

learn, laugh, live



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Chair's Hello

By the time you read this, September will have arrived. Hopefully, it will not be the end of the summertime weather. Maybe, as autumn approaches, we can even hope for something more pleasant than severe heat waves or thunderstorms. Both my garden and my allotment are looking pretty bedraggled. I hope your gardens fared better. I was in France for three weeks during the intense heatwave there (34-38 degrees most days) which not even the wine and baguettes could make enjoyable, and returned to a very sad, dry, half dead garden.

There are good things to look forward to however! The new autumn term is just around the corner and we are making an exciting start with our **Swindon u3a Open Day on 3rd September**. Do come along (**10.00am – 1.00pm at St Joseph's Catholic College on Ocotal Way SN3 3LR**) and say 'hello', have a cuppa and look at all the amazing activities on offer. A very special thank you to all those who responded to our plea for some volunteers to help out. What wonderful, supportive members you are.

We follow that with our **AGM on the 14th November at Ellendune Centre 1.45 for a 2.15 start**. AGMs are necessary and important but are sometimes thought dull, so I really hope you will try and come along. We need you to get involved. As an extra incentive we are going to follow the 'business' side of the meeting with refreshments and a **quiz**. Surely you can't resist that!

To round off 2022, there are possible plans for a **Christmas Party**. Last year's had to be cancelled, you may remember, as a result of alarming Covid rates. Hopefully we can have a festive celebration this year. I'll keep you posted on possible plans. For those worried about the costs of our social get-togethers I can assure you they are minimal. It has long been a tradition in u3as up and down the country to have monthly meetings which any member can attend. It's a great way of meeting other u3a members outside of your own group/s and of getting a feeling of belonging to the u3a 'family'. Our monthly meetings often have an outside speaker while our festive parties showcase our own talented members.

On the subject of finance, I am pleased to report that we have been able to pull back from the downward turn we anticipated last summer. There are challenges ahead over the coming months for all of us, individuals and organisations as we face a possible recession, rising costs and tightening of budgets. This is not a time to make any major changes to our strategy. However, I hope that by next year we may be confident enough on our budgeting forecasts to make real financial reductions for our members.

So, I hope to see many of you at one or more of our forthcoming events. We are going into the new academic year with confidence and optimism for the future of Swindon u3a. By the next Newsletter you will be back with your groups, learning, laughing, living. 2022-23 here we come!

Gill



Swindon u3a AGM

**Monday 14th November, 2.15 (doors open 1:45)
At the Ellendune Centre, Barrett Way, Wroughton,
Swindon SN4 9LW**

**If that alone is not exciting enough to entice you, then come
along for the Refreshments and the fabulous Quiz!**

You can book your place for the meeting, including the Quiz, no need to register separately for that. Just use the link on the Home Page of the website,
www.swindonu3a.org

You will need your name and membership number.

Nominations for the membership of the Committee and Resolutions to be put to the meeting will open on 1st September and close on 7th October

Nominations and Resolutions can be submitted online by clicking on the links on the Home page of the website from 1st September www.swindonu3a.org.uk .
You will need your name, membership number and postcode.

Paper copies of forms for proposing members for election to the committee and for submitting resolutions to the meeting can be obtained from the Swindon u3a office.

**If you would like more information about the AGM or
becoming a trustee, please click on my name**



Sue Carvey



Libraries Week - "Lifelong Learning"

The first week of October (3rd to 9th) is Libraries Week and the theme this year is "**Lifelong Learning**". What better example than the u3a? We will be contributing to this event with posters and leaflets in our local libraries and hope the event might attract new members.

Here's what the libraries' organisation says:

"Libraries Week is an annual showcase and celebration of the best that libraries have to offer. Each year we pick a theme and explore the innovative and surprising things that libraries are doing to support their communities.

"In 2022, Libraries Week takes place between the 3rd and 9th October, celebrating the nation's much-loved libraries and the central role that libraries play in supporting life-long learning. We want to showcase how libraries across all sectors are inspiring learning for all and helping individuals to unlock and fulfil their potential at every stage of life."

Here is a link to that site: <http://librariesweek.org.uk>

Focus Groups Update

Last Autumn, we carried out a series of Focus Group meetings which proved to be very useful in helping us understand the range of views members hold about several key issues. A detailed report of the findings was produced along with a summary of key points. Both were made available to all members.

We subsequently prioritised 6 key areas and have been working our way through them, looking at ways to address the points raised.

There are some areas where good progress has been made and some where it will take longer to make long lasting and effective improvements. The fact that these things are 'issues' in the first place is because they are challenging!

An update of our actions so far, along with proposed future actions, is available on our website www.swindonu3a.org.uk. If you are unable to access the website and wish to see the update, please contact the office for an e-mailed or paper copy.

Opening hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 10.00 – 12.00. Answerphone at other times.

Tel 01793 614629

We plan to hold a second round of Focus Groups in the near future. We will be asking for volunteers to take part and would particularly encourage members who have not as yet taken up opportunities to share their experiences to put their names forward.

Jill Kelly

Membership Liaison Secretary

The Merribells

The Merribells are actively seeking new **members**.

There are two groups: The A group and the B group. The B group is the training group for the A Group.

We meet on Thursdays at the Gorse Hill Community Centre in Swindon.

An ability to read music is useful but not essential for the training group, as you will learn.



Hand bell ringing is a fun and engaging activity that is good for your brain and coordination.

We look forward to meeting some of you at the Open Day on the 3rd September at St Joseph's Catholic College. 10am-1pm.

See us in action on this link <https://youtu.be/K79OSIFJsFo>

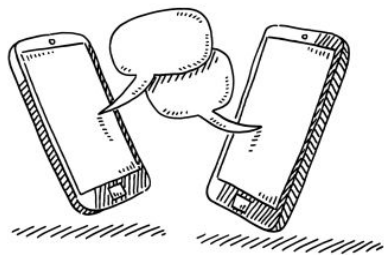
Marion Andrews
Group Organiser

Life in a poem

Dame Carol Ann Duffy is a British poet and playwright, well known for her prize winning poems. She was born in Glasgow in 1955 to an Irish Roman Catholic family. She's a professor of contemporary poetry at Manchester Metropolitan University, and was appointed Poet Laureate in 2009, a post she held for ten years. She is the first woman, the first Scottish-born poet and the first known lesbian poet to hold the position. Although an atheist since her teenage years, Duffy has said that poetry and prayer are very similar.

I am sure this simple little poem will
speak to many of us...!!

Lesley Basu



Text

I tend the mobile now
like an injured bird

We text, text, text
our significant words.

I re-read your first,
your second, your third,
look for your small xx,
feeling absurd.

The codes we send
arrive with a broken chord.

I try to picture your hands,
their image is blurred.

Nothing my thumbs press
will ever be heard.

By **Carol Ann Duffy**

Subject Advisers

Not everyone knows that the Third Age Trust provides a wide range of advisors to support u3a groups in developing their activities. They can be particularly useful when setting up new groups but also when groups want to refresh the way they do things. New ideas can help us rethink and maybe introduce new ideas or activities into our groups. The list of Subject Advisers is given in each edition of the Third Age Matters but not all of us take the magazine and even if we do, not all of us read it from cover to cover! Contact details are there so that it is easy to email or phone to ask them to send information.

Subjects covered include the Arts, Creative activities, History, Languages, Pastimes, Research, Science, Sport, Walking and Walking Sports, Wellbeing and Discussion Groups (e.g. Religion, Current Affairs, Philosophy).

If you don't take TAM (Third Age Matters) someone in your group may be able to lend or share a copy or contact me if you'd like to find a Subject Advisor's details.

Gill Brain

Monthly Meetings

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'**.

The work that went on at Bletchley Park, and the people who worked there, continues to fascinate us after all this time. If you have visited Bletchley Park you will know that you cannot see everything of interest there in just one day. Nor can this talk cover everything of interest in the time allotted. Gillian will concentrate therefore, on some of the inspiring people who worked at Bletchley Park, and why it was, on so many levels, such a miraculous place of remarkable achievement that it will continue to fascinate us for many years to come.

Monday 10th October at **2.00 pm** at **Coleview Community Centre** - our topic will be **'Archaeology - it's not just digging'**. The team from Wessex Archaeology will present an overview of how we bring heritage to life using ecology, art, science and technology. A multi-disciplinary team will demonstrate the diversity of skills needed to interpret heritage in the 21st century with input from the Environmental, Marine and Art Studio teams. Short talks will be followed by opportunities to handle artefacts from 10,000 BC to the Second World War and u3a members will be invited to step into a virtual reality experience where they can explore a Roman Villa, Anglo Saxon Hall or Second World War Aircraft Wreck.

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 online, this will give us a guide for numbers attending.

Sue Cook



u3a Concertgoers Group

We are pleased to invite you to join our first event of the new season!

When: Wednesday, 7th December 2022. Leaving Swindon approx. 9am, returning approx. 7.30pm.

Where: Birmingham Symphony Hall

What: Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's performance of:

Brahms Tragic Overture

Neilson Violin Concerto

Shostakovich Symphony no 5

We plan to stop off at the famous Birmingham Frankfurt Christmas Market for about an hour in the morning before making our way to the Symphony Hall for the concert which starts at 2.15pm.

Cost: £50 per ticket to include concert ticket, coach travel and driver's gratuity. Price based on 40 people attending.

Payment: By bank transfer if you can. Otherwise by cheque made out to Swindon u3a

Enquiries/Booking: Please contact ***Nina Stimson*** or ***Cindy Matthews*** by clicking on either of the names.





Are you interested in Aircraft or Flying ??

The **u3a Aviation Group** meets **every other Friday** at the **Gorse Hill Community Centre**. Our new season has already started and our next meeting is on **September 9th 2022**.

The meetings are held from **10.00 – 12.00** at which we have a full programme of speakers covering the Past, the Present and the Future of Aviation.

Time at our meetings is also spent socialising with the all important tea and biscuits being served during the morning.

Visits to venues of an aviation interest are arranged on a regular basis and we have a summer and a winter group meal.

If you would like any more information on our group you can either come along on a Friday morning to see what we are all about or you can contact our Group Organiser by clicking on his name.

Clynt Perrott

Copy Date Changes

The change made to the Copy Dates made at the beginning of the Year, to follow the monthly Management Meeting, have proved problematic. It has been agreed that distribution be on the last day of the previous month and that the Copy Date will be 12 days beforehand.

Geoff Bryan

St Andrew's Heritage Open Day Saturday 10th September 2-4pm

St Andrew's church in [Blunsdon St Andrew, in North Swindon](#), is delighted to be taking part, for the first time, in this year's Heritage Open Days event, by being open from 2-4pm on Saturday 10th September, with local experts on hand to answer your questions.

St Andrew's is a small Grade 2* listed building, dating back to the 13th century but largely renovated by architect William Butterfield in the 1860s. It contains some excellent examples of Victorian and 20th century stained-glass windows. Although it is now surrounded by modern housing estates, being set off the main road down a track it retains a prayerful tranquillity and is surrounded by a spacious churchyard where many generations of local families are buried.

We are delighted that local experts in the history of the church and churchyard and in stained-glass windows will be joining us to give talks on the day and answer questions, but we would also love to hear your stories about St Andrew's.

The church is not just a historic building, but continues to be a worshipping community serving the parish of North Swindon. We worship every Sunday at 10am and at other times during each month. We are looking forward to the licensing of Karen Vermeersch as a lay minister in October and the confirmation of Sally Robertson as vicar in November. You will find more details of these events and others in the life of our church on our website.

On 10th September, the church will be open from 2-4pm with talks about the church and churchyard at 2 and 3pm and about the windows at 2.30 and 3.30pm. Tea, coffee and cake will be served and donations to church funds gratefully received.

For further details please contact Sally Robertson 07588 594410 revd.sally.robertson@nschurch.org.uk, visit www.nschurch.org.uk or message us through our Facebook page: standrews.northswindon.

St Andrew's is located off Tadpole Lane, between Blunsdon Abbey Park and Lyall Close, SN25 2DW



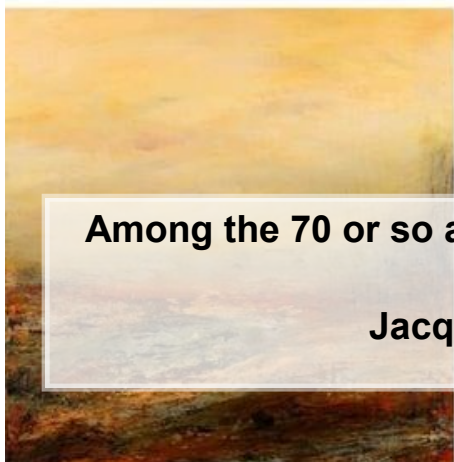


17, 18, 24 and 25 September

Meet Swindon's artists in their studios the last two weekends of September.

Over 70 awe inspiring artists will be welcoming you as they open the doors to their studios and pop-up galleries.

www.swindonopenstudios.org



Among the 70 or so artists taking part in this event will be two of our very own members.

Jacquie Primrose and Anthea Hilson

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(Answerphone operates when the office is closed)

Email: office@swindonu3a.org.uk

Web: www.swindonu3a.org.uk

Charity Number 298853

Copy Dates

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

18th September

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

19th October

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.