

MALVERN U3A

Nº 90 AUTUMN 2019 NEWSLETTER

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 26th November

The Cube, Albert Road North

Christmas Lunch

Friday 13th December

Worcestershire Golf Club

Menu and booking form enclosed



U3A Committee (Trustees)

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**Cover photo: Theme, Rectangles, Triangles & Circles,
Glenys Burrows, Camera Group**

CHAIR'S NOTES

To use a hackneyed phrase, this year seems to have 'flown past' and already we are on the receiving end of pearls of wisdom from some papers of the approach of another "Beast from the East". Happily however Malvern U3A appears to sail on calmly with a widening collection of interest groups and steady membership levels.

Registration Day, which was delivered with consummate efficiency by Jenny Clayphan, saw an amazing breadth of subjects on offer. It needed all her organisational skill to fit the required tables into the space available. Sincere thanks go both to her and to the theatre staff who were so accommodating. Many members commented on the clarity of her layout, but, she now retires from her role and a replacement is urgently required.

Several large groups have now benefitted from the improved facilities at the Cube and we continue to have a harmonious working relationship with their trustees. The speakers' meetings there on the last Tuesday of each month are growing in popularity, due certainly to the excellent quality of the talks, coupled possibly with the lure of free tea and biscuits and the chance to chat with friends.

The dreaded Data Protection Act, although working effectively, seems to have generated a little flurry of concern and I am asking again for everyone to use the blind copy "bcc" function in their replies to messages to avoid scattering e-mail addresses into cyber space.

The Annual General Meeting is on 26th November. The agenda and papers for this will be sent out in the coming weeks and happily unlike last year there are no new legal obligations to be met to comply with changes in the law, so we should complete the formalities speedily. As they are stepping down, I would like to thank Jenny Jackson, Brian Chesney, and Jenny Clayphan for their massive contribution to the smooth running of Malvern U3A committee, and to say personally, I am sorry to see them retire. This brings me to the next point: the AGM paper that really requires your attention is the **Nomination of Trustees form**. We have nearly 1700 members so hiding somewhere amongst you must be the people willing to become trustees. It's not rocket science, you work with a great group of people, we even laugh occasionally, so what is holding you back? Please speak to any trustee to get more information about the roles.

I am confident that 2020 will see an evermore successful year for us all. Meanwhile I hope that you all enjoy the Autumn sunshine, long may it last.

Sue Lamberton

FROM THE TRUSTEES

Annual General Meeting

As Sue has mentioned in her Chair's Notes, the Malvern U3A AGM will be held on **Tuesday 26th November at The Cube, starting at 2.30 pm.**

Sue also reminds us that three of our Trustees will be retiring in November. They are Jenny Jackson, General Secretary, Brian Chesney, Venues Co-ordinator and Jenny Clayphan, Groups Co-ordinator. We urgently need to find volunteers to take on these vital roles. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in filling one of these vacancies please contact one of the retiring Trustees, or any member of the Committee (contact details are on page 2 of this newsletter), to find out what is involved..

The AGM will be followed by the **Monthly Talk** - see the back cover of this newsletter for details.

Malvern U3A Christmas Lunch

This year's lunch is on **Friday 13th December, 12.30 for 1.00 pm at Worcestershire Golf Club.** Full details can be found on the menu/booking form enclosed with this newsletter, and can also be downloaded from the website (www.malvernu3a.org.uk). There is a choice of two courses (£22 per person) or three courses (£26). Places are limited to 80, and tickets are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The closing date for orders is Friday 29th November. When posting in your order, as well as a cheque in full payment, please remember to send a SAE for the return of your tickets.

U3A Diaries for 2020

These are now available for £2.75 and will be on sale at the Monthly Meetings at the Cube (see back cover for details) as well as at the AGM, as long as stocks last.

Group Leaders Meeting

This will be held on **Tuesday 29th October at the Cube, 11.00 am to 12 noon.** Refreshments will be served at the beginning of the meeting.

MU3A Newsletter

At the Trustees meeting in August, it was agreed to cut the number of printed Newsletters from three to two a year. This was just one of the measures considered in order to reduce overall running costs and to avoid having to raise membership fees for next year. Future issues will appear in Spring and Autumn.

From Members

Table Tennis Group

Congratulations to Group members Jenny and Will Ahern who won the U3A Welsh Open Table Tennis Championship in Cardiff this summer.

The National U3A's online newsletter for July reported on the event:

This year's exciting U3A Welsh Open Table Tennis Championships took place in Cardiff with 30 teams from England and Wales participating.

The day showcases the great qualities of being part of the U3A movement – collaboration, learning, staying active and having fun. Well done to a team from Malvern U3A who were the overall winners - with teams from Bridgend and Pembroke U3As in second and third places respectively.

Philip Avery, a volunteer with Table Tennis Wales - which organised the competition on behalf of U3A – said, “For us the taking part and enjoyment is more important than winning or losing. Thanks to all those who took part especially those that travelled a long way for a fun day of table tennis.”

MU3A Table Tennis Group Leader, Dina Murdie reports, “With Jenny and Will, there were six other couples from our Group who attended the event and all felt that they had a good time meeting other teams from around the area and a good day of table tennis.”



Theme: *Rectangles, Triangles & Circles*, Dave Roberts, Camera Group

Geology Group

It has been a busy summer for the geology group with a series of field trips to a variety of locations around our area. Whilst a number of trips have been very local, we have also visited Big Pit near Abergavenny and the Forest of Dean coal and iron ore mining region.

Big Pit is part of the National Museum of Wales and well worth a visit. Besides the opportunity to descend into a deep mine, there are interesting museum exhibits and displays describing the processes involved in coal mining. We began the trip to the Forest of Dean at the New Fancy Viewpoint, the location of one of the old deep mines. Here, there is a geomap which represents the geology of the whole Forest of Dean mining area, as well as a memorial to the miners who lost their lives working in the mines. Amazingly, there were around 100 different mine locations, both coal and iron ore in the Forest of Dean.

During the summer, a small group of members were involved in a job to clear and re-expose a local site which was due to be visited by members of an International geological meeting. The site was an SSSI near the village of Eckington which had been established as being one of a number of terraces of the Avon deposited between 130,000 and 115,000 years ago when the climate was generally a little warmer than today. In this context, a terrace might be likened to a river beach. In earlier studies, this terrace had proven to be very rich in fauna, principally small molluscs but interestingly also having produced evidence of the presence of Hippopotamus in the region.

The work consisted of hacking back a mass of brambles before a face about 2m wide and 2m deep could be excavated. Once through the top soil there were layers of sand and gravel of varying consistency. It was interesting to find that one of these layers included a huge number of small, mainly broken, fossils. However, the most exciting find was something that the resident expert of the day thought was part of a hippopotamus tusk (see photo).



We are pleased that about 30 new people have signed up to the group for this year and hope to welcome them to our special new members' introductory sessions as well as the start of a seven part lecture series starting in October. We are always open to new members, so if you are interested, come along to one of our meetings or send me an email. All the details regarding our group can be found on our website: <https://malvernu3a.org.uk/geology3>

Roger Hunt, rmrhunt@sky.com



Theme: *Vintage & Retro*, Marcela Hales, Camera Group

Grania's 85th Birthday Celebration

Malvern U3A member Grania Joinson celebrated her birthday in June this year by doing a sponsored skydive in support of St Richard's Hospice in Worcester. On the following pages you can read her vivid account of the experience. The photograph below was taken by Grania's son Tim, and shows her with skydive instructor Simon and video photographer Richard.



I should have done my Sky Dive in aid of St Richards Hospice in Worcester on 8th June, the date of my 85th birthday, but the atrocious weather meant no flying and cancellation. I re-booked for the following Sunday. Tim, my very kind son, was my 'team' for the day. We left Malvern at 7am to go to an airfield near Banbury, Oxfordshire.

The weather was not encouraging; grey with heavy cloud but not raining. After signing in and weight recorded, we were briefed about equipment, parachutes and harness etc. We were also drilled in the few movements we would need to do. Most important was lifting our feet and lower legs before landing, to avoid breaking our ankles and those of our instructor. Feet hitting the ground too fast is the biggest danger in Sky Diving.

Then we waited for the weather to improve. At around 11.30 we were all asked decide either to wait for a 50/50 chance of a flight later on or re-book for another day. We chose to stay and were relieved to see that more than half decided to leave, which meant if flying did start I was more likely to get a place.

About 12 pm we were told that flying would commence. I was lucky because I was in the second flight and could watch the first and note roughly how long it took the plane to reach 13,000 feet and before the first divers appeared from out of the clouds. I had to get into my jump suit and be fitted for a helmet with goggles and harness. Under my harness I proudly wore a tee shirt showing that I was being sponsored in aid of St. Richard's Hospice. I met my instructor Simon, to whom I would be attached later on. He was very friendly and relaxed and we shared a few jokes. We made our way out to the plane, heart thumping more in excitement than fear.

In the plane we sat astride long benches on each side. Simon was behind me and my video photographer Richard in front. Simon kept checking and tightening my harness, like the starter checks girths of horses before a race! Richard reminded me to smile and relax and enjoy myself when out among the clouds! It was a small plane carrying about a dozen people - divers, photographers and instructors. Three of us were doing tandem dives. Others were old hands going up for a jolly, equipped with their own individual parachutes.

Then the cabin lights started to come on. Red: goggles down, get ready, Amber: door opened, Green: first of the independent jumpers was out, followed by two more and Richard. Then it was my turn! I was sitting in the doorway before I knew it and Simon gave me an almighty shove and I was tumbling towards a lovely big white fluffy cloud and thinking a nice soft feather bed to fall into! Helpfully the cloud blocked out any sight of the land far below. Next thing as the wind roared around me I caught sight of Richard valiantly trying to get photos and remembered to produce some sort of smile. There was a reduction in pace. Calm and serenity was restored.



Photograph: Richard Orford

Simon showed me where to hold the guide ropes and I was in charge, steering the 'chute slightly left and right. Needless to say control was handed back for landing. The ground still looked some way off, but we were going quite fast so had to hurry to lift lower legs and feet up and out of the way. On reaching the ground a man on either side grabbed me and kept me upright in a very controlled manner. It took a few moments for me to regain my balance. My harness was loosened and then it began to sink in what I had done - and what I had achieved!

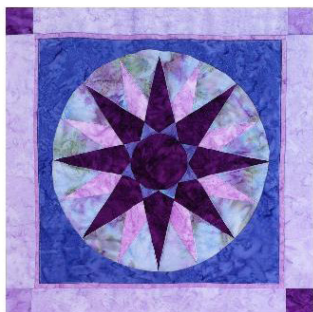
I walked over to Tim and gave him a big hug - no doubt he was feeling relieved that I was down in one piece! As we were having refreshments a bit later, the fourth and last flight took off, and although it was blustery the wind became stronger. We waited to see parachutes in the sky but it was too rough to let them jump and so the poor things came back down in the plane. What a disappointment for them.

CONCLUSION: I really had no idea of the huge interest generated by an 85 year old doing a first Sky Dive until so many people, complete strangers, came over to congratulate me and shake my hand! A challenge for me and a triumph for St Richard's Hospice, as my fund has raised £3,000. My thanks to all who donated so generously to the Hospice. Thanks to Alison and Jodie, the Hospice Fundraisers, who put up with endless phone calls and questions and encouraged and helped me all the way.

Grania Joinson

Patchwork and Needle Skills

Samples of members' work



Quiz Group

The Group has proved very popular since starting in June last year. Members are invited to take turns as quiz masters (singly or in pairs) and can choose their own topics, which makes for a wonderfully diverse range of questions. As well as the usual popular themes: General Knowledge, History, Geography etc, we've had rounds with titles such as Empire, Colours, Nicknames, and the British Monarchy. See some examples of recent questions below, with answers at the bottom of the page.

For more information, contact:

Liz Daniel 01684 540904

Maggie Rider 08626 635389

elizabethdaniel274@gmail.com or

mrider355@talktalk.net

- 1 What name is given to both a soft gentle breeze and a fine cotton gingham?
- 2 What is the name of the ancient road which runs from Rome to Brindisi?
- 3 Who wrote the book, *Empire of the Sun*?
- 4 In which Worcestershire village was Edward Elgar born?
- 5 Which Minister of Transport introduced the Breathalyzer test?
- 6 Where is Margaret Thatcher Day celebrated on 10 January?
- 7 What is a female mole called?
- 8 Who wrote the music for *West Side Story*?
- 9 The Greek liqueur Ouzo is flavoured with which plant?
- 10 Who was the first British pilot to fly Concorde?



Theme: Rectangles, Triangles & Circles,
Allan Colwill, Camera Group

1 Zephyr, 2 The Appian Way, 3 J G Ballard, 4 Lower Broadheath, 5 Barbara Castle, 6 The Falklands, 7 A sow, 8 Leonard Bernstein, 9 Anise (Aniseed), 10 Brian Trubshaw

Boules & Petanque



Members of Boules & Pentanque at their Social Evening in August. Margaret Baddily from the Lady Foley Tea Rooms presented the prizes.

Proposal to set up a Natural History Group

It has been suggested that there may be some interest in starting a Natural History group. It is envisaged that the group would accommodate all levels of knowledge and experience and will be very much practical in its outlook. So, a mix of field trips and classroom sessions. The field of natural history is clearly large and the topics to be covered would be decided by group members exploiting available expertise. But these could include birds, flora, butterflies, moths and dragonflies. If you might be interested in joining such a group,



please contact Jenny Clayphan at groups@malvernu3a.org.uk. If you have expertise in any relevant subject which might be helpful in running the group then please let her know.

Theme: Rectangles, Triangles & Circles, Marge Brace, Camera Group

Travel Group



Anderton Boat Lift

In May this year, Margaret Flanagan organised a visit for the Group to the Anderton Boat Lift - the 50ft vertical link between the River Weaver and the Trent and Mersey Canal in Cheshire. Built in 1875, it was in use for over 100 years before being closed due to corrosion. It re-opened in 2002 following restoration.

Visit to Shrewsbury

Richard Shenton reports on a Group trip in September:

“On a warm autumn morning over 40 members of the Travel group, went on a visit to Shrewsbury. Some of us took a boat trip up the Severn which was most enjoyable. This was followed by a tour of the ancient sites of the town.”



Painting 2 Group

Samples of members' work





Theme: Gap, Don Handy, Camera Group

Noticeboard

Midlands Charity Christmas Cards

Christmas cards from twenty charities will be on sale at the ARCOS building at the top of Avenue Road, Malvern, from 23 October - 18 December. The shop will be open from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm, Monday - Friday, and 10.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturday.

ARCOS (Association for Rehabilitation of Communication and Oral Skills),
Hatherton Lodge, Avenue Road, Malvern WR14 3AG 01684 576795
www.arcos.org.uk

Speakers' topics for our Monthly Meeting

2.30pm at The Cube

Come along for inspiration, and a chat with friends old and new.

Refreshments will be served after the meetings

29 October ***Trials and Tribulations as a Church Warden*** - with Dr Jan Long
Jan returns to entertain us, this time to recount some of her hilarious experiences over many years as a Church Warden.

26 November **The Annual General Meeting**, followed by
Remembering "The Swinging Sixties" - with Ray Sturdy
Britain had a youth boom, new cars and new motorways. There were scandals, a royal wedding, a moon walk and almost a nuclear war.

December - no meeting, but don't forget Christmas Lunch on the 13th

28 January ***The Curious History of Vegetables*** - with Bill Laws
According to Bill Laws, author of *Fifty Plants that Changed the Course of History*, vegetables have proved to be both inspiring and controversial. From gardens and allotments to romance and aphrodisiacs, the vegetable world is anything but dull.

25 February ***Genealogy: the search for one's ancestors*** - with Rob Collinge
Rob will tell us about his search into his late father's ancestry. This lead him back to 1830s Germany, early pioneer Texas, 19th century Mexico, WW1 and more. His talk demonstrates the variety of resources available to the determined investigator.

31 March **The Social and Political Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan - with Bernard Lockett**
Bernard describes the vast amount of social and political comment in the Gilbert and Sullivan shows. A wry look, too, at how much of their work is relevant to the 21st century.

NEWSLETTER

We welcome items from groups or individual members for the Newsletters which are published in Autumn and Spring.

All written contributions should be e-mailed (preferably as Word documents) to
newsletter@malvernu3a.org.uk

Photographs should be sent as .jpg files

Please note that contributions may be edited.

The deadline for the Spring edition is

Monday 9 March 2020