

learn, laugh, live



Chair's 'Hello'

It seems no time at all since I sent you my last update but since we have changed the timing of the publication of the Newsletter to fit in with a number of other events, this Newsletter has come around more quickly than usual. This means there is less for me to update you about since the Management Team doesn't meet until next week. I hope you are enjoying the summer. I know from many of my u3a groups and contacts that a lot of you are on holiday. Normally we would be envying you enjoying the sunshine and the heat in some exotic place. However, given the heatwave here at home, many of us just want to go somewhere cold. I did read somewhere recently that the best job to do at the moment was cleaning out your freezer! Joking aside, please do take care in the extreme heat.

We are busy making preparations for a number of events which are coming up soon on our u3a calendar. The first is our **Open Day on 3rd September at St Joseph's College 10.00-1.00**. Even if you know exactly what u3a activities you'll be doing next year, do come along and take a look at our amazing display of information on u3a activities that are available and chat with other members. It is very much a social, as well as an informative morning. I hope to see you there. You'll find me on the French Conversation and Poetry tables.

Next, we are already thinking about, and making preparatory plans for our **AGM in November**. Last year, because of Covid, we held the AGM on-line only. This year we are planning an in person meeting but subject, of course, to Covid. Keep an eye open for more information about where and when this will be held.

On August 23rd the Committee will be meeting for a session to review, revise and update our Swindon u3a Strategic Plan. Last year's Plan was somewhat thrown by the immediate financial issues we had to face unexpectedly. This year we hope to revisit some of the things which still need addressing. These include issues which many of you have raised during the year. The Strategic Plan 2022-23 should give us a roadmap for our activities during the coming year.

Membership renewals have begun and I know that many of you have been super quick off the mark and already renewed for the new academic year. If you haven't yet done so – here's a gentle reminder.

Well, the Solstice has come and gone – some shops already have Christmas displays going up as a reminder that we're in the second half of the year. I try not to think of that yet. I hope that, like me, you will try and enjoy every moment of the rest of 2022. It won't come again.

Warm wishes to you all.

u3a

Swindon

Swindon u3a offers over 135 interest groups where you can make new friends, develop your talents and enjoy yourself.

To find out more about our groups and activities come to our

Open Day

on 3rd September 10.00 - 1.00
at St Joseph's College, Swindon.



Royal Wootton Bassett Activities

RWB Coffee Mornings and Afternoon Social Groups are looking for new members.

Coffee Mornings are held every fortnight on a Wednesday at The Angel Hotel, Royal Wootton Bassett from 10am - 11.30am. .

Afternoon Socials are held every fortnight on a Thursday at The Cross Keys Pub, Royal Wootton Bassett from 2pm - 3.30pm.

You would be able to come to both sessions if you wish to.

Both venues are free to use, you only pay for any drink you may have. This enables us to support the venue, in return for them allowing us to use their facilities. We have members from all over Swindon. If interested please come along and meet our friendly group.

RWB Craft/Afternoon Social Group are also looking for new members, This is also another opportunity to meet. If you are not into Crafts, just come along and have a chat. These groups run throughout the year, with no break in August. For more information, including dates when we meet, please contact me by clicking on my name.

John Turner



Monthly Meeting—11th July Bobbie Darbyshire

About 40 members of Swindon u3a thoroughly enjoyed the talk by Bobbie Darbyshire at The Ellendune Community Centre on Monday 11th July.

Bobbie already has 4 successful published books and has more in the pipeline. She talked about where writers get their ideas from.

Where does that first sentence come from? The rest of the novel will develop from that first sentence so it is important to get it written down. The second sentence, the first paragraph and the first chapter will follow from that small but important beginning.

That first sentence comes from inside the head but could be from an idea or thought or observation from life. It will often be based on a problem or worry that is plaguing the author at the time. The writing of the novel will help to expurgate the worry.

Characters, plots and subplots will reveal themselves as the writing progresses. Bobbie doesn't have a detailed schematic prior to starting to write; everything isn't pre-planned or plotted out. Characters are yet to develop but as they react with the other characters, the situations and the locations, the author and ourselves create that character through what is written and subsequently read.

When writer's block strikes – often two-thirds of the way through – it is probably because she does not know the characters well enough yet. Then it is back to re-editing because by that stage she knows the characters better than when she started writing. It has been said that every book has a beginning, a muddle and an end.



Published works:

Truth Games

Love, Revenge and Buttered Scones

Oz

The Posthumous Adventures of Harry Whittaker

These are all available as paperbacks and on Kindle. Harry is also on Audible and is on Borrowbox at the Swindon Library.

Bob Carvey

Merribells — Francis and Julia Hobbs

At our recent summer social, after our last ring of the U3A year, we took the opportunity to thank Francis and Julia for the many years they have devoted to the Merribells group.

The Merribells were founded by Ron Tanner in 2001 and Francis and Julia joined after seeing a performance at a Steam Christmas Fayre where the bell players were dressed in Victorian costume. Julia didn't fancy that but she did fancy playing bells, and so they joined.

We think Francis became Group Organiser in 2009, with Julia by his side as the trusty keeper of the diary which was essential as Julia also played in the Merrifolk. It was important that there were no clashes of performances.

Francis has organised our attendance at various HRGB (Handbell Ringers of Great Britain) rallies throughout the South West when he has loaded up his car with the bells and foams and other paraphernalia. He has been the front man at our performances where he has utilised his great selection of awful jokes, stories and poems to entertain our audiences, giving us time while we try to get our bells ready for the next piece. Above all he is patient, kind and steadfast.

Francis and Julia are not leaving the group but Francis has stepped down as group organiser of the Merribells. To acknowledge their sterling service and because we like them so much, we presented them with a hydrangea plant for their new garden and a national Gardens voucher.



As a new group organiser I know I have big shoes to fill!

Marion Andrews

Broome Manor Pétanque - Ladies Pairs Competition

The latest in our summer competition series was the Ladies Pairs which took place in cooler conditions, thank goodness. Everyone had a great day in a convivial but competitive atmosphere. The early rounds and semi finals were played in the morning with the final and runners up matches after a lunch taken in the club house. We were honoured with a visit from one of our old players, Frank Wherry. Frank is an example to us all as he never gives up. At one point, after a stroke, he had to change playing hands and proved as good as he had ever been. Frank presented the Rose Bowl and the medals to the winning pairs.

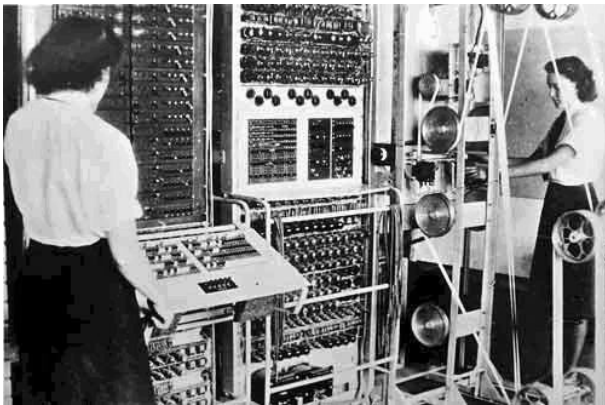
The Broome Manor Rose Bowl went to Lou Crowden and Liz Tolman

Silver medal went to Anna Pike and Noreen Payne

Bronze medal went to Kathleen Wyatt and Val Drinkwater

Bob Carvey





Monthly Meetings

As there will be no meeting in August, the next Monthly Meeting will be held on Monday **12th September at 2.00 pm at the Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton**, when our speaker will be **Gillian Cane on 'The Miracle of Bletchley Park'**.

It is just not possible to recount all of the wonderful things about Bletchley Park in one talk, so Gillian will concentrate on some of the brilliant and truly eccentric characters who peopled the park during the Second World War and why it is such a miracle to her.

The **October** meeting will be held on **Monday 10th October at 2.00 pm at Coleview Community Centre**. Further details will be in the next newsletter and online shortly.

There is no need to book. Please just turn up on the day and you will be very welcome. However, if you are able to book this will give us a guide for numbers.

Sue Cook

It's Your u3a!

Swindon u3a has a Management Committee made up of elected trustees. The opportunity to join the committee and become a part of shaping the future of our organisation is available to all members. Each year at the AGM **all the existing trustees must stand down**. If they are prepared to stand again they must put themselves up for re-election by us, the members.

Whose u3a is it anyway?

Our constitution allows for 12 elected trustees. We currently have 8 and after almost too many years to count, sadly one of them will be standing down as a trustee. You can probably see where I am going with this.

Do you have spare time on your hands? I won't lie, being a trustee can be time consuming. If, however, you are committed to getting a u3a that, the majority of members are happy with and works for the members, then please consider becoming a trustee.

Nominations will be open from 1st September to 7th October. Just go to the Home Page of the website at the beginning of September. This year the AGM will be held on Monday 14th November.

Shout it out loud and clear, it's yours, it's mine it's, our u3a !

If you would like any further information about what being a trustee involves, please get in touch with me by clicking on my name.

Sue Carvey, Secretary

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Copy Dates

Items for the **September** Newsletter must be received by

21st August

Items for the **October** Newsletter must be received by

20th September

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.