



# Newsletter



Photograph by  
David Garmont

January 2018

## Monthly Meetings

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

**8th January 2018**

### **“My Life as an Auctioneer and how to spot Fakes” by Gordon Brockman**

Gordon is an Auctioneer and Valuer at the Chippenham & Berkshire Auction Rooms and is also kept busy on the Charity Auction Circuit. He's appeared in episodes of the 'Antiques Road Trip' and 'Put Your Money Where Your Mouth is...' Clearly no stranger to fame. (This talk may not be all it seems!)

**12th February 2018**

### **John Farrow talks about “The Cravens and Ashdown House”**

John was a Government research chemist before joining one of the Research Councils in Swindon in the late 1970s. When he retired, he went on a Swindon College tour guide training course and is now a National Trust guide at Ashdown House and Avebury stone circle and Manor House. He also joined the Swindon Branch of the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and has been Branch Secretary for most of the period since. He has helped to maintain and restore the Canal at Royal Wootton Bassett and has given talks about the Canal and a variety of other topics.

### **“The Cravens and Ashdown House”**

For the last ten years, John has been a National Trust guide at Ashdown House which stands in woods between Ashbury and Lambourn, 8 miles east of Swindon. It was built as a hunting lodge in the 1660s by William Craven reputedly to enable his close friend Elizabeth, sister of Charles 1, (known as the Winter Queen), to get away from the plague in London. John will give background to the Craven family and give pictorial descriptions of the House and the people associated with it.

**Monthly Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017**  
**Ash Jones (Senior Citizens Liaison Team)**

talked about

**Safety for Seniors**

Our speaker works as a Detective Constable for Avon & Somerset Police but was speaking to us as a volunteer from the Senior Citizens Liaison Team, a charity that provides opportunities for older adults to benefit from crime prevention advice, victim aftercare services and social inclusion.

He made the point that due to better standards of living and healthcare we are all living much longer. In 1910 there were 100 people living beyond 100 years but by 2016 this had increased to 15,000 with more than ½ million over the age of 90. At a talk he had given the previous week in Burnham-on-Sea he had spoken with an undertaker who pointed out to him that 40 years ago he buried 1 person a year who was over 100 but in the previous week alone he had buried 3 people over 100.

Ash told us that fraud is a hidden crime and accounts for £30-40 billion per year which is more than all other crimes put together. Much of this money goes to finance more crime. We can be affected by fraud in 4 ways; doorstep crime, telephone, internet and postal scams.

Doorstep crime is often committed by a team of 2, one of whom appears to be from a utility company or the council and distracts the householder while the other one slips into the house and takes what they can. Always ask for identity and keep them outside. If in doubt close the door and call the police.

Telephone scams usually involve trying to get your bank details by pretending to be from the bank or the police and usually saying that your bank account is at risk of fraud. They can be very persistent and frightening but remember that banks and police do not do this. Hang up, wait 10 minutes to ensure the line is clear and then ring your bank on a number you know, not one given to you by the fraudsters.

Internet fraud is usually by email. You may get an email that seems to come from your bank or a government department such HMRC. This will probably ask you to click on a link to check your bank details or to claim a refund. Banks and HMRC never do this so just delete the email and don't follow any links or give any details.

If you receive a letter saying you have won some money and asking for your bank details so that the payment can be made, ignore it, it is a con. Anybody who asks for money from you before sending you money that is owed to you is trying to defraud you and should be ignored.

**The best way to stay safe is to use your instinct. If it doesn't feel right it isn't.**

## Reports on Monthly Meetings

### Monthly Meeting at The Ellendune Centre

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December

Despite the bad weather there was a good turnout of members for the monthly meeting and there was much tinsel and many Christmas jumpers on display. We were splendidly entertained by our very own U3ukes and U3A Guitar groups led by Phil Goddard. The quality of playing and singing was excellent, and we were even treated to a few jokes from Phil, but I won't comment on them! In the first session we listened to popular favourites from the Beatles like "8 days a week" and the Shirelles "Will you love me tomorrow".

During the interval our wonderful volunteer tea ladies provided free tea/coffee and a mince pie.

After the break we had a medley of Christmas songs and the Elvis classic "Return to sender" but my favourite, which brought back many happy memories, was "Have I the right?" by the Honeycombs; the groups signature tune.



## Management Reports

### Feedback from the Management Committee

At the AGM it was proposed that we include a regular summary of the monthly Management Committee meetings in the Newsletter so that all U3A members could have a better idea about the work of the committee. This is the first such item and we'd be interested to know what you think. Is it clear enough? Would you like more information? Could we do it differently? Let us have your views - please contact any committee member.

### Strategy Meeting

We held a half-day strategy meeting in October on our structure and purpose and at the following Management Committee meeting pulled together our work plan for 2018. We'll put this on the website once it's finalised. A key part of this will be communicating more actively with our members, so if you have any thoughts on this please let one of us know. In addition to our regular monitoring reports on finances, membership, website, group news etc. we reviewed how the recent new members' meeting had gone and noted some ideas for the next one. We also spent some time planning the Group Coordinators' day at the end of November.

*Margaret Goldie*

### Management Committee News

At recent committee meetings and an "Awayday", the management committee has been giving thought to ways in which we can ensure that our growing organisation works as effectively as possible for all its members to enable them to get the very best possible experience.

Two areas we have identified are to clarify the structure of Swindon U3A and to look at ways to make communications as efficient as possible.

To achieve the first we are in the process of reviewing the roles of all committee members and their "job descriptions" and how the committee links with the various groups of people who have responsibility for ensuring the smooth running of different aspects of our organisation.

To achieve the second we need to regularly review how we communicate with you and how we can improve this. Future articles in the Newsletter will explain various aspects of our work in more detail. If you have any comments or suggestions about improving our communications please contact us via the office or at [secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@swindonu3a.org.uk) or directly to any committee member.

## **Management Committee – Report of November 2017 meeting**

The Committee was told that 2,012 members had now enrolled for the 2017/18 season. The Treasurer anticipated that this would rise to 2,050 by March 2018, which would be an increase of over 6% on the previous year. There are now over 160 Groups operating under the Swindon U3A umbrella, and although growth brings its own pressures and challenges, the vast majority of members are thoroughly enjoying their experiences.

It was disappointing that fewer than half of the Group Organisers were able to be present at the annual GOs' meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November. Those present took part in small discussion groups looking at questions such as "How do you engage with/welcome new members to your group?", "What are your group's objectives?" "How has your group changed or evolved over time?" and "How many people in your group take some responsibility – however small?". The feedback is being collated by our General Secretary Margaret Goldie.

Because of questions and discussion at the GOs' meeting, it was agreed that a formal letter should be sent to all Group Organisers re-iterating the law on Data Protection and our policy on what information can be held, and clarifying what information it is acceptable for GOs to hold. This policy will also be available on the website. GOs will be asked to sign an acceptance form, so that the Committee can be clear that the organisation complies with the law.

Vice-chairman Avril Muirhead has set up the first meeting of the new Events Sub-Committee meeting for January and they will consider the planning of future events, including the 2018 Freshers' Fair, a second New Members' meeting for early Spring, and the AGM in October.

*John Williams, Chairman*

## **December 2017 Management Committee Meeting**

The Committee agreed that progress was being made on a number of issues including its Work Plan 2018 which has 3 main themes:

- How we wish to take our U3A forward – our aims and objectives
- Streamlining the governance structure as the organisation grows in size
- Establishing positive links between the Committee and the Membership

The governance structure has involved re-constituting the sub-committee structure so that there will now be five sub-committees responsible for:

- Events
- Administration
- Groups
- Publications
- IT Development and Information Governance

Each will be chaired by a member of the Management Committee with at least one other MC member present. Membership from non-committee members and volunteers is welcomed. We need all the input and support we can get from members with relevant experience and knowledge.

New role descriptions for MC members will be approved in February.

The report and largely positive feedback from the November Group Organisers' Meeting is to be published on the website. **We are also seeking a volunteer to take on a new role as Data Protection Officer outside of the Management Committee.**

The Treasurer reported that membership was up to 2,030 as of 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

**IMPORTANT - In Case of Emergency forms (ICE) and the Data Protection Act.**

It has been brought to the attention of the Committee that the use of these forms carries a high risk of breaching the Data Protection Act if they are held by Group Organisers.

The Health Information included in these forms can be of a sensitive nature – i.e. health conditions and medication and as such should only be held by the person to whom they refer.

We acknowledge that for some groups – dependent on the activity and for some individuals – it is important that in the event of an accident or incident this information is available.

It is therefore strongly advised that the individual concerned remains responsible for their own information. It may well be advisable for that individual to indicate where they keep the form (i.e. a backpack, or a jacket pocket) and that it is easily identifiable (e.g. a coloured envelope).

## Group News

### Travel Group J's visit to Salisbury

As we left Wroughton on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October the weather was not good, but thankfully by the time we reached Salisbury the rain had stopped.

A visit to Arundells was to be the main focus of our trip. This house, situated in the Cathedral Close, was the home of the former Prime Minister, Sir Edward Heath.

As there were so many of us we were split into two groups for our guided tours. This meant that we had free time either in the morning or afternoon and there was certainly plenty to do in The Close itself. The Military Museum, known as "The Rifles", is right next door to Arundells and the Salisbury Museum only a very short walk away. Salisbury Museum had a special exhibition on the author, Terry Pratchett and in the Cathedral was one entitled "Threads through Revelation". This consisted of fourteen large embroidered panels, which were said to contain twelve million stitches and to have taken three years to complete.

The elegant Queen Anne style front to Arundells conceals the fact that the building contains six distinct periods of architecture, the earliest being 14<sup>th</sup> Century. The rooms are not huge, but they are comfortably furnished, and have been left as far as possible as they were when Sir Edward was living there. Models of his five yachts, each called Morning Cloud, can be seen in a special cabinet, while his great collection of art works is displayed around the house. It was very interesting to see photos of him with various heads of state who had visited and the gifts he had been given by them. I think nearly everyone's favourite display was that of the originals of political cartoons which had been published during his years in office. We were invited not only to sit down in each room (what a relief) but also to play his grand piano!

I think a good day was had by all and we certainly came away having discovered what a talented man Sir Edward Heath had been.

*Isabel Habgood*



## **Merribells join the Celebrations**

The Merribells Handbell Group was set up by Ron Tanner in 2001 and soon became affiliated to the national movement HRGB - Handbell Ringers of Great Britain.

HRGB was formed on 14th October 1967 and was therefore celebrating its 50th Anniversary in October. To mark this occasion, handbell events have taken place across the whole nation.

Merribells were invited to attend such an event on Saturday 7th October at Fordingbridge in Hampshire, where we joined five other teams from Hampshire, Dorset and Berkshire. The day long event ran from 10.30am to 4.30pm with breaks for lunch and tea (with birthday cake). With two conductors sharing duties, we rehearsed seven different pieces of music, two of which had been specially written to commemorate the 50th anniversary. We were able pick up several different ringing techniques during these rehearsals and the enjoyable day culminated with a full concert performance of all seven pieces.

Then on Saturday 14th October we made the journey to Wincanton in Somerset, joining up with no fewer than seventeen other handbell ringing teams from Somerset, Wiltshire, Devon and Dorset. Starting at 12 noon and finishing at 5pm, with breaks for lunch, tea and birthday cake again, our challenge for the day was to play 50 tunes - one for each year of HRGB.

The 50 tunes were interspersed with solo items from several teams, the most outstanding of which was from a team of just 4 from Poole, who between them managed to ring almost 40 bells - an amazing thing to both watch and listen to. Our musical director for the day was Rob Worrall of the local Wincanton team, who had arranged all of the 50 tunes. He extracted a worthy performance from everyone, giving us another very memorable day.

At both events, during lunch and tea breaks we were able to socialise and chat to other ringers, adding to the enjoyment of both events. We were looking forward to meeting some of them again at an HRGB Christmas Ringing Festival at Taunton on December 2nd. The journey to Taunton went smoothly and we arrived at St Michael's Church in good time. Throughout the afternoon handbell ringers from 16 groups across the South West Region rehearsed 7 pieces of Christmas Music along with members of the Exeter Children's Orchestra, a talented group of young musicians whose music blended well with the bells. Then at 7pm the church was filled to capacity with a large audience who were entertained with the music that we had rehearsed interspersed with seasonal readings, carol singing for everyone and solo spots from 5 handbell groups, one of which was Merribells with our rendition of White Christmas. A retiring collection at the end of the evening yielded £435 for Children's Hospice South West, bringing to an end yet another very enjoyable day.

*Francis Hobbs*

*Merribells Group Organiser*

### **U3A Birders' Trip to Dorset on 31st Oct. to 3rd Nov.**

A group of us from the Birders' Group spent four days bird watching in and around Weymouth in gloriously unseasonal warm and sunny weather for the time of year. We visited RSPB reserves at Arne, Radipole Lake and Lodmoor as well as Chesil Bank and Portland Bill, the last including a very fruitful visit to the Portland Bird Observatory.

We counted no fewer than 84 species of birds, plus mammals such as Field Voles, Sika and Roe Deer. We saw some of the UK's smallest birds: Goldcrest and Firecrest, its most exotic: Spoonbills, its most colourful: Kingfishers, and one of its rarest, magnificent and most persecuted: Hen Harrier. We even managed to spot two North American vagrants: Lesser Yellowlegs and Stilt Sandpiper.

Whilst we all had 'lifers' (first ever sightings), each of us had a view of what was the highlight of the trip; for some it was a particular bird, for others it was several and for some it was everything, including some amazing sunsets over the sea. It was agreed unanimously that the trip was a great success and, while we are all happy to get back to visiting our local patches, 'away trips' such as this will continue to form a really important and enjoyable part of our birding agenda. Where to next?



Firecrest (RSPB)

## **How the Other Half Loves**

November 11<sup>th</sup>, Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham

Fifty two of us boarded the bus at various points around Swindon for the U3A Theatre Group's trip to see Alan Ayckbourn's "How the Other Half Loves" at Cheltenham's Everyman Theatre, two going along under their own steam (well probably petrol, actually!)

The play was an old fashioned farce of the sort which those of us old enough to remember Brian Rix will recognise. The story centres round a late night escapade, details never fully revealed, but which results in the participants having to make excuses to their spouses.

By chance both guilty parties use the name of a new chap in the office, Featherstone, suggesting that they were commiserating over an infidelity – each offender supposedly spending the evening with the innocent party - he with the chap, she with his wife. Full of good intentions, and unbeknown to each other, the unsuspecting partner in each couple decides to invite the apparently troubled new couple to dinner on separate evenings to help resolve their differences, of which they of course are totally unaware!

The centre piece is a scene at which we see all six actors together, acting out the two evenings simultaneously, alternating conversations and contrasting actual and perceived emotions. The timing was immaculate, and I can't possibly do justice in a short write up, it was very funny indeed.

Finally Featherstone gets the message, believing his wife really has had an affair, and takes his anger out on the supposed offender, while his timid wife's reaction when alone with the young Lothario is a delight. Altogether an excellent trip, thanks to Cherry Warr for organizing yet another of these jolly events.

## U3A Field Archery

We are very lucky to have the beautiful setting on Roves Farm land for our Field Archery group, with facilities to suit all abilities. Since the Fresher's fair in September, our membership has increased to 58 (reaching our manageable figure of 60) with an average of 25 people shooting at our Monday and Friday sessions

On 27<sup>th</sup> October we held our Halloween barbeque which was a great success. There was an excellent turnout and the weather as always, was glorious.

Pumpkins were hung around the various targets in the woods and suitably scary paper targets in the indoor range and on the hay bales at the bottom of the field.

Peter E did a stalwart job as Head Chef, assisted by Norman on onions and a band of little helpers. Prizes went to Jim Morris, Suzie's daughter, John Beale and Brian Winley for best shots.

An archery related quiz proved quite difficult for that time of the day, but hopefully everyone enjoyed the challenge! Thanks to everyone for a very successful morning. Christmas bbq date tba!

*Sue Horton*



Peter Edwards, our wizard of a chef.



## **Coffee at Kings**

Please note that the group, which meets fortnightly at The Kings in Old Town, is not able to take new members at this time. Please **do not** just turn up unless you are already a member as the space available at the venue is very limited. If however, you would like to join a coffee group – please contact [Gill McKinnon](#) by clicking on her name and if there is sufficient interest in the idea we can look into setting up a new group.

## **Proposed New Coffee Morning Group**

My friend and I are new members of the U3A. We are looking to set up a Coffee morning group in Royal Wootton Bassett and maybe surrounding areas – open to all members. We aim to meet fortnightly on Thursdays at 11am at the Cross Keys Pub, which has a friendly, sociable atmosphere. There is always the possibility of staying on for lunch, if anyone chooses. We are looking to possibly hold our first meeting during January/February. Anyone who is interested and wishes to find out more please contact [John Turner](#) by clicking on his name.

## **New Book Group**

A new Book Group is starting up in November, so if you'd like to join us in the early stages you'd be very welcome. We're going to meet on the 3rd Monday afternoon of each month, between 2pm and 4pm. We will arrange meetings in each other's homes to begin with. The first meeting will be on Monday November 20th, when we will get to know each other a little and decide how we'd like to take the group forward. If you're interested, please contact [Margaret Goldie](#) by clicking on her name.

## **Use it or lose it- living longer, living well**

Another successful programme finished on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and was reviewed by the delivery team on October 25<sup>th</sup>. There were 9 participants and evaluations were positive. As always the presenters made any minor adjustments to the programme in light of these evaluations.

Because interest is high and so many people have signed up to the programme, it has been agreed there will be 3 programmes in 2018 instead of the 2 run in previous years. The new administrator, Marla Carroll, will contact those people who have already expressed an interest and allocate places on the programmes from the existing list. The programmes will run on 3 Wednesday afternoons in February/March, April/May and September/October.

Please wait for Marla to contact you if have already signed up for a place, then if the course allocated does not suit you, you can contact her to discuss an alternative. No new bookings will be taken until the Fresher's Fair 2018.

*Claire Smith*

## **Highworth Petanque Group**

In October's Newsletter Gordon Younghusband told you about Petanque in Swindon, and in particular the Highworth Petanque Group. We presently have two separate groups who play on Thursday and Friday mornings but, as many have discovered, we are usually fully subscribed. I am therefore investigating the possibility of starting a third group, probably on Wednesday, but presently our venue is booked on Wednesday mornings - however I am investigating alternatives. Are there any U3A members who would be interested in joining a new group? To send a message please click on [Graham Arrondelle](#) - If there are enough of you I am sure we can find a date and time that will suit all (other commitments excepted).

*Graham Arrondelle* (Co-chair of HPG)

## **New Developments for Swindon U3A**

**LIFT Psychology is an NHS service** which has been running courses to help people prevent or cope with daily life problems for over twenty years. These courses help people with daily stressors and what doctors call long term conditions. These are illnesses that will probably never completely go away but their impact on daily living can be reduced, often in a transformative way. Other courses include 'Overcoming Panic, Anxiety and Worry'; 'Overcoming Sleep Difficulties'; 'Living well with Long Term Pain' and many others.

The courses are taught and although discussion and questions are encouraged, no-one ever needs to speak if they don't wish to. As with other NHS provision these courses are free. Coffee tea and biscuits are available, and a small donation may be requested but not demanded.

Swindon U3A and LIFT are seeking to collaborate in order to offer courses to U3A members. This follows on from the high level of demand for the 'Use it or Lose it' Memory programme which has been running for several years. Courses could be available during the daytime or evening and normally run for 4 weeks. Alternatively, a course could be delivered in a single Saturday session.

If you feel that there is a course which could be relevant to you or if you are interested to learn more, please contact Gill McKinnon using the link below. Should there be sufficient interest we will arrange an open meeting where you can find out more and ask questions.

### **Group news**

British History; Spanish Beginners; Beginners Bridge: If you are interested in any of these potential new groups – please contact me.

New Walking group: If you have signed up to join a new Wednesday Walking group, this has not been forgotten. A meeting will be arranged for all interested members shortly and you will be contacted. If you have not signed up but are interested, please send me a message and I will add your name to the list.

[Gill Mckinnon Groups Coordinator](#)

A new Travel Study Group will be holding its inaugural meeting on 23rd January at 2:00pm at the MRT Centre on Queens Drive. If you wish to join please contact [Dawn Johnson](#) by clicking on her name.

## **First Aid Courses**

I would like to run another couple of basic first aid courses for members. Before I make any arrangements I would like to check how many people are interested.

Can you please contact [David Maggs](#) by clicking on his name.

I am probably looking at sometime in 2018 to run the courses.

## **Walking Football at Croft Sports Centre**

### **(This is NOT a Swindon U3A event)**

I am part of the Generation Gains team and we are setting up walking football sessions at Croft Sports Centre aimed at men and women over the age of 60 and was wondering if members of the Swindon U3A would be interested in this activity. If we can get this up and running successfully we are looking to make this a regular session.

The session is free and will take place at Croft Sport centre (SN3 1RA). We started on the 20<sup>th</sup> November running from 10am-11am, with free tea and coffee provided after the session until around 11:30am.

There is plenty of free parking at the venue and it is easy to access.

The spaces do need to be booked beforehand on either of the following:

By emailing [GenerationGains@GLL.ORG](mailto:GenerationGains@GLL.ORG) or calling Crofts Sports Centre on 01793 618669.

Thomas Eagles

## Visits and Outings

Travel Study Group C & G  
Visit to

### **The Postal Museum and Newly Opened Underground Mail Train Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

There will also be free time to visit other attractions nearby for example the Clock Museum, Charles Dickens Museum, Foundlings Museum and many others within a short walk.

Departure times and pick-up points:-

8.00am Matalan, Greenbridge.

8.20am Ellendune Centre, Wroughton

8.40am Ashington Way, West Swindon

5.00pm (approx.) Depart for Swindon

**Cost £25pp** includes: coach, entry & driver's gratuity.

All members welcome

Note: we have been advised by the Postal Museum that the train is a miniature train and may be uncomfortable for some visitors. Also for Health and Safety reasons in an emergency you need to be able to walk 100 metres (328 feet) on uneven terrain with low lighting levels. For more information contact Mary or Sylvia.

Contact: [Mary Morgan](#) or [Sylvia Blacklock](#) (Click on a name)

Travel Group J  
visit to  
**Royal Hospital, Chelsea.**  
**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018**

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 Davidson](#) or [Peter Davidson](#) (Click on a name)

Visit to

**The Museum of London**

Learn about London before it was London and up to the present day

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of February

Departure times

Highworth, Brewery Street Car Park 8.00 am

Malborough Road/Downs View Road 8.20 am

Bus Station 8.30 am

Gorse Hill, Chapel Street Car Park 8.40 am

Ashington Way 8.50 am

Depart for Swindon at 4.30 pm

Cost £20 to include driver's gratuity and coach.

All members welcome

Contact [Sheila O'Connell](#) by clicking on her name

**'Motown the Musical' on Thursday 1 March 2018**

starting at 2.30pm at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London

The seats are in the Royal Circle with good views of the stage. Face value of each ticket is £69.50

Price including transport by Barnes Coaches will be £49.50. Payment needed asap.

Partners and friends are welcome. Tickets will be given out on the coach.

Pick-ups will be 10.00am at Swindon Orbital, 10.15am at Ashington Way (if parking restrictions imposed these will be liable to change) and 10.30am at the Bus Station. This will, hopefully, get us to London in time to find somewhere to lunch. We should be home by 8.00pm.

If you are interested in this trip please contact [Cherry Warr](#) by clicking on her name which will open up a contact form.

**Travel Group J** visit to  
**Portsmouth on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

A visit to historic Portsmouth with options to visit the Historic Dockyard, Spinnaker Tower and/or Gunwharf Quays shopping centre. As our visit coincides with the school Easter holidays you are advised to consider booking historic dockyard attraction tickets on-line in advance.

Departure times and pick-up points:

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

**Cost £18** per person which includes the coach and gratuities

All members and friends welcome.

Contact [Jayne Bellamy](#) or [Mike Carvell](#) (Just click on a name to open a contact form)

Concert Goers Group invite you to  
**The Colston Hall**, Bristol  
**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.30pm.**  
Pre Concert talk at 6.25pm

**Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**  
presents

**Debussy—Rondes de Printemps**  
**Mendelssohn—Violin Concerto in E minor**  
**Berlioz—Symphonie Fantastique**

Departure times (to be advised) and pickup points  
Downsview Road/Marlborough Road Junction  
Bus Station  
Ashington Way (W Swindon) bus stop

Queries to [Nina Stimson](#) (Click on the name)

**Payment required by 5<sup>th</sup> February**  
Cost to be advised (includes ticket, coach and driver's gratuity)

**'Hairspray'** at the **Everyman Theatre Cheltenham**, for the matinee on Thursday, 31 May 2018 at 2pm. It's a brilliant 'feel good' show.

Tickets are £49 a ticket (transport is included in the price). If we have a full coach there will be a refund on the day. To reserve a place contact [Cherry Warr](#) by clicking on her name.

Payment needed by February 2018, but cheques are accepted dated 1 February 2018 made payable to Swindon U3A. They will be banked in February.

Pick-ups will be between 10-11am and we should arrive back in Swindon between 5-6pm. Pick-up points will be notified nearer the time, but will include the Bus Station. Transport will be by Barnes Coaches.

*"The international smash hit musical comedy Hairspray the Musical comes to the Everyman Theatre for the first time - ever!"*

*Baltimore, 1962. Tracy Turnblad is a big girl with big hair and an even bigger dream: to dance her way onto national TV, and into the heart of teen idol Link Larkin. Tracy's audition makes her a local star and soon she is using her new-found fame to fight for integration. But can she win equality - and Link's heart - without denting her 'do?*

*Featuring the hit songs Welcome To The 60s, You Can't Stop The Beat, The Nicest Kids in Town and many more.*

*Don't miss this irresistible feel-good show that is guaranteed to have you dancing the night away. Let your hair down and book now!"*

Travel Group J & Aviation Group Visit To  
**The Delights & Heritage of Suffolk**

Five Days from 13 - 17 May 2018

Based at the 4\* **StokebyNayland Hotel** on the outskirts of Leavenheath

**Day 1** Travel East and spend some free time in Lavenham where you can choose to visit the National Trust's Lavenham Guildhall, an early 16th century framed building that dominates the market place.

**Day 2** Our Blue Badge guide accompanies the group when we visit the Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum. Our guide remains with us when we continue in the afternoon to visit the National Trust's Sutton Hoo, an Anglo Saxon burial site where the Sutton Hoo treasure was discovered in 1939.

**Day 3** Today with our Blue Badge guide we visit Colchester, the first Roman city in Britain. Our guided tour of the city incorporates a visit to Colchester Castle Museum.

We continue to Constable Country on the Suffolk / Essex border the birthplace of the renowned artist John Constable. Our guided tour of East Bergholt takes in John Constable's Studio and at Dedham we see Constable's School and Dedham Parish Church. Finally we visit Flatford.

**Day 4** This morning, with our Blue badge guide, we visit the picturesque fishing village of Aldeburgh. In the afternoon we visit Christchurch Mansion, a Tudor building, set in an ancient and beautiful park close to the centre of Ipswich. With outstanding paintings and furniture, it is one of the most important visitor attractions in East Anglia.

**Day 5** Our last day, we visit English Heritage's Audley House and Gardens, Saffron Walden, one of England's grandest stately homes.

Following our visit we make our way home.

Cost: £499 (Single room supplement £99) This includes all coach travel and hotel. (Bed, breakfast and evening meal)

Extras: Entrance fees to places visited. Entrance to aviation museum is free and National Trust properties free to members of NT, gratuities. Insurance £24 (if required)

Departure time and pick up points to be notified at a later date.

For further details contact [Ken Ivie](#) by clicking on his name.

**All members and friends welcome.**



**Friends of The Ridgeway**

## **Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize 2018**



The Ridgeway – the oldest road in Britain – historically was a trackway providing a reliable trading route from the Dorset coast along the chalk Downs to the Wash in Norfolk. Today it is not only the oldest road but is also a wonderful resource for all the communities that live along its route, not just walkers, where all can enjoy walking, riding or just being there. The Friends of the Ridgeway, a voluntary organisation and registered charity, is committed to the preservation in perpetuity of all the natural aspects and features of the ancient Ridgeway.

Based on a generous donation, The Friends of The Ridgeway have established an arts competition and prize – the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize. Following the success of this year's competition, it will be held again in 2018. The aim of the competition is to bring The Ridgeway to life not only as a long distance trail but also as an artistic inspiration, and to show The Ridgeway, its history and environs, in all their aspects throughout all seasons. The theme of the competition is *'Spirit of the Ridgeway'*.

The main points of the prize competition are:

- There will be separate classes for painting, sculpture (including ceramics and textiles) , photography and writing (poetry or prose);
- Competition is open to all, amateur and professional artists;
- Art work submitted must be produced in the 24 months prior to closing date;
- The results of the competition will be announced and prizes awarded at the Ridgeway Friends Day planned for 22 April 2018;
- The closing date for entries shall be one month prior to the Ridgeway Friends Day (i.e. 22 March 2018);

The full rules of the competition are given in a separate document.

All entrants will receive one year's membership of The Friends of The Ridgeway Each category winner will receive a keeper prize plus £100. The overall winner will receive a keeper prize plus £250 and a trophy.

To enter applicants should contact The Friends of The Ridgeway. Entrants need to complete the Entry Form and submit it with their art work.

*Why not seek artistic inspiration from the Ridgeway and then, through the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize, share it with all those that love and value the Ridgeway?*

Further information can be obtained from:

**Anthony Burdall, 2 Fernham Road, Faringdon Oxfordshire SN7 7JY**  
Tel : 01367 240713 Mob : 0784135 2938 Email : [anthony.burdall@burdall.net](mailto:anthony.burdall@burdall.net)

## What's on early in 2018

We are offering a delicious **Winter Warmer Menu**

between Fri 19th Jan and Thurs 8th Feb

Three course Lunch for £6.00pp

And...

Between the 20th Feb and 29th March **Spring is in the Air!**

The new Menu will reflect seasonal produce

Book a table of 4 and only pay for 3!!

To make a reservation email: [faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk](mailto:faithmarles@swindon.ac.uk)

Or Tel: 01793 498244



The  
**Restaurant**

## Notices

When submitting articles or notices to the Newsletter and the What's On it is essential that they are sent by email to [newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk). If you are unable to do this please send them to the U3A office with a note for them to be forwarded to the newsletter team. Items not submitted in this way cannot be guaranteed to be picked up and published.

The cut-off date for sending in events to be included in the January What's On is 6<sup>th</sup> December. The cut-off date for the February What's On and Newsletter is 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

### **Swindon U3A Office**

Please note that the office will be closed after Wednesday the 20th December and will reopen on Wednesday the 3rd January

### **The Newsletter Editor**

As from the December issue, our editor, Doreen Swannell has relinquished her role as editor of the Newsletter.

Doreen has made a significant contribution and through her hard work and dedication we have a Newsletter that receives high praise from many quarters.

Her help will be greatly missed by the Newsletter Team but we look forward to welcoming a new editor for a new year.

Thank you Doreen!

## List of Email Addresses

### General

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Monthly meeting speaker organiser	speaker.organiser@swindonu3a.org.uk
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

### January 2018

#### Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January

**Monthly Meeting** at the Ellendune Centre 2.15pm includes "Life as an Auctioneer".

#### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January

**Travel Study Group C & G** Visit to "The Postal Museum", London and newly opened "Underground Mail Train" with free time to visit other attractions nearby for example the "Clock Museum", "Charles Dickens Museum", "Foundlings Museum" and many others within a short walk. See December Newsletter for further details. Contacts: [Mary Morgan](#) or [Sylvia Blacklock](#)

### February 2018

#### Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018

**Travel Group J** visit to Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Cost approx. £28 to include coach, driver's gratuity and guided tours. Contact [Barbara Davidson](#) or [Peter Davidson](#). See December Newsletter for further information.

## **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of February**

Visit to **The Museum of London**

Learn about London before it was London and up to the present day

Contact [Sheila O'Connell](#) by clicking on her name

## **March 2018**

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

**Theatre-goers Group** visit to 'Motown the Musical', starting at 2.30pm at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London. The seats are in the Royal Circle with good views of the stage. Face value of each ticket is £69.50. Price including transport by Barnes Coaches will be £49.50. Payment needed by 6 December. Partners and friends are welcome. See December Newsletter for further information. Contact [Cherry Warr](#). Coach seats only for anyone to join this trip to go to the West End, London are £13.00 each.

## **Looking Further Ahead**

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**Travel Group J** visit to **Portsmouth**

A visit to historic Portsmouth with options to visit the Historic Dockyard, Spinnaker Tower and/or Gunwharf Quays shopping centre. As our visit coincides with the school Easter holidays you are advised to consider booking historic dockyard attraction tickets on-line in advance.

**Cost £18** per person which includes the coach and gratuities

All members and friends welcome.

Contact [Jayne Bellamy](#) or [Mike Carvell](#) (Just click on a name to open a contact form)

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.30pm**

Concert Goers Group invite you to

**The Colston Hall**, Bristol for a concert by the

**Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**

Queries to [Nina Stimson](#) (Click on the name)

**Five Days from 13 - 17 May 2018**

Travel Group J & Aviation Group Visit To

**The Delights & Heritage of Suffolk**

Based at the 4\* **StokebyNayland Hotel** on the outskirts of Leavenheath

For further details contact [Ken Ivie](#) by clicking on his name.

**All members and friends welcome.**

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018**

**Theatregoers Group** visit to the musical Hairspray at the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham for a matinee performance. Cost £49 including transport. If we have a full coach there will be a refund on the day. Contact [Cherry Warr](#). See December Newsletter for further details.