

MALVERN u3a

Nº 95 SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER



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CHAIR'S NOTES

Joseph Chamberlain said in a speech in 1898:

"I think you will all agree that we are living in most interesting times. I never remember myself a time in which our history was so full, in which day by day brought us new objects of interest and, let me say also new objects for anxiety."

We are indeed living in '*most interesting times*', but it seems that each age at some time feels like there has never been anything like this before.

When I sat down to write the introduction to the Autumn Newsletter we were enjoying the warmest September on record. As I write today we are experiencing beautiful, still, warm and sunny weather, in March. It is some consolation in these rather anxious times.

At the end of last year, we were just beginning to emerge with increasing confidence from two years of restrictions imposed to control the spread of Covid 19, when new strains were identified and the number of cases began rising again.

Nevertheless, the Trustees, following the government lead, are encouraging groups to discuss amongst themselves and decide how best to proceed. We are moving into a learning-to-live-with-Covid phase and many Groups have re-started more face-to-face activities. This is good news and it is already evident how much these socially interactive meetings were missed. The Committee view remains one of cautious optimism and we continue to take sensible precautions to inhibit any further spreading of this virus where we can.

Like many members, I have been deeply affected by the dreadful scenes from Ukraine and we are all doing what we can to show support for the millions of people there who are no longer able to carry on normal peaceful lives and do the ordinary things that we so often take for granted. By chance, the u3a colours of blue and yellow are the same as the Ukrainian flag.

As you will see from this newsletter, plans are being made for events for this year. There is a new monthly speaker programme now in place. We are planning a Group Leaders meeting again in May and a Groups Fair in September. We have also been reviewing our processes and will gradually be updating and simplifying them, which we hope will make our routine administration a bit swifter and less onerous to perform. Changes on this will be communicated to members as they happen.

We also have some ideas about events to help us celebrate this year, as nationally we will mark u3a's 40 year birthday. More about this will follow. If there is anyone, as an individual or as a Group, who has any ideas to contribute or would be prepared to help organise something, please get in touch with any member of the Committee.

It is marvellous to see so many groups now active again and bringing back the u3a "Learn, Laugh, Live" approach to our lives. I hope you all can enjoy our Spring and Summer period.

Bill Culshaw, Chair

FROM THE TRUSTEES

Malvern u3a Committee

We were delighted to welcome Helen O'Donnell and Wendy Mondy as co-opted members of the Committee following the departure of Brenda Johnson and Jeff Thorogood last autumn. Wendy has taken on the role of Membership Secretary, and she and Helen will be formally nominated as Trustees at the AGM in November. We're also very pleased to announce that Aidan Lawrence is taking over from John Elkington as Web Manager. Aidan has been advising the Malvern u3a Technology Working Group (TWG) in setting up a new membership system and with generally updating the website (see below). We are very sorry to see John go. Many, many thanks are due to him for his work as a Trustee, especially the mammoth task of setting up and maintaining the Mu3a website over the last few years.

There are still vacancies on the Committee. In particular, we urgently need someone to help with organising the programme of speakers for the Monthly Meetings. If you would like to find out more about this important role, please get in touch with our Chair, Bill Culshaw (chair@malvernmu3a.org.uk). Contact details for all the Committee members can be found on the inside cover of this Newsletter.

Changes to the Malvern u3a Membership Process

You will recently have received a letter from Bill Culshaw - either by email or by post - announcing that from September this year all membership applications and renewals will be made online. If you didn't receive this letter, or have any concerns about how the new system will affect you, please contact Trustee Roger Hunt at trusteessupport@malvernmu3a.org.uk or on 01684 305005 or 07469 245499

Groups Survey

Our Groups Co-ordinator, Peter Corfield, contacted Malvern u3a Group Leaders in January in order to take a snapshot of members' activities. The results were encouraging, as the survey showed that 58% of Groups had started meeting face-to-face again, either in public venues or in their own homes. The numbers may be higher now since the covid restrictions have relaxed further.

Malvern u3a Events in 2022

Here are some important dates for your diary:

Tuesday 10 May (2.00 pm): Annual Group Leaders Meeting - details to follow

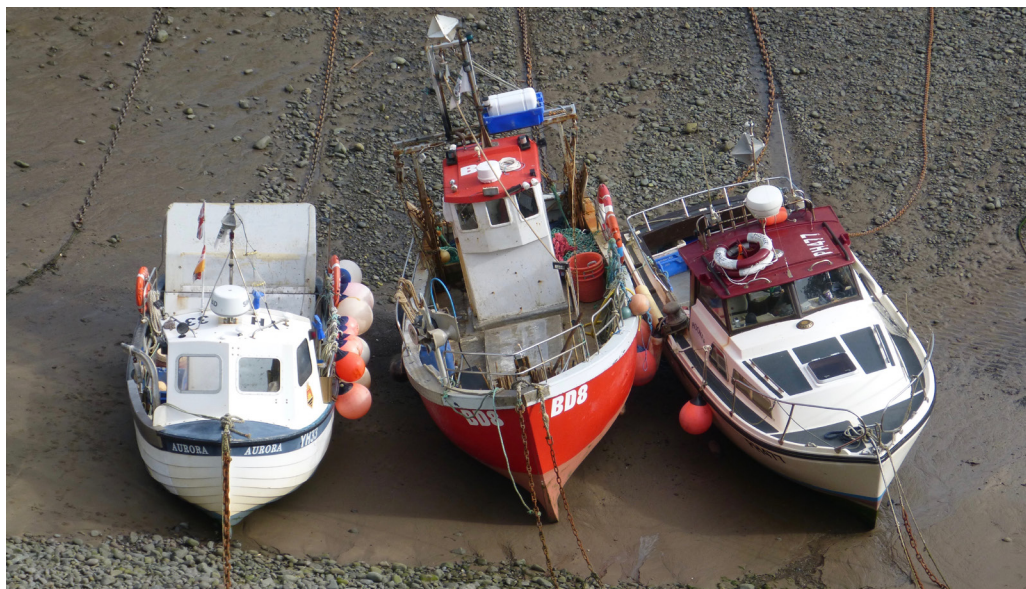
Monday 5 September (morning): Groups Fair at the Malvern Theatres

Tuesday 29 November (2.00 pm): Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be followed as usual by the Monthly Speaker's Meeting. (See the back cover of this Newsletter for more details).

Wednesday 21 September: u3a Day – to celebrate u3a's 40th anniversary.

u3a branches across the UK will be organising events during the year to mark the anniversary. More information will follow in due course.



Morris Portsmouth, Clovelly, Theme: Red, White and Blue, Camera Group

u3a Cotswold Link

Special Interest Day

This is scheduled to be held at The Pavilion in Cheltenham on Wednesday 6 July 2022. The theme for the day is *Mitigating Climate and Environmental Impacts*. Details will be available shortly at <https://u3asites.org.uk/cotswold-link/home>

u3a West Midlands

West Midlands u3a Newsletter

This monthly online Newsletter provides details of national and regional u3a events and courses available to members, as well as news from u3a branches across the West Midlands. We have set up a page for the newsletter on the Malvern u3a website and you can access it every month by following the link:: <https://malvernu3a.org.uk/wm-u3a-newsletter/>

Trust u3a

Trust u3a is an online u3a which offers the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses. Like any u3a, its activities are run by its members and was set up in 2020 to offer support to those affected by the Covid restrictions. The original intention was to create Tu3a for a limited 12 month period. However, due to the continuation of restrictions and its growing popularity (it now has over 1000 members and 80 online interest Groups) it has been decided that, from April 2022, Tu3a will become part of the Trust's overall learning provision. For more information, visit the Third Age Trust website at: www.u3a.org.uk

FROM MEMBERS



Camera Group: (Top) Joan Smith, *Round and Round*
(Bottom) Anne Portsmouth, *Blackpool Rock*

A Day in the Future

A tribute to Sir David Attenborough for all his work on the Planet's declining species and conservation.

To know what you want, only you know what that is
You are in this life on your own, your objective is to
Focus and Concentrate on A Day in the Future.

On that Day you will know it, you will regard the endeavour
and expertise with a glow of accomplishment.

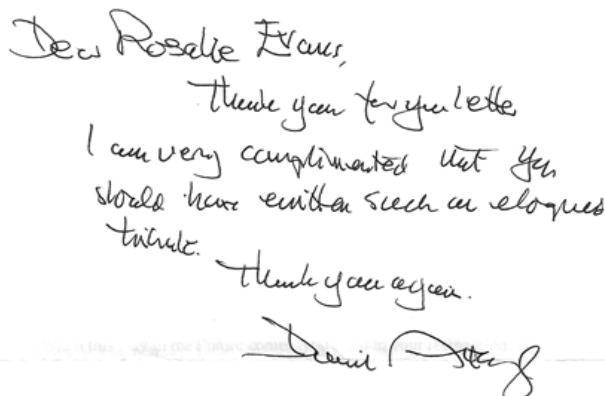
That Day will sum up what you have achieved for the protection of Wildlife
and for humanity to live on a plateau with nature rather than in a demanding
dominating position.

Through your travels, observations, broadcasts and writing you have inspired
us to pay attention to live in a more earthly and pragmatic way, and to guard
the Planet and its resources as our home.

When this Day in the Future comes, you hand in your resignation
as Senior Executive, and now 7 decades on, perhaps with some Relief for the
Responsibility in a major World Wide renowned position for Wild Animal
Welfare and with hope that the work set in place for the future, will continue
to grow and save the Planet for generations of wild life and humanity alike.

Rosalie A Evans, Creative Writing Group 1

This piece was written by Rosalie and read to her fellow Group members at their monthly Zoom meeting in March 2021. At their suggestion, she sent a copy to Sir David Attenborough himself and received this handwritten reply from him.



Dear Rosalie Evans,
Thank you for your letter.
I am very complimented that you
should have written such an eloquent
tribute.
Thank you again.
David Attenborough

Dear Rosalie Evans

Thank you for your letter. I am very complimented that you should have written such an eloquent tribute. Thank you again

David Attenborough

Geology Group

There is generally little to report from the Geology group in the winter as we follow our indoor programme of monthly lectures which began in October and completes in April. Apart from the varied list of subjects from a range of eminent visiting lecturers, the other issue of interest was our navigation from fully Zoom, through hybrid Zoom/face to face sessions and finally back to 'normal' in hall meetings which started with our meeting on 18th March. It has been interesting that those who have ventured into the hall have said how much they missed and welcomed back that human connection.

The winter months do mean, however, that members of the group have once again been involved in the quarry clearance tasks organised by the Earth Heritage Trust, working on behalf of local owners such as the local AONB and the Malvern Hills Trust. These jobs involve clearing vegetation from around the quarry and on the rock faces of selected quarries. The reason for doing this is to expose regions of geological interest for visitors/enthusiasts.

Altogether there have been about nine sessions between October last year and most recently this February covering around 17 different site locations. In addition to members of the Geology group being involved there were also volunteers from other geological groups in the region. The photos below show a selection of the work sessions.

Roger Hunt, email: rmrhunt@sky.com



Broad Down Quarry



A well-earned break!



East Malvern Fault



Dingle Quarry

Solos

Solos started in September 2021 to offer monthly meetups for people living alone to gather for companionship, social activities and interests. The group dynamic is friendly with a feeling of wellbeing that comes from bringing people together. We also offer members the opportunity to organise activities amongst themselves. In addition we hold monthly social activities. There's plenty of laughter and fun, sharing and connecting at these popular events. So far we have organised:



Tapas evening
Monthly walks
Festive social
Afternoon tea
Skittles evening
Sunday roast lunches
Valentine's lunch
Curry night
Italian evening

We have more fun events planned for the coming months.

For more information please contact the Group Leader Mary Barrett:
marybarrettis@sky.com

Walking Football

The walking football group is looking for new signings to boost its squad. It doesn't matter if you've played before, we welcome anyone (men and women) who is keen to try something new, get fit, and enjoy the camaraderie of a kickabout in a friendly environment. We meet fortnightly on Thursdays at Malvern St James School sports and leisure centre in Barnards Green Road, between 6.30 and 7.30pm. For more information give me a call, Keith Redbourn, Group Leader, on 07795 663082, or email keithredbourn@gmail.com.

Opera and Classical Music (NEW GROUP)

Come and enjoy an opera or a programme of classical music at the group leader's home in Upton upon Severn. The group will meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 2.00 p.m. and alternate between an opera and classical music with an interval for refreshments.

Members may present their own programme of classical music lasting 90 -110 minutes, plus an interval of 20 minutes, or a DVD or Blue Ray recording of an opera.

The leader has music streaming facilities of the highest sound quality for the music programme.

Booking is essential as the number of places is limited.

Contact Tom Foort on 01684 593914 or email: tomfoort@btinternet.com

Welsh Culture Group

This was our first meeting of 2022 and we were pleased to be able to welcome several new members. After a hearty rendition of the Welsh national anthem, John Bentley told us a story from his childhood of a memorable holiday in Tenby. This was followed by Elaine Tilley and Elaine Comber reading two poems in Welsh and then giving us an English translation. Georgina James amused us with explanations of “cwtch” and after the tea break Ken Harris read a poem and told us the story of Swansea Jack, lifesaving dog.



Our Eisteddfod competition this year was to write a short article about “A River in Wales” and the winner was announced as John Bentley (see photograph) who wrote about the Crafnant river in North Wales. He was crowned by Ken Harris who was our last winner in 2020.

Sue Price then compared two trips to Eisteddfodau in South Wales and the meeting ended with the group singing *Ar hyd a nos*.

Sue Price, sm.price@talktalk.net

Natural History Group

We meet on the 1st Monday of the month from 10.00-12.00. Venue: Manor Park. The group welcomes those who are new to natural history as well as members with prior interests in plant and animal life.

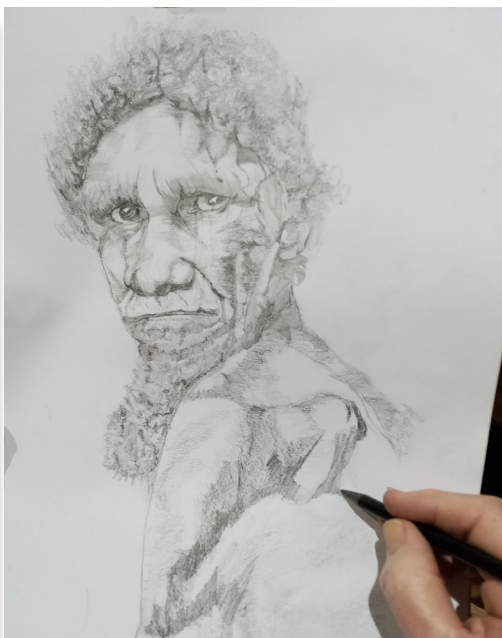
We are very practical in outlook, sharing knowledge and learning from one another. As well as our indoor meetings, sometimes with invited speakers, we have monthly field trips, and study groups.

The study groups focus on one small area over the seasons, allowing people to increase their knowledge in the field. This year (2022) one study group meets at Woodfords Meadow, between the Cube and railway line. A traditional meadow with ancient woodland edges. The second is Mill Coppice, a small ancient woodland a few miles north of North Hill.

Current interests include plant life, birds, insects, fungi and the relationships between species and habitats. If you have an interest, join us to share it. If not, come to learn from others.

For more information, contact Group Leader, Richard Newton, at richard@renewton.plus.com or on 01684 565626

Painting 2 - Samples of Members' Work



The Unknown Unknowns - (NEW GROUP)

The pandemic and chronic medical conditions, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Obesity, Diabetes and Heart Disease, place our Health Service in an invidious position: unable to match demand with supply.

In this nine month course we will begin to understand how this mismatch came about and what we can do in order to secure our own, our children's and grandchildren's health during what will be a new paradigm of limited remedial healthcare in future.

We will cover the history and science alongside the exciting results of emerging research that is delivering consistently positive outcomes for patients with chronic conditions, revealing throughout our journey many Unknown Unknowns.

This presentation should not be construed as medical advice, nor should it be substituted for medical advice from your healthcare provider. By agreeing to participate in this group, you would assume all responsibilities and risks for your lifestyle management - we cannot and will not tell anyone what to do.

The course sessions will take place at Elmslie House (Avenue Road WR14 3AY) at 3.00-4.00 pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month, starting on 6 October 2022.

For more information and to sign up for the course, please email Jim at murpcorp+UU@gmail.com

Jim Murphy created and delivered the Preventative Healthcare Programme, 'LIVE', in the early 2000s for HSBC, resulting in reduced absenteeism as staff took responsibility for their health.

More recently Jim & Joan Murphy have been accepted as ambassadors for the GP-run PHC organisation promoting preventive health via very recent research.

(Jim Murphy will be giving a talk on this topic at the Malvern u3a Monthly Meeting on Tuesday 27 September 2022.)



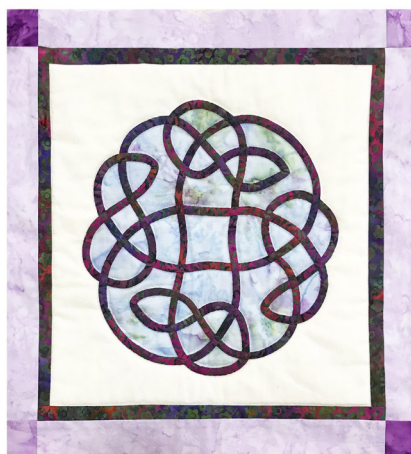
Mary Geffen, Theme: Round, Camera Group

German Beginners Plus

The German Beginners Plus classes have permanently moved to Monday mornings from Thursdays. The time - 10.30 until midday - remains the same.

For more information, please contact Ursula Howes at uschi6627@gmail.com

Patchwork and Needle Skills - Samples of Members' Work



Astronomy and Astrophysics

Chris Baddiley, Group Leader, reports: This April is the last of the astronomy and astrophysics classes for this term. We always finish before Easter and resume in September afresh.

For the last two years it has been in Zoom only. If it can run next academic year I would use the same Zoom format, as physical meetings are no longer practical for me. Without more students it is unlikely to continue anyway. The course has been very popular over a number of years, many of re-enrolments each year, but numbers have naturally been depleting.

The first half of course has been exploration of the history of astronomy, exploring the night sky, binoculars and telescope equipment, the earth's motion, seasons, Gravity and Planetary orbits, the physics of the planets, the solar system, instrumentation, the forces of nature. The second half the sun and stellar evolution, the milky way galaxy, planetary systems round other stars, and other types of galaxies, their evolution, black holes, the structure of the universe. And finally, before Easter, the nature of space time and cosmology, the evolution of the universe. The course also includes cutting edge international research.

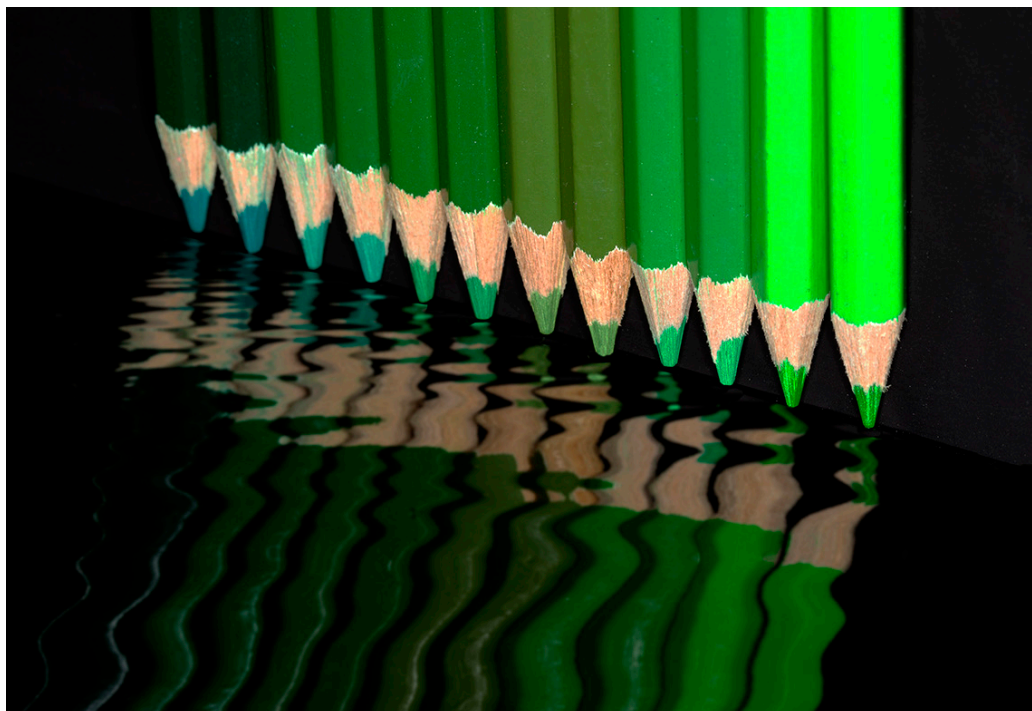


This is a screen shot of the Group class in March.

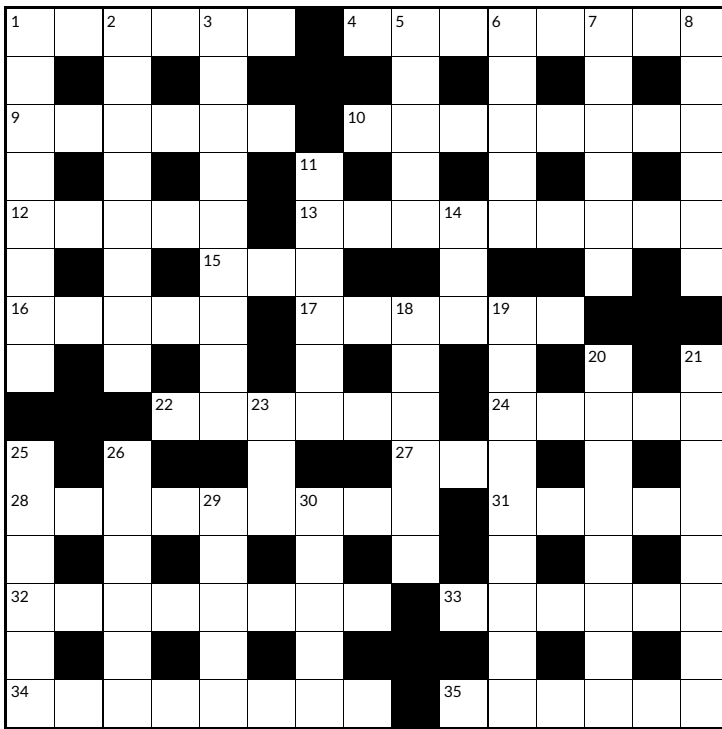
Chris is in the top right hand corner - he explains, "This shows my Mission Control office with telescopes in the background; the small ones compared with those in the observatory."

I consider the evolution of our atmosphere, global warming and the effect of life on earth and answer such questions as...are we alone?, Why are the constants of nature the values they are?, How is it that we are here and the universe exists?, Are we part of it or is it dependent on us for its existence? The geometry of space and time and the evolution of the universe. It is all done in PowerPoint slides.

New members are welcome. For more information please contact Chris at cjbaddiley@gmail.com or on 01886 880047



Camera Group: (Top) Joan Smith, Theme: *Gift*
(Bottom) Dave Roberts, Theme: *Green*



The Editors' Crossword

(a mix of 'quick' and easy cryptic clues).

Answers below

ACROSS

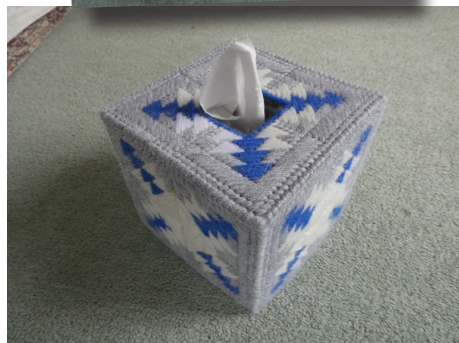
- 1 Sounds like Isaiah is making money! (6)
- 4 Can't not (anag) (8)
- 9 Volumes of liquid (6)
- 10 Jay Blades or Will Kirk? (5)
- 12 European river fish (5)
- 13 Comforted in tumultuous ruder seas (9)
- 15 Three consecutive vowels in debt (3)
- 16 Part of racy Nick is a sceptic (5)
- 17 Sailors sing of a hovel (6)
- 22 Misbehave or cause difficulties (4,2)
- 24 Horizontal palindrome (5)
- 27 Strong alkaline solution sounds untrue (3)
- 28 Plates out to start a discussion (9)
- 31 Some super things for Australian city (5)
- 32 Never imagined, even in sleep! (8)
- 33 Arachnid silken construction (6)
- 34 Tide returns in start of endless expedition to hurry things along (8)
- 35 like Beckham? (4,2)

DOWN

- 1 Government affairs (8)
- 2 Not incoming (8)
- 3 An answer that is exactly the same (9)
- 5 A work of Carmen or Tosca (5)
- 6 Chums return before the beginning of summer for strikes (5)
- 7 To desiccate in the outdoors (3,3)
- 8 Torrent of abuse (6)
- 11 Reliable prisoner with special privileges (6)
- 14 Sally is naughty initially (3)
- 18 One of these keeps the doctor away! (6)
- 19 Bell's communication apparatus (9)
- 20 Disturbed era vowed to be intimidated (8)
- 21 26 letters, or the first 1¾ of the Greek version? (8)
- 23 Everything is a headless sphere (3)
- 25 The other half! (6)
- 26 Exhausted! (4,2)
- 29 Turn over (5)
- 30 Concede allowing access? (5)

Across: 1.Profit 4.Constant 9.Litres 10.Repairs 12.Trout 13.Reassured 14.IOU 16.Cynic 17.Shanty 22.Play Up 24.Level 27.Lye 28.Postulate 31.Perth 32.Undreamt 33.Cobweb 34.Expedite 35.Bend It
Down: 1.Politics 2.Outgoing 3.Identical 5.Opera 6.Slaps 7.Air Dry 8.Tirade 11.Trusty 14.Sin 18.Apples 19.Telephone 20.Overawed 21.Alphabet 23.All 25.Spouse 26.Used Up 29.Upend 30.Admit

Handicrafts 2 - Samples of Members' Work



Poetry Please 1



Many members will already know that Betty Collings died on Boxing Day 2021 at the age of 90. She will be remembered with great affection by all who knew her. Poetry was a great love of hers, and she was responsible for proposing it as an interest group for Malvern u3a - hence "Poetry Please". Incidentally, she never missed listening to the programme of that name on Radio 4.

As a new u3a member over 12 years ago, I met Betty when I enquired about joining her group which at that time she held in her own home. She was most apologetic when she confessed that she only had three extra chairs and I would have to go on a waiting list! In time the group expanded and meetings were held in various venues around Malvern, eventually ending up at The Cube.

Several years ago nearly 30 members turned up for the first meeting of the new academic year and had to relocate to the Cube theatre for that day. As a result, Betty arranged for two Poetry Please groups to be formed - and so it remains.

Betty's meetings were always very informal and great fun; her sense of humour was infectious. It was always a source of amusement that for some reason she professed to dislike intensely the poetry of Christina Rossetti and William Wordsworth! Her favourite poem was "Invictus" by W.E. Henley which she could recite by heart and occasionally did.

I stepped into Betty's shoes as group leader of Poetry Please 1 in September 2016, and in spite of failing eyesight, she continued to attend for the next two years.

In 1968, Betty was the model for "The Hour Glass" painted by Victor Moody who at that time was Headmaster of Malvern School of Art, with whom she enjoyed friendship and that of his daughter, Catherine.

Betty was always proud to be a "Brummie". She was not ashamed of living without a television or a computer and derived great pleasure from reading and listening to the radio. She was ever grateful to her son and daughter-in-law for their love and support. Farewell Betty

Mary-Rose Hughes

Monthly Meetings

All talks take place at The Cube in Malvern. starting at 2.30 pm on the last Tuesday of each month (except August and December).

Speakers and Topics

26 April *The Challenges That Visually Impaired People Face* with Shirley Sheridan - "My story begins with an explanation of my sight loss. I will then go on to describe the effect it had on me and then the help I received from Sight Concern to regain my independence. I demonstrate various aids and encourage volunteers to wear a blindfold and perform simple tasks so the audience can appreciate better the daily challenges that visually impaired people face."

31 May *Reflections: the career highs, lows, achievements and regrets of a former Chief Constable* with Paul West QPM DL - Paul led West Mercia Police between 2003 and 2011, thus becoming the longest-serving Chief Constable in the force's history. He will highlight many career events and milestones along the way and comment on issues such as the extent to which the introduction of politics into policing has led to true public accountability.

28 June *Tax, Care and the New Guy* with Nickie Gardiner - The speaker will cover the rules of inheritance tax and the recent changes to it and also the topic of Care and the different options there are in planning and dealing with this. Then there is the New Guy! What happens if there is a re-marriage and you want to protect your assets to ensure they are left in the hands of those you have chosen to benefit. This is known as Sideways Disinheritance. The speaker will also cover the topic of Lasting Powers of Attorney and explain the different types and their importance.

26 July *Sentenced to Beyond the Seas* with David Clark - The story of eight Worcestershire Women sentenced to death or transportation in the 1780's who all ended up on the first fleet to Australia and what became of them. Only one ever offended again, another, together with her husband, became well respected in the community. One returned to England a rich woman and another became the progenitor of the largest living family group in Australia today.

27 September *Preventative Healthcare* with Jim Murphy - Chronic medical conditions, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Obesity, Diabetes and Heart Disease, place our Health Service in an invidious position; unable to match demand with supply. We are not alone - it is a modern international phenomenon. This presentation explains the curious and confounding origins of this mismatch and reaches back into the 19th century to evidence how the objectives of several industries have conspired independently in producing this result. It will cover the history and science alongside the exciting results emerging from research that is delivering consistently positive outcomes for patients.



Gwen Evans, *Beach Huts at Bournemouth*, Camera Group

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

Monday 12 September 2022