

learn, laugh, live



Summer Solstice

Chair's Hello

June is here – summer at last! Janus in Roman mythology is the God of transitions, the middle point between beginnings and endings. He gave his name to January but is as appropriate to June! And so, while enjoying the mid-summer to its full, we also in mid-June pass through to the second half of the year as we begin to face towards autumn and winter.

We too, in our u3a have to start to plan in earnest for the new 'academic' term which starts in September. In July we open for **membership renewals** for 2022-2023, on 3rd September we have our **Open Day** to show new and potential new members the wonderful array of activities which we offer and for those Groups who took a pause in August, activities will get underway again.



Janus

The Management Team has continued to be busy over April and May. Four sessions were held with Group Organisers, led by the Groups Co-ordinator, Linda Young and our three new Group Assistants, Mike Deegan, Christine Dixon, and Bob Carvey. GOs were asked to review and update their group data so that we can make our calculations about supplements which will be charged from September. Much work has been done on the criteria and concepts underlying these calculations. In comparison with last summer when supplements had to be introduced with little time to reflect fully, this year, the Cost Committee has had time to deliberate in a more measured way.

We hope that what is finally decided will be both as fair as possible to all members and as easy as possible to collect and process.

The Management Committee also looked at a number of the issues raised in our Focus Group meetings earlier in the year, noting which have been resolved, which continue to be a work in progress and which need to be incorporated into our next Strategic Plan.

The summer is not over yet and there is much to enjoy over the next few weeks. As I write this, we are about to enter the Jubilee week-end with all the jollity, street parties and other entertainment that is being planned nationally and in Swindon. We, too, will be celebrating on June 17th as we are looking forward to a Swindon u3a celebration of the 40th year of the existence of the u3a movement in Britain. An afternoon of fun, games and entertainment is planned, open to all our members. I hope to meet many of you there. Your invitation is repeated in this Newsletter. So, I send you all my best wishes for the long summer days ahead and hope you continue to enjoy your u3a activities to the full.

P.S. The Management Committee has agreed the supplements for the 2022/23 year and will be communicating these shortly, ready for the membership renewal process which begins on 4th July.

Gill

chair@swindonu3a.org.uk

Publicity Officer

Chris Ockwell, the trustee who has been overseeing our publicity for some time is stepping down from this role to concentrate more on the management of and relations with our venues. We are, therefore, looking for a volunteer to help with the publicity activities of Swindon u3a. We would like to improve the general public's knowledge and understanding of our activities, our relationships with other local organisations and groups, and increase our exposure to local media. There is a team of members who help with various aspects of publicity, and a lot is already happening, but we would like someone to help bring all the various activities together in a coherent manner and help us to develop, expand and improve our publicity for the future.

If you are interested and think you could help us to maintain and develop our publicity please get in contact. I will be happy to discuss this further with you. Do get in touch.

Gill Brain

chair@swindonu3a.org.uk



Swindon u3a invite you to a summer Party
to celebrate 40 years of the u3a.

Come and enjoy fun, games, music, singing and
afternoon tea with a u3a Birthday Cake!

On Friday 17th June 2.00pm to 5.00pm

At the Ellendune Community Centre

(please book in on our website)

Monthly Meetings

The Monthly meetings are back! The next one will be held on Monday 11th July 2022 at 2.00 pm at the Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton, when our speaker will be Bobbie Darbyshire. Bobbie will be giving a light-hearted talk on 'Where do novelists get their ideas from?' From initial spark to realisation on the page, she will explain how the complex world of character, location, plot and subplot arrives in a writer's mind.

There will be no meeting in August but the programme will re-commence on Monday 12th September. Details of the forthcoming programme will be available shortly.

In order to give us an idea of numbers it would be really helpful if you could book online, but if not then please feel free to just turn up on the day and you will be very welcome.

[Sue Cook](#)

About Bobbie Darbyshire

Bobbie's fourth novel, **'The Posthumous Adventures of Harry Whittaker'** was published in March 2019. She won the 2008 fiction prize at the National Academy of Writing and the New Delta Review Creative Nonfiction Prize 2010. She has worked as barmaid, mushroom picker, film extra, maths coach, cabinet minister's private secretary, care assistant and volunteer adult-literacy teacher, as well as in social research and government policy.

Her latest novel is **'The Posthumous Adventures of Harry Whittaker'**

A world-famous superstar actor dies, but to his astonishment finds he's still here among us. He's able to watch the effect of his mean-spirited will on those left behind, including his son (cycling along on the cover) and even his cat. If your spirits are in need of a lift, it's a real feel-good book that will keep you hooked.

Bobbie's three earlier novels are:

'OZ': Mark Jonnson's life is a mess. He fears his marriage is over, but can't bear to leave his boisterous 7-year-old daughter, Matilda. Just when he thinks things can't get worse, his mother is killed in a road accident. Shocked and grieving, he decamps to her house, where he uncovers a secret that turns his life upside-down and sends him and his daughter on a whirlwind search for the truth.

'Love, Revenge & Buttered Scones': Long-listed for the 2011 International Rubery Book Award. In this comedy of errors, three troubled people dash off to the Scottish Highlands, where their destinies are mysteriously entwined around a reading group in the Inverness public library. Twists & surprises, very funny with also some dark, serious threads, it keeps you guessing throughout.

'Truth Games': In 1970s London, the blazing summers of 75 & 76, a group of friends get out of their depth in infidelity. Thought-provoking, amusing & sexy, a book about how we hurt each other with lies and with truths.

Available on Amazon

How to . . . Make the most of your u3a membership

During lockdown, especially when even outdoor exercise was limited and only essential travel was permitted, some of us who had tired of cleaning and tidying and whose gardens were immaculate (I wish!) looked for other diversions such as online activities. Although there are not quite as many of them as formerly, they can still be found, usually at very little cost or no cost at all.

If you would like to extend your horizons without leaving your home, look no further than the Home Page of the Swindon u3a website - www.swindonu3a.org.uk

If you had clicked on this innocuous little box in the merry month of May and scrolled down, you could have joined Zoom sessions on the origins of blues music or joined a short Zoom course on how to solve cryptic crosswords. If you are interested in exploring Laughter Yoga, you can still join Judith Walker from Edinburgh u3a at 10.00

on Wednesdays and all for free. You can also sign up to get monthly updates so you won't miss out on items which might interest you.

Thames Valley Network

Along with over 40 u3as, Swindon is a member of the TVN. Click or tap for further details of their talks and events.

u3a Online Events

*The Third Age Trust offers a number of online events. **Click or tap** here to see the events. N.B. booking closes 24 hours before the event.*

It is also worth checking out the Thames Valley Network link. Post lockdown they are organising about 2 online events a month. Some are free and other have a modest cost of £1 or £2 per device. If you have a laptop and a TV with an HDMI socket, you can even connect your laptop to the TV by a cable so more than one

person can enjoy the experience. A word of warning, don't try clicking on the boxes here, they are images and not hyperlinks!

[Sue Carvey](#)



WOW Walking on Wednesday

Lovely day and wonderful views on a challenging circular walk with the group today through long grass and acres of wild flowers from Greatfield to Ringsbury camp. Lots of awkward stiles and we were quite relieved that all the curious young cows were behind a wire fence. We were ready for a rest while we enjoyed an excellent lunch at the Bolingbroke Arms

Shirley Lewis

Weald and Downland Museum

Fascinating day out with the U3A Travel Group, so much to see. They were filming at The Repair Shop so we couldn't get too close and didn't manage to spot any celebrities!

Shirly Lewis



Swindon u3a Group News

The 2 stories above appeared on the Swindon u3a Facebook page in the last few days. Have you, as a group organiser or member, got similar stories to tell of your activities in our u3a? If you have, please send them to newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk and post them on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com

Do you have forthcoming events, success stories, interesting anecdotes, recommendations or advice that you think will interest our members? Please send it in to the newsletter email address above. We can accept most formats and really appreciate your contributions.

Bob Carvey

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Copy Dates

Items for the **July** Newsletter must be received by
28th June

Items for the **August** Newsletter must be received by
26th July

All contributions must be sent to the Editor using the Newsletter
contributions e-mail address:

newsletter@swindonu3a.org.uk

Geoff Bryan

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.