

MALVERN NEWSLETTER

Nº 91 SPRING 2020



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CHAIR'S NOTES

This winter has been an appalling reminder that living, as most of us do, virtually on the side of the Malvern Hills, above the Severn flood plain, has been a safeguard for the majority of us, and despite the emergence of an ever expanding plethora of road works, groups have continued to have productive meetings throughout the winter months.

Topography is of no defence however when it comes to Covid-19. As I write this, Trustees are noting frequent updates from the government as to the management of social gatherings. U3A members are, by definition, a thoughtful and informed body of people who are taking their own decisions about personal conduct and safety but, following the latest official guidelines, we have decided that all interest groups should cease activity until further notice. The speakers' meetings had already been suspended for the time being and it is becoming clear that the demographic of U3A places many of us at greater risk than expected in the general population. Trustees are at present exploring technical solutions to allow many of us to stay in touch via Skype etc.

The monthly meeting at the Cube was continuing to attract a larger audience and a wide variety of topics have been explored. Pubs signs were found to be more informative than previously expected!

The very active Geology Group are progressing their liaison with other bodies to produce a new guide to the Geology of the Malvern Hills. This will prove to be an interesting project, not just for Malvern U3A.

Several new groups have formed and an interesting venture into a Whist Drive is on the cards (see page 18).

Isolation, for whatever reason, is hard for some of us and it may be that by the time of publication we will all be living under a more restrictive regime. As Spring moves into Summer may I tentatively suggest that we attempt to recapture the community spirit of our parents and battle on through the coming months whilst keeping a watchful eye out for our friends and neighbours who may be struggling.

Wishing you all Good Health and Good Luck

Sue Lamberton

FROM THE TRUSTEES

The next few months

See the back cover of this newsletter for just a few suggestions on how to keep busy and in touch with each other while we go through this period of “social distancing”.

Groups Fair 2020 - Change of Venue

All being well, the coronavirus crisis will be behind us and we will be able to hold the Groups Fair (Registration Day) as planned on Monday 7 September 2020. Please note that Malvern Theatre will be closed for refurbishment so this year the Fair will be held in The Dome on Imperial Road, Malvern WR14 3AW. More details will be circulated nearer the time, but please mark the date and new venue on your calendar.

Award to V.I.P.S

Congratulations to Jeni Chesney, who has received a President's Award from Sight Concern Worcestershire (SCW) for her initiative in setting up the Malvern U3A V.I.P.S Group. The Award was presented by SCW's President, Lady Morrison, at their AGM in January.

Read more about the V.I.P.S on page 9 of this Newsletter.



Theme: Rectangles, *Triangles* & *Circles*, Don Bradley, Camera Group

From Members

Military History Group

Last autumn the Military History Group undertook a battlefields tour of York and the surrounding areas. Travelling up we stopped at the Leeds Royal Armouries Museum before going on to York and booking into our hotel right by the city walls.

We then had a very interesting walking tour of York and during the following days we visited various battlefields in the surrounding area. These included Eden Camp (see photo below) a World War II Italian and German POW camp with all the huts now showing aspects of life and war in the 1940s - including a theatre and canteen.

We visited battlefields at Stamford Bridge, Marston Moor, and Towton and spent a day in Richmond which incorporated a tour of The Green Howards museum. We also had time in the city to visit the York Army museum, the Yorkshire Air museum, walk the walls and visit the Viking centre.

The tour was very well organised by Joan and Jim Murphy; with interesting and informative on the ground talks by Mark Tovey and Alan Grey, which gave us a perspective of battles through the ages.

Don Handy



***Here's to Life* by Gren Gaskell**

We're not too old.
Let's live and laugh
And put behind
The time that's past.
This is our time
To learn and grow,
It's not too late
New seeds to sew.

Let's live as if
We live again,
This time is ours.
It's not insane
To feel that we
Have time to claim,
At seventy
Whatevery.

If we have health
And mind and soul,
Ambitions still
To make our goal,
Why count the years
That went before?
Let's fill the cup
And drink some more.

THE TOAST

"Here's to life and love and laughter,
Here's to now and what comes after"

This poem is from Gren's book, ***A Way with Words***.
Reproduced here with his kind permission

Literature Group



Poems and Picnic on a Summer's Day

Tuesday Gardening Group

Scaling the dizzy heights of Green Lane, or plummeting to the depths of the exquisite terraced gardens on Wells Road, our intrepid clientele also have been known to venture afar. Droitwich, Redditch and other itches and Wyches, Worcester, Hereford and beyond, provide variety of design and fascinating flora, palm trees, aloe variegata multiplied, rare specimens, ordinary recognisable beauties too numerous to list here, are the joys of our visits.

The cakes and tea are of a key relevance in all chosen venues, and they too ain't bad either

Another year of botanical excellence having passed, the Malvern reps, of the "David Bellamy experience", now settle down amongst glorious dehiscence awaiting with joyful anticipation, the 29 snowdrop varieties to be viewed in 2020.

November 2019



Green Hairstreak, Richard Newton, Camera Group

The V.I.P.S

The V.I.P.S is a social and support group for anyone with serious visual impairment. We have been meeting since September and our numbers have grown from 14 to 20. We have had a very varied programme so far, including Keep Fit, Dowsing, Tactile Nature and an Art session using pastels.

Recently we celebrated Louis Braille's 200th birthday with a party (see photos below) when, with the help of Sue Norcross and one of our own VI members, Bob Leverett, we learned about Braille's life and his love of music - which he used to describe colour to blind people.

We enjoyed French food at the party, and revived our schoolboy French.

It is a fun group, very friendly and somewhat noisy!

We have a chatty tea break, with home baked goodies to sample.

If this is for you please get in touch with

Jane Lawrence, Group Leader: 07973 254259 janemlawrence@msn.com

or Jeni Chesney: 01684 891999 jenichesney57@yahoo.com

Meetings are cancelled until further notice - contact Jane or Jeni for information.



Patchwork and Needle Skills
Samples of members' work



***The Likely Lads* by John Bentley**

Snow covered the little market town of Much Leaddon. It was three days to Christmas. In The Saracen's Head, the festive fancy dress party was in full swing. "Quack" Duxbury, a local lad, was standing unsteadily supping his fourth pint of cider as he eyed up the coterie of town girls dressed as belly dancers. His flat mate Big Dave Wheelan arrived shaking snow off his work overalls which still half covered the JCB logo on his back. Changing quickly into an Arab sheik, he leapt on to the karaoke stage and bellowed a theatrical version of "The Green, Green, Grass Of Home" which brought the house down. He easily won the karaoke competition and a box of 12 premium ciders.

Picking up casual work around town didn't bring much money in. It left the two lads almost flat broke every week. An old school friend comes over. "Hello you guys, fancy a drink?" He puts his Porsche car keys on the bar and flashes a £20 note from his wallet. "Where are you working now, Colin?" "Oh, I'm still with Goldman Sachs you know."

A raucous rendition of "Old Lang Syne" ends the party. Outside the blizzard disrupts directions and the boys take a wrong turning ending up at the council yard on the industrial estate where they work over the winter months. And there sits the JCB covered in snow. Big Dave Wheelan still has the keys to the JCB in his overalls. He fires up the digger and, whooping hysterically, the pair drive into the Aldi supermarket next door making erratic loops around the empty car park ending up gouging a hole in the supermarket wall. The store's cash machine catches his eye.

After three attempts, the cash machine is dislodged and scooped up into the JCB's steel bucket. "Gotcha!" "Quack" Duxbury shouts. In almost zero visibility, they zig zag home, mounting an invisible kerb, plough across next door's front garden and just miss crashing into their own front door. Laughing gleefully, the likely lads stagger ungainly indoors carrying the cash box.

Next door, Albert Braithwaite, eagle eyed chairman of the Dixon Drive Neighbourhood Watch Committee, woke up, opened his bedroom curtains and couldn't believe his eyes. His Winter Wonderland Tableaux had been totally destroyed by the digger. Red faced, he rang the police in a raging temper. Surveying the scene with the police, Albert Braithwaite cried, "Twenty years I've been doing that display. It's all for charity you know. Look at it. It's ruined! I bet those two layabouts next door are behind it!" The police find the two lads flat out snoring on the sofa with the cash box on the carpet surrounded by empty cider bottles. PC's Plant and Turner look at each other and smirk. "Amateurs", said Turner. Later, when the church bells chime 12.30, the boys wake up to find two policemen sitting opposite them. "Well, good morning lads. Happy Christmas," PC Plant says sarcastically....."just a few routine questions."

(John Bentley is a member of Creative Writing 1)

Wine Tasting Group

Thirteen Group members converged on a secret location in Malvern in December for a sumptuous four-course meal served by waiters wearing spotless white gloves. The wines were “The Best of the Best” – the ten wines that scored the highest at meetings of the Group during 2019.

We began with an aperitif: Exquisite Cremant du Jura 2016 from *Aldi* that attracted high praise at our June Barbecue. This was followed by two white wines: Ormarine 2017 Picpoul de Pinet from *Aldi* that scored 8.5 at the May meeting and Root 1:

Chilean Sauvignon Blanc 2018 from *Morrison's* that scored 8.0 at our July meeting. These accompanied the starter which was Smoked Salmon & Asparagus Terrine.

There then followed an interlude during which two red wines were sampled. They were an Aluado 2018 Alicante Bouschet from *Laithwaites* that scored 8.8 at our April meeting and an Opi Malbec Reserve 2018, also from *Laithwaites* that scored 8.6 at the April meeting.

To accompany the Roast Lamb Shank served with Port Wine Jus, Mashed Sweet Potato, Sprouts, Roast Parsnips and French beans there was a *Wine Society's* Californian Old Vine Zinfandel 2017 that scored 9 at the March meeting, and a Vacqueyras 2016 Domaine Grand Montmirail from *Waitrose/Yapp Bros* that scored 8.5 at the May meeting.

With the Raspberry Crème Brulee Dessert came a Passito di Pantelleria from *Lidl* and a Rubis Tempranillo from *Aldi*. The latter had accompanied the puddings at the June Barbecue and been much appreciated.

A selection of English, Welsh and Italian Cheeses completed the gastronomical extravaganza. These were accompanied by an Armilar 10-year-old Tawny Port.

At the end of the evening we looked forward to a New Year filled with new viticulture discoveries.

David and Liz Martin



Spanish Improvers Plus

Poems inspired by 'Andalucía' by Antonio Machado. Antonio Cipriano José María y Francisco de Santa Ana Machado y Ruiz, who died in 1939, is one of the most respected 20th century Spanish poets. Born in Seville, he only lived in Andalucía for some fifteen years, but his poem 'Andalucía' encapsulates his affection for his natal province, its short phrasing suggesting a distance and intangibility. The poems written by members of Spanish Improvers Plus group have tried to reflect his style.

Canto a Andalucía

por Antonio Machado

Cádiz, salada claridad.
Granada, agua oculta que llora.
Romana y mora, Córdoba callada.
Málaga cantaora.
Almería, dorada.
Plateado, Jaén.
Huelva, la orilla de las tres carabelas.
Y Sevilla.

Song to Andalucía

Cádiz, salt-laden brilliance,
Granada, hidden waters that weep.
Roman and Moorish, silent Córdoba.
Málaga, flamenco singer.
Almería, golden.
Jaén, silvery.
Huelva, shore of the three caravels.
And Sevilla.

Portsmouth

por Catherine

Portsmouth, la boca del puerto
Monmouth, la boca del río
Norwich, el grande plano
Ipswich, la ciudad del puerto
Liverpool, el puerto eterno
Poole, el puerto rico
Chichester, la catedral grande
Leicester, la plaza grande

Portsmouth, the mouth of the harbour;
Monmouth, the mouth of the river;
Norwich, the grand plateau;
Ipswich, the city of the harbour;
Liverpool, the eternal harbour;
Poole, the rich harbour;
Chichester, the grand cathedral;
Leicester, the grand square.

Worcester

por Michael

Worcester, ciudad real,
Puentesando el río cubierto de cisnes.
La escuela del Rey, generaciones de
aprendizaje y disciplina.
La Colmena, mielera de conocimiento,
placer, lectura.
La universidad ocupada con ciencia y
tecnología.
Huntingdon Hall, placeres teatrales en
banco apretados.
La antigua catedral con su historia
continúa.
El gremio señorial, cámaras vacías
haciendo eco de pasos solitarios.
Las tiendas cerradas de la calle
principal.
"Floreat semper fidelis civitas."

Worcester, the King's city
Bridging the swan-covered river.
The King's School, generations of
learning and discipline,
The Hive, a honey-pot of knowledge,
pleasure, reading,
The University, filled with science and
technology,
Huntingdon Hall, theatrical pleasures on
cramped benches,
The ancient cathedral, continuous
history,
The Guildhall, empty halls echoing lonely
footsteps,
The shut shops of the High Street.
"Floreat semper fidelis civitas."

Malvern

por Win

Duro, dramático;
Senderos, serpientes, cercan cimas.
Canteras cerradas, crudas y grises.
Agua fresca de pozos.
Escuelas de jóvenes,
Pensionistas en pisos.
Los coches deportivos.
Músicos, artistas, poetas,
excéntricos.
Científicos con obras ocultas.
Teatros, estaciones de ferrocarril.
Central, el priorato, histórico,
sereno.

*Strong and dramatic;
Footpaths, serpents, surround the
peaks.
Quarries closed, raw and grey.
Fresh water from springs.
Schools of youngsters, Pensioners in
apartments.
Sports cars.
Musicians, artists, poets, eccen-
trics.
Scientists with secret works.
Theatres and Railway stations,
Central, the Priory, historic, serene.*

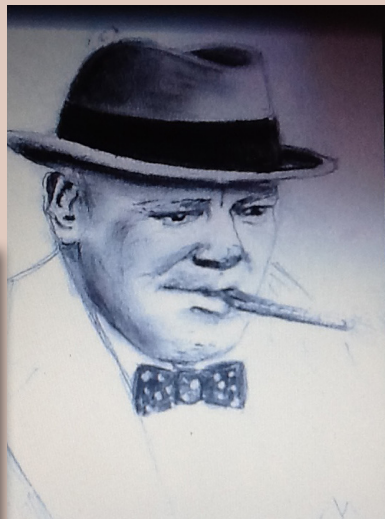
Lugar improbable por Richard

Ilha Formosa
Isla Hermosa
Tierra bienaventurada
Provincia renegada
Aborígenes oprimidos
Itinerantes enriquecidos
Por Holanda fortificada
Por la dinastía conquistada
Por Japón colonizada
Por China liberada
Pero no incorporada
Problema histórico
Vestigio político
Gente marginada
Economía presionada
Nación no reconocida
Denominación mal parecida
Futuro inestable
Taiwan indomable

*Ilha Formosa
Beautiful island
Blessed land
Renegade province
Oppressed natives
Enriched immigrants
Fortified by Holland
Conquered by the [Qing] dynasty
Colonised by Japan
Liberated by China
But not fully incorporated (into the
mainland)
Historical problem
Political remnant
Marginalised people
Economy under pressure
Nation without recognition
Ill-favoured name
Future unstable
Taiwan indomitable*

Painting 2 Group

Samples of members' work



Family History and Genealogy

In November, we welcomed the Genealogy group from Pershore U3A. Their leader, Keith Southwell, brought ten members and they joined us for a meeting on "Ancient Handwriting". We had a short PowerPoint on the different types of text, forms of writing and the abbreviations used in the different sorts of legal and secretary hands. It was a mostly practical session where we tried to decipher practice samples of text from 14th C onwards. These included wills and various legal documents which were available to download free from the internet. We will be joining Pershore at one of their sessions in March next year. It was a most enjoyable meeting. It was lovely to exchange ideas on the running of our meetings and for both groups to get ideas for future meetings. We currently have a friendly, thriving group of about 30 regular members but we are always ready to welcome new people who are either experienced or who are just beginning their family history. There is a wealth of knowledge within the group and members are always prepared to help with research. Gwenda Evans



Geology Group

The group has completed a successful winter programme of lectures including a fortnightly series of six talks by our own member, Richard Edwards, entitled "The Evolution of the British Landscape". Our lectures have been consistently well attended with around 80 members coming along. We now look forward to our summer programme of outdoor field trips, with locations as varied as the Malvern Hills, the Charnwood Forest, the Martley area, south Wales and the Antrim coast. The programme begins at the end of April and is open to all members of the group. Details of the programme dates can be found on the Geology group website as well a much more information about the group.

During the winter months several of our members have continued helping the Hereford & Worcester Earth Heritage Trust in the ongoing maintenance of a number of the local geological sites. One such task was at the Little Doward, near Monmouth, in support of the Woodland Trust. This location includes a classic limestone pavement formation which is very unusual this far south. The two photos show the site before (above) and after (below) the clearance work.

We are open to new members at any time, so if you are interested in joining do get in touch.

Roger Hunt, rmrhunt@sky.com

Meetings may be cancelled, contact Roger for information.



New Group: Summer Evening Whist Drives

Margaret Aspland runs the Bridge (EAT Group) and hopes to organise a series of Whist Drives during the summer months. The proposed venue is Holy Trinity Church, North Malvern Road WR14 4LR, and the meetings would be held on the first Friday of the month, starting in May and continuing through the summer till September (May 1, June 5, July 3, August 7, September 4) from 6.30 - 8.30 pm. There would be a short break for a glass of wine/soft drink and nibbles (you would be asked for a small contribution to costs).

Of course, these plans may be foiled by the covid-19 virus, but if you'd be interested in taking part, please contact Margaret by email or phone, see contact details below.

masugarloaf@gmail.com 01684 565956



Theme: *Texture*, Rachel Salisbury, Camera Group

The Grape Group

"In vino veritas"

We are a small [ish] group of like-minded members who enjoy discovering new wines from all over our planet. It is fun finding an excellent example at a reasonable price. We are not connoisseurs or experts; we just enjoy the challenge. We meet at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month. We take it in turns to host the evening and the venue normally will be in the Host's home. The average fee per meeting, to cover the cost of the wine, is about £10 per head. There is now an opportunity for new members to join us.

If you are interested and/or would like some more information please contact the Leader, John Waring, on 01684 578640

Meetings are cancelled until further notice - contact John for updates.

Lawn Bowling



This year is the eighth anniversary since the Group was formed. Lawn bowling sessions will start on Wednesday 6th May (2.00pm – weather permitting) at the beautiful setting of the Malvern Priory Bowling Club Green (Orchard Road) for a two hour period each Wednesday until the end of August (26th). These sessions are open to both beginners and more advanced players, and provide outdoor exercise in a friendly and challenging team-play environment. Experienced players from the Priory Club will also be on hand to provide support for advancing your game – Lorna Rodway, Rupert Thomas and Bill Moran.



If you are interested in taking part in this social sport, please call (or email) me for more information. Bowling equipment can be provided and the dress code is informal – the only stipulation is that soft, flat, shoes/trainers are worn on the Green. Coaching is given on the rules and bowling techniques for newcomers to get you started. Age is no barrier to the game - come and get involved in some competitive sporting fun! I look forward to hearing from you.

Wayne Braddock (Level-2 Coach),

Tel: 01684 574025; email: wayne.braddock@btinternet.com

The start of the season may be delayed, contact Wayne for details

Please keep in touch!

During the next few months we'd love to know what you're doing to get through this difficult time. At the time of writing, we know that some groups have already set up systems allowing them to meet remotely, and the Trustees are working on a way to help others do the same. Send your stories and ideas to newsletter@malvern3a.org.uk and we'll try to pass them on via the monthly e-Bulletin to MU3A members. Send photographs too, and we may be able to publish them in the Autumn Newsletter (see details below). If you're not online, you might set up a rota for regular telephone calls between fellow members. And perhaps writing actual letters will come back into fashion! See below for more suggestions.

Visit the **U3A National Office website** (www.u3a.org.uk) for lots of helpful advice about staying in touch. They have also set up a U3A Shared Learning Project, asking members to keep a diary during the coming weeks. For more information contact diary@u3a.org.uk

Subscribe to the National online newsletter. This is a free source of information, news and advice from National and Regional U3As. Sign up at www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter to receive regular mailings to your inbox.

Virtual U3A (vU3A) - vU3A is an online-only group. It aims to provide the U3A experience for those who are isolated in some way by circumstances or geography. You will find a link to Virtual U3A on the Malvern U3A website: www.malvern3a.org.uk

Let's hope the coronavirus will soon be just a painful memory. In the meantime, keep healthy, keep busy and **keep in touch!**

Tessa Hartog, newsletter@malvern3a.org.uk, 01684 562411

NEWSLETTER

All written contributions should be e-mailed (preferably as Word documents) to **newsletter@malvern3a.org.uk**

Photographs should be sent separately as .jpg files (no smaller than 1Mb)

Please note that contributions may be edited.

The deadline for the Autumn edition is

Wednesday 9 September 2020