



NEWSLETTER



Westonbirt
Photograph courtesy of
Dave Garmont

November 2017

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Monthly Meetings are held at the Ellendune Centre,
Wroughton beginning at 2.15pm unless otherwise advised.

Monday 13th November 2017

Safety for Seniors—Speaker : Ashley Jones

This presentation is aimed at older adult audiences and explores the extent of the ageing population and some of the safety challenges faced by elders in society today. With a strong focus on empowerment through education, the presentation explores the dangers of doorstep crime and telephone, mail and internet (e-mail) deception-type scams. Ashley will offer tips and advice on staying safe - as well as signposting seniors to some other useful resources.

Monday, 11 December 2017

Christmas Entertainment with
the U3UKES and U3A Guitar Groups

U3ukes is based at Eastcott Community Centre, Swindon. We meet fortnightly from 10am until 12 noon and we play and sing songs that take our fancy, pop, standards, folk or country. We try to extend our abilities with the ukulele by including a mini workshop during each session; this is kept brief and usually entails a bit of home practice. We have a solo spot for anyone who wishes to perform their skills to the group. We also have a performing group who are prepared to give time to playing and singing at various venues around Swindon.

U3A Guitar is also based at Eastcott Community Centre and meets fortnightly from 2pm until 5pm. The first hour is dedicated to beginners who work their way through basics such as musical notation, note location on the guitar, strumming and playing simple tunes by sight reading the music. The second part of the meeting 3pm until 5pm is based on extending guitar knowledge in small groups, exploring different methods of playing guitar, working and developing a song within that group learning different parts of the tune. Finally, playing songs from a group songbook, is a mixed ability group, who share their acquired knowledge of guitar.



Monthly Meeting 9th October 2017
Amelia Shaw talked about **The Beanstalk Charity**

Amelia explained that, due to busy lives, families aren't talking as much as they used to, that children spend a long time on electronic devices, meal times aren't held around a table but snacks are snatched as and when or dinner is eaten in front of the television. Young children are not getting exposed to words, language and vocabulary.

Teachers are doing their very best but they have a full and very structured curriculum and work in groups with the children on set books. Again, in the class there's very little time for stories and most especially stories that are individualised to the child's interests.

Amelia got us to talk to each other about our early memories of books that we had read to us or had read ourselves to illustrate how important it is for children to experience the joy of reading.

We were told about young children from under privileged backgrounds who had already been helped but there was a great need for more children to receive this help.

Beanstalk recruits, trains and supports volunteers to provide consistent one-to-one support to children aged from 3-13 who are struggling with their reading and confidence. They emphasise reading for pleasure. A trained reading helper works one-to-one with 3 children for 30 minutes twice a week. They bring books into the school and encourage children to select their next reading books.

So far, Beanstalks trained reading helpers have supported and encouraged over 150,000 children in schools in England. Last year their 3,000 reading helpers supported 11,000 children and they've got ambitious plans to grow so by 2021 they aim to help 30,000 children.

Amelia asked for our help by volunteering to become reading helpers and a great deal of interest was shown by members at the meeting.

If you want to know more about the work of Beanstalk please visit their website: www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk where you'll find many more examples of their work.

Chairman's Report for 2016/2017 presented at the AGM

A very busy year saw membership increase to 1,928 by the year end, an increase of over 5% on the previous year. Swindon U3A is now one of the largest U3As in the UK.

This makes for some challenging work for your Management Committee and I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their efforts this year. Apart from our monthly Committee meetings, we have undertaken a Saturday Awayday to give quality time to important development issues and will be repeating this exercise later this October. Then there is the annual Group Organisers' meeting, New Members meeting and of course, Freshers' Fair, all taking up Saturdays.

Steve Ball stood down as Health & Safety Officer last December but we are fortunate to have the services of Dave Maggs as his successor. Liz Bartlett also stood down as New Members' Representative in June to devote her time to her ailing husband Harry, a long serving member of the Aviation Group and founder and editor of their newsletter. Harry recently passed away and I and other members of the Committee attended the funeral service. Our thanks to both Steve and Liz for their commitment. We are grateful to Adele Merrison for stepping up as New Members' Representative and for organising the meeting this Saturday at the Lawns Community Centre from 10am to 12 noon. The effective operation of Swindon U3A depends on many other members who volunteer their time and commitment as Group Organisers, Newsletter distributors, Office volunteers and Organisers of the speakers for the monthly meetings here at Ellendune. Some of the larger Groups have their own committees, newsletter editors, and so on. To all of them, we say a very big thank you.

This year has not been without its problems. Some of these have centred around personality issues within larger Groups and faulty equipment including audio equipment and the mats for short mat bowls and issues with some of the accommodation we hire for Groups. The most demanding problems, especially for our Webmaster Alex Cranswick, have been with the operation of SUCAS and the ongoing electronic distribution of emails, the Newsletter and the What's On. Alex has managed the improvements made with seemingly tireless patience. In a world where most of us find IT issues difficult to face, he has done a sterling job.

We are a thriving organisation, part of a national and international movement which offers retired and part-time people the opportunity to feel they have a continuing, active place in society. By joining in, we make new friends, achieve new ambitions, feel pride in our achievements, and share a mutually caring role in an increasingly ageing society. To paraphrase the famous wartime appeals poster, our country needs US!

But there are still challenges. Effective operation requires good succession planning so that Groups continue when an Organiser steps down. Joining the U3A is not just about enjoying one or more Group activities. Please be ready to volunteer to help and support; within your Groups or with office administration at our Gorse Hill office or making the tea at the monthly meetings. Thank you!

John Williams

Have you renewed your membership?

It is sometimes easy to forget something that only comes up once a year. Please check to see if you have renewed your membership by asking your group organiser. Members who have not renewed by the 1st November 2017 are no longer eligible to take part in U3A activities until they have completed an application form and paid their membership fee for the year.

Swindon U3A Dance Orchestra

"The song has ended but the melody lingers on."

It is with sadness that I must tell you one of the longest running activities organised by a Swindon U3A group is no longer viable. For almost a quarter of a century the Dance Orchestra has been promoting monthly afternoon tea dances, firstly at Ellendune and latterly at Gorse Hill. At the height of our popularity attendances were of the order of eighty but at our last dance there were more band members than dancers, clearly an unsatisfactory situation.

The main reason for the decline in attendance is not too difficult to find - it is age related. We have been asking everyone to dance in "The Old Fashioned Way" in which we tried to rekindle some of the atmosphere of the late 1940's and 1950's when the popular music for dancing was played by big bands. Many who attended our dances had spent their formative years in dance halls and some formed lasting relationships from a first meeting on the dance floor. There are no original members of the dance orchestra still playing with us and it is the same for our dancers. I occasionally meet some of those who supported our dances over the years and are still around; I usually get an apology from them for not attending our dances now but the state of their health means that taking to the dance floor for them is a thing of the past.

We had three objectives for the tea dance; firstly, to give the group a purpose, secondly, to promote a social function mainly for OAPs at a reasonable cost and thirdly, since 2003, to raise money for local charities. With respect to item three, over the years, we have donated a gross sum in the order of £6,000 shared between various local charities.

Recently much publicity has been given to the problems of loneliness for many elderly people and we have played concerts at Penhill and Toothill organised by local residents. We have been aided by volunteers who helped with mobility and catering for events that enabled them to socialise. More of these concerts are planned for the autumn and we would be interested to hear from any other group that would be able to join in with such ventures.

Over the years we have played for many other functions and hope to continue with public performances. In a world dominated with "canned music" the dance orchestra is determined in its efforts to **keep music alive**.

George Connell



Pétanque in Swindon U3A

It does not seem like twenty years ago when I was at the Freshers' Fair looking for new members to create a pétanque group at Broome Manor. There was much interest and after a few weeks of play and coaching a new group was set up to play on Thursdays and group organisers were nominated. As time went on, 'Pétanque at Broome Manor' expanded to more groups on other days.

However, the original Swindon U3A pétanque group was formed at St. Michaels Hall in Highworth on a terrain constructed by Highworth Lions Club. They hoped to attract competition from Highworth's twin town of Pontorson in France but it turned out that not many visitors from Pontorson played pétanque. Swindon U3A made use of the facilities on Fridays but soon needed to expand to Thursdays to cope with the numbers wishing to play. Over the years, the terrain has been enlarged by the U3A and can now accommodate 24 players at a time. Because of the increasing numbers wishing to play, pétanque was then started at Broome Manor and now there are groups playing there on four days a week.

In a strip designed by the late Jack Maddison, Highworth Pétanque has over the years, played in leagues, tournaments and friendlies against other U3A's with varying degrees of success. Sometimes, we have won trophies and even prize money. We have played at most Warner's Hotels and competed as far away as Falmouth.

But what of the future? Other terrains have been looked at for future expansion, including Haydon Wick Bowls Club and at Lydiard Park, but without success. Perhaps the next generation of Swindon U3A members will follow our lead and expand the popularity of pétanque ever wider. Sadly, we no longer have any of our founder members with us but we do have several nonagenarians still playing regularly. It was only recently that our centenarian sadly passed away but only after playing past her century. She was a remarkable player right to the end.

Gordon Younghusband



Cultural and Social History Group

For their last meeting of the Summer Session, the Cultural and Social History Group were joined by Chairman John Williams, Media and Publicity representative, Martin Preston and guests from other groups to listen to their guest speaker.

Mr Atiff Ghafar of the Al Habib Mosque had been invited to visit the group following the Mosque's involvement in the nationwide Peace Bus campaign and gave an illustrated talk on the History of Islam. His talk clearly established the links between the Islamic Religion and early Christianity and began by establishing the Prophet Mohammed's descent from Abraham. We were given an outline of his early life and a picture of the culture of Mecca prior to his birth. It became clear throughout his talk that there were many parallels between the early Christians in the Middle East and the life of Mohammed including Angels visiting Mohammed and his early life as a shepherd. Mr Ghafar outlined how, following a revelation to Mohammed, the faith begins to spread through an idolatrous people and how Mohammed's life was frequently threatened and the number of times he had to flee persecution.

The talk ended with a quick explanation of the difference between Sunni and Shia Muslims. Islam is a religion of peace as emphasised by the Peace Bus Campaign launched by the Islamic Community in Great Britain following the recent terrorist attacks. The bus promotes the Community of Islam as one which wants peace and reaches out to everyone in a spirit of co-existence. Certainly Mr Ghafar's visit illustrated that there is more that unites us than divides us. Mr Ghafar patiently answered about fifteen minutes of close questioning before joining members of the group for more informal chat and a welcome cup of tea.

The Cultural and Social History Group meets on the first and third Monday of every month at Toothill Church, West Swindon. Our theme for the coming year is 'Discovery and Change'.

Enquiries to [John Edgerton](#) (please click on his name)



GROUP NEWS

A Message from your Groups Coordinator

Following a very busy Freshers' Fair, a number of new groups are already up and running including: - Money Matters; Beginners Ukulele 3; Table Tennis 3; Art Appreciation. Details of these groups are now available on the website. We also hope to set up further new groups – so if your name is on a waiting list for Quizzing; French; British History; Travel Study; Walking – please bear with us, we will be in touch.

If you think you may be interested in any of the following: Chess; Beginners Bridge; Armchair Travel; Book Club – then please get in touch as we have a small level of interest in each of these.

The final appeal is for anyone within our membership who has expertise in Exercise or Chair Aerobics and is interested in running a group. Please get in touch by using the link below.

[Gill McKinnon](#) (please use this link)

Aviation Group

On 1st September at Gorse Hill Community Centre the organisers of the Aviation Group changed when the organiser Alan Smith handed over the reins to his deputy Graham Price. Graham is pictured presenting Alan with an appropriate gift of thanks for his four years of service. At the same meeting Ken Ivie was elected as Graham's deputy.



Dinner Party Group

My partner and I love to cook and share with friends. We'd like to meet more people who would enjoy participating in monthly dinner parties. Maximum 8 at each dinner party although more can join the group. With 16 members, we will have 2 parties per month. Dinners are hosted at group members homes. Each member must be happy to host a dinner party every 4 months.

[Shelagh Gough](#) (please use this link)

Merribells BBQ

How lucky we were, after the rain and wind of the past few weeks, that the sun came out and we were able to enjoy ringing outside. There were a few problems with the wind blowing the music all over the place but we managed. Glenys nearly lost her voice "counting" and a few bar calls by Sheila "tested" the Ringers concentration!! In all the BBQ was enjoyed by eighteen members of the 'A' and 'B' groups in the lovely garden of our hosts Francis and Julia Hobbs.

We now look forward to the new season in September and the celebration events of the 50th Anniversary of the HRGB in October

Sheila Walker



Friday Walking Group

The Friday Walking group invites you to join them for their Autumn Walk on Friday 13th October. The walk is from Wareham to the National Trust Car park at Corfe Castle. This is approximately six miles along the Purbeck Way. There is a special event at the Swanage Steam Railway and if anyone would like to join us and spend the day there we can deviate and drop you there.

Pick up time will be 8.30am (prompt) at the bus stop opposite Evelyn Street Bridge in Marlborough Road. We should be back in Swindon by approximately 5pm.

Cost will depend on numbers coming but we ask for a deposit of £10. Any cheques are to be made payable to Swindon U3A.

For more information or if you wish to join us, contact by clicking on this link [Tony Bettley](#)

Flower Arranging Group

We aim to enhance our skills using different approaches and looking at modern flower arranging techniques. The session always starts with a practical demonstration from our group organiser Margaret New. Then she is on hand to offer tips, advice and encouragement as the morning's arrangements progress.

This new term has a full and varied programme which includes pew ends, arrangements using five flowers, autumn and Christmas ideas and we will learn leaf manipulation. Themes through spring and into early summer take the group up to the 2018 summer break. Please click on the name below to make contact.

[Jackie Pile](#)

Memory—Use it or Lose it

Living Longer, Living Well

This year's course is fully booked but feel free to enquire about courses for next year. If you are interested please contact [Nicola Nowak](#) for more information.

Pilates on Fridays

Pilates meets every Friday at the Western Community Centre, Somerset Road, Swindon, SN2 1NF from 9.45am until 10.45am, starting on 22nd September. Our aim is to improve relaxation techniques and gain co-ordination, improve posture and efficiency of breathing, improve overall muscle strength and flexibility.

The professional tutor is Lisa Carpenter.

You would need your own yoga/Pilates mat and comfortable clothes that allow you to stretch.

The cost is £18 payable in advance per six week cycle.

[Jane Caudwell, Organiser](#) (Click on her name to make an enquiry)

This group was not featured in the Year Book

PROPOSED NEW GROUP

Money Matters

I am interested in forming a new group with the aim of developing a better understanding about the financial implications of current affairs. We select and discuss topics that are of interest with each member taking away a topic for further research. Then we share our findings in the next meeting. I would propose that the group meets once a month initially for about 60 to 90 minutes with the time slot to be agreed by all interested members. The number of members will dictate whether we can use a "funded" venue or not. Again, the venue can be agreed by the members. Each meeting will consist of two parts, sharing information and discussion of topics agreed from the previous meeting, then selection of topics for the next meeting. No financial training or knowledge is needed and we will not get too technical either. All you need is an interest in learning together by participation in research and discussion.

Examples of possible subjects for discussion:

Can we truly have a cashless society

The impact of automation and AI

What is wrong with the housing market

Meetings are every 4 weeks on Wednesday afternoon 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Next meeting 22nd November at Toothill Community Centre, Dunwich Drive SN5 8DH. Served by bus number 10.

If you are interested or want to know more, please contact [Tina Reed](#) by clicking her name.

VISITS AND OUTINGS

Good Music in Birmingham

Anyone remember the BBC's "The Old Grey Whistle Test" with 'Whispering' Bob Harris?

Everyone likes a good tune and the Czech composer Antonin Dvorak was a real master of tuneful composing.

The U3A Concert-Goers' Group travelled to Birmingham's Symphony Hall on 24 May and enjoyed a programme featuring Mozart Symphony No 31, Dvorak's popular Cello Concerto and Schumann's Symphony No1 "Spring". The Hall has superb acoustics and after the likeable Mozart Symphony we relished the solo cello of Daniel Mueller-Schott singing out with fine tone. He played with technical brilliance and great energy, almost attacking some passages and one member commented that she had heard more sensitive readings of the slow lyrical passages for the solo instrument. Overall though a fine performance.

Everyone enjoyed the Schumann Spring Symphony with its colouration and use of all the wind instruments.

We had a flawless coach trip, and our hearty thanks go to Nina Stimson, assisted by Berwyn Jones, for organising this.

Robin Clegg

Military History Visit to The Tank Museum, Bovington

On a very wet Thursday morning 34 members and friends of the Military History Group set off on the long winding road to visit the Tank Museum at Bovington in Dorset. The rain, which continued for the entire journey and in fact did not let up throughout the day, did not dampen our spirits and we arrived at Bovington mid morning.

First port of call was the cafe for a cup of tea/coffee before we split up to explore the huge collection of armoured vehicles on display. With only one or two vehicles on display outside, almost the entire collection is exhibited under cover. The collection tells the story of the development of the tank from its first appearance during WW1 right up to the very modern all terrain vehicles used by the army in Afghanistan.

The very first tank named by the troops as 'Little Willie' seemed to be more dangerous to the crew rather than the enemy. A large number of allied tanks from WW2 are in the collection including a Russian T34.

As you negotiate the museum you come across a comprehensive collection of WW2 German army tanks and in evidence is the famous 'Tiger Tank' which brought fear and dread to both allied infantryman and tank commanders. Also on show is the Sherman tank used in the recent film 'Fury' starring Brad Pitt.

Most of the group had lunch or a light snack in the very comfortable and reasonably priced cafe. After lunch some people took advantage of the free guided tours provided by the museum.

After a very enjoyable but tiring day we departed the museum at 4pm arriving in Swindon around 6.40pm.

Ken Ivie

**Travel Group B and D
trip to
Tyntesfield House and Oakham Treasures
Tuesday 21st November 2017**

Departures times and pick up points:

Highworth time to be arranged.

8.20am Chapel Street

8.30am Bus Station

8.40am Downsview Road

9.00am Ashington Way

Arrive Tyntesfield 10.30am to visit the House

Leave Tyntesfield 1.15pm

Arrive Oakham Treasures 1.30pm

Leave Oakham 4.30pm

Cost £19.50 for National Trust Members

Non NT members £19.50 plus entrance to house.

Contact [Sue Williams](#) (Click her name)

Travel Group J

visit to

Bletchley Park

Thursday 30th November 2017

Bletchley Park was the central site for British code breakers during WW2. It housed the government code and cipher school which regularly broke the codes of the Axis Powers. It has been said that the intelligence produced at Bletchley Park shortened the war by two years. There are catering facilities on site where hot meals or light snacks can be purchased.

Departure times and pick-up points:

8.30am Ellendune Centre Wroughton
8.40am Marriott Roundabout, Pipers Way
8.45am Coate Water
4.00pm Depart for Swindon

Cost £28 per person which includes coach, gratuities and entry to museum.

All members and friends welcome. Please click on this link to make an enquiry.

[Ken Ivie](#)

Swindon Film Society

for the best in World Cinema

Autumn/Winter 2017 Programme at The Arts Centre

4 October	Clash (Egypt)
18 October	The Ghost and Mrs Muir (USA)
1 November	The Black Hen (Nepal)
22 November	Neruda (Chile)
6 December	The Young Offenders (Ireland)

Films start at 7.45 pm

Admission: SFS members £7.00/£6.00, Guests £9.00

For full details visit our website: www.swindonfilm.org.uk

Cut off dates

The cut off date for the December What's On and for the December Newsletter is 3rd November 2017.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed items for the Newsletter. They are very welcome and much appreciated **but** I would like to encourage others to submit articles as well. Items on visits, outings, happenings in groups, walking adventures, book reviews from the reading groups and how the language groups get on when on holiday overseas using their new found skills are all welcome. Have a favourite recipe or poem, these would be appreciated too. Help your fellow members keep up to date and entertained by contributing to your magazine.

Contributions should be sent to newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk

Editor

November Night

Adelaid Crapsey

Listen . .

With faint dry sound,

Like steps of passing ghosts,

The leaves, frost crisp'd, break from the trees

And fall.

Adelaid Crapsey was an American poet who invented a verse form called "cinquain" consisting of two, four, six, eight and two syllables or accents as can be seen in this example. She was a great admirer of Japanese verse forms. Sadly she only lived a short life from 1878 to 1914 and was not well published in her lifetime.

Ratatouille Recipe – Ideal for using those autumn vegetables

Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 Large onions
- 2 Cloves garlic
- 1 Large courgette
- 2 Peppers (red or yellow)
- 1 Aubergine
- 4 Largish ripe tomatoes
- 500gm Carton of Passata
- Salt & Pepper
- 1 Dessert spoon mixed dried herbs
- 2 Teaspoons Sugar



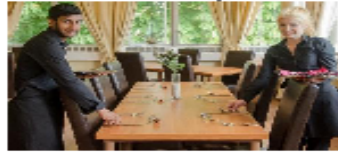
Method

Peel and coarsely chop the onions and crush the garlic. Put the oil in a large saucepan and heat over a medium heat. Add the onions and garlic to the oil and stir. Let them cook for a few minutes while you chop the courgettes into pieces about 1cm cubed. Add these and stir. Repeat for the peppers and aubergine. De-core the tomatoes and chop and add. Allow to cook down for 5 mins before adding the passata. Stir well and add the herbs, seasoning and sugar (reduces acidity of the tomatoes).

Turn down the heat to very low and cook with a lid on for a minimum of 1 hour stirring from time to time. If there is too much liquid cook more rapidly with the lid off for a few minutes at the end.

This will serve 6 as a vegetable accompaniment to meat or fish but is delicious on its own with some crusty bread.

Bob Carvey



The Restaurant



Swindon College Training Restaurant

Lunch

Tuesday – Friday seating 12 – 12.30pm

Dinner

Thursday seating 6.30 – 7pm

3 courses £12.50 – 2 courses £10.50

Themed Events and 7 course Gourmet Dinners

The training restaurant is open for bookings during term time and offers fantastic value for money. Superb, freshly prepared meals are served at lunch and dinner, using locally sourced ingredients wherever possible. All preparation and service is carried out by supervised students training for a career in the industry



Christmas Meals

We are now taking booking for our popular Christmas lunches and dinners. We can cater for groups up to 50 for details speak to Faith Rostron.

**For further details or to make a booking call: 01793 498244
or email: faithrostron@swindon.ac.uk**

List of Email Addresses

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Portable appliance testing (PAT)	pat@swindonu3a.org.uk

The Editor reserves the right to amend or abbreviate any entries submitted. We should also like to point out that any views expressed are not necessarily those of the organisation or of the Editor.

Swindon U3A

What's On

Welcome to the monthly What's On information sheet of future events

November

Monday 13th November

Monthly meeting at the Ellendune Centre at 2.15pm includes a Senior Safety Presentation by a member of Senior Citizen Liaison Team (SCLT). This presentation is aimed at older adult audiences and explores the extent of the ageing population and some of the safety challenges faced by elders in society today. With a strong focus on empowerment through education, the presentation explores the dangers of doorstep crime and telephone, mail and internet (e-mail) deception-type scams. Tips and advice on staying safe - as well as signposting seniors to some other useful resources.

Friday 3rd November

Cut-off date This is the cut-off date for sending in events to be included in the December Newsletter and What's On

Thursday 9th November

U3A Dance Orchestra present an Afternoon of Music at Toothill Community Centre 2pm – 4pm. Aimed at anyone that would enjoy listening to or dancing to a 16-piece orchestra. Single people extremely welcome. No need to dance just enjoy the social atmosphere. Cost £2 entry, 50p refreshments. No need to book. Contact Jan for further information on 07884392879

Friday 24th November

Concert Goers Group invite you to the Wiltshire Music Centre, Bradford on Avon for a performance by the Italian string quartet Quartetto de Cremona at 7.30pm (pre-concert talk at 6.30pm) established as one of the most exciting chamber ensembles on the international stage. Cost £27.50 (ticket, coach and driver's gratuity). Contact [Nina Stimson](#) by clicking on her name.

[Thames Valley U3A Network programme includes](#)

23rd November - TVN workshop on "Speakers & Speaking" at Benson Parish Hall, Benson, Oxon. Day is free including lunch but must be booked in advance. See website for Flyer or contact our U3A Office <http://www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk/>

[National U3A Educational Events](#)

Setting the Scene at the National Portrait Gallery on 14th November 2017 and multiple dates in December there is a Christmas Concert with Brandenburg Singers at the Queens Chapel of the Savoy. See website <https://u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events> or contact our U3A Office for further information.

Thurs 30th November

Travel Group J visit to Bletchley Park, the central site for British Codebreakers during WW2. Cost £28 per person. All members and friends welcome. Further Details are in the October Newsletter or Contact [Ken Ivie](#)

December

Tuesday 5th December

Travel Study Group C&G visit to Ludlow on "Tinsel Tuesday" with plenty of time to explore. There will be a Traditional Christmas Gift Market that specialises in local artisan and craft made items, with musical entertainment throughout the day.

Departure times and pickup points: -

8.00am Ashington Way, West Swindon

8.20am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

8.40am Outside Matalan, Greenbridge

4.30pm (approx.) Depart for Swindon

Approximate cost £17 per person, including coach and driver's gratuity. All members are welcome. Contact [Bill Mead](#) by clicking on his name. Refunds are not made after 48 hours prior to trip.

Further Ahead

Thursday 22nd February 2018

Travel Group J visit to Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Depart Ellendune Centre 8.30am, Pipers Way bus stop 8.45am, Coate Water Garage lay by 8.55am.

Arrive at National Army Museum in time for coffee. Time to explore the recently refurbished museum or visit the nearby Chelsea Physic Garden or explore Chelsea Embankment and Gardens. Lunch available at Army Museum before meeting at the Royal Hospital next door at 1.30pm for guided tours by the Chelsea Pensioners.

Depart for Swindon from the Hospital at 4.00pm. Cost approx. £28 to include coach, driver's gratuity and guided tours.

Contact [Barbara & Peter Davidson](#)

Thursday 31st May 2018

Theatregoers Group visit to the musical Hairspray at the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham. A 2.00pm matinee performance of this feel-good show. Cost £49 including transport. If we have a full coach there will be a refund on the day. If you would like to reserve a place click on the name to make contact [Cherry Warr](#) . Payment is needed by February 2018 but cheques are accepted dated 1st February made payable to Swindon U3A. They will be banked in February.

Pick-ups will be between 10.00 and 11.00am and we should arrive back in Swindon between 5.00 and 6.00pm. Pick up points will be notified nearer the time but will include the bus station. Transport will be Barnes Coaches.

Monthly Dinner Parties My partner and I love to cook and share with friends. We'd like to meet more people who would enjoy participating in monthly dinner parties. Maximum 8 at each dinner party although more can join the group. With 16 members, we will have 2 parties per month. Dinners are hosted at group members homes. Each member must be happy to host dinner party every 4 months. Contact [Shelagh Gough](#) if you are interested and with sufficient interest we can form a U3A Group

Groups Sub-Committee is looking for anyone interested in helping support this sub-committee in its work. Please contact Group Coordinator [Gill McKinnon](#) . Assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Swindon College Training Restaurant invite bookings for Lunch, Tuesday to Friday, or Dinner on Thursday. Both in term time. Booking for popular Christmas lunches and dinners for groups up to 50 are also available. See October Newsletter for costs and further details or contact Faith Rostron, Tel. 498244 or email: faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk

Podcasts of what has been broadcast so far by our U3A Groups on Swindon 105.5 Community Radio are now available to all members on the home page of the Swindon U3A website - have a listen.

Line Dance Social in support of the Great Western Hospital Brighter Futures Radiotherapy Appeal is to take place at Liden Community Centre on 8th December 7.30pm – 10.30pm. Cost £5 dancers, £2.50 non- dancers. Raffle Prizes welcome.

"It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare,
it is because we do not dare
that things are difficult"

Seneca, Roman Stoic Philosopher