

January 2024



Happy New Year

Contents
Chair's Hello
What's On
News
Life in a Poem
Contacts

HELLO

and



By the time you read this Newsletter it will be a new year and you will be looking forward to a new start for your group meetings. I too will be making a new start by stepping down from the role of Swindon u3a Chair and looking forward to having a little more time to develop some of my other interests. I will still be around in various guises – as GO to 3 groups, and continuing to edit the Newsletter until we can find a new Editor. I want to thank all of you who have been supportive of me in my time as chair and will, I'm sure, continue to support the Swindon u3a Committee.

I have been Chair of our organisation for nearly 3 years. When I became Chair we were still in Covid lockdown and I have worked with the Committee over the following years to bring about the changes needed to ensure a secure future for Swindon u3a. I do believe it is time for someone new to take over as Chair and help to bring different ideas and thinking to the future development of the organisation. I will be leaving behind a strong and supportive Committee and I do hope one of our members (maybe YOU?) will step forward and Chair the Committee - a new year and a new Chair.

The situation has now become urgent. If you are a regular reader of the Newsletter you will have read the constant pleas for volunteer help over the last few months – and probably read on, assuming someone else will come forward. Well, no-one has! We are now without both a **Chair and a Treasurer**. Both are posts which **MUST** be filled if Swindon u3a is to continue. They are key core posts which both the Third Age Trust and the Charity Commission insist must be filled. If you care about your u3a and if you want to continue enjoying your interest and activity groups you need to consider offering a few hours a month to help out. Please get in touch with any member of the Committee to chat about what is involved and how you could help.

Please help out – I wish you all a happy and healthy New Year and look forward to seeing you at our various social events.

Warm regards

Gill

What's On



Monday 8 January 2024 - 2.00 pm - Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton, SN4 9LW

DON'T FALL FOR FRAUD - KEEPING YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE FROM THE FRAUDSTERS - NEIL MCCALLUM AND TIM SALT

Ever had someone knock on your door and tell you they can repair the problem with your roof you didn't know about? Or an email asking for help from a friend or relative who is stranded abroad? Fraud is now 40% of all recorded crimes in the UK. Last year fraudsters stole £1.2 billion. That's £2,300 for every minute of the year. The good news is that, even in this technology-driven world, a few simple steps can dramatically increase your financial safety and reduce the risks of someone cheating you.

Neil has over thirty years' experience of public sector performance and review work. He currently manages a portfolio of international projects, working with a range of judicial, law enforcement and non-government organisations on issues of accountability, transparency and good governance. He has worked on these issues in Botswana, Ethiopia, The Gambia and numerous other countries, including the UK.

Tim was a serving police officer heading the West Midlands Police Fraud Squad. He was a founder member and chair of the Association of Chief Police Officers Working Group on Fraud and Chair of the National Fraud Forum and represented the Police in discussions with the Law Commission on offences of fraud and corruption. Since leaving the police he has provided fraud and corruption prevention programmes for a wide range of organisation in both the public and private sectors across Europe, Africa and Asia. He has been an IPA member for more than 50 years.

Monday 12 February 2024 – 2.00 pm – 4:00 12 February 2024

**Coleview Community Centre, Towcester Road, Swindon SN3 4AS
'Driving safely in winter'.**

A presentation from the Older Drivers Forum for Gloucestershire (ODFG)

This evidence-informed presentation provides the latest advice on how to drive safely in the low light, low temperatures, and slippery conditions of winter roads.

It will be delivered by Alexandra and Nigel Lloyd-Jones who founded ODFG, as a positive legacy following the death of their mother in a crash.

Alexandra has over 30 years' experience in the voluntary sector. Nigel had a career in marketing communications specialising in the automotive industry. He now leads the Older Driver Workstream for the Gloucestershire Road Safety partnership.

ODFG is part of a cohort of seven Forums and is the only one run by the voluntary sector. The Forum's mission is to provide advice on how to keep mature drivers driving safely for longer, and how to plan for when it is time to retire from driving. They also support families, and carers concerned about a mature driver.

For further information visit www.olderdriversforum.com

**Monday 11 March 2024 – 2.00 pm – Coleview Community Centre,
Towcester Road, Swindon SN3 4AS**

5 of the 50 – BASED ON HER SWINDON IN 50 BUILDINGS BOOK – ANGELA ATKINSON

Swindon-based, Angela Atkinson is well-known as a champion of the town via her Born Again Swindonian blog. She's also a published author of five Swindon-related books – the most recent, a collaborative project about West Swindon came out shortly before Christmas 2023.

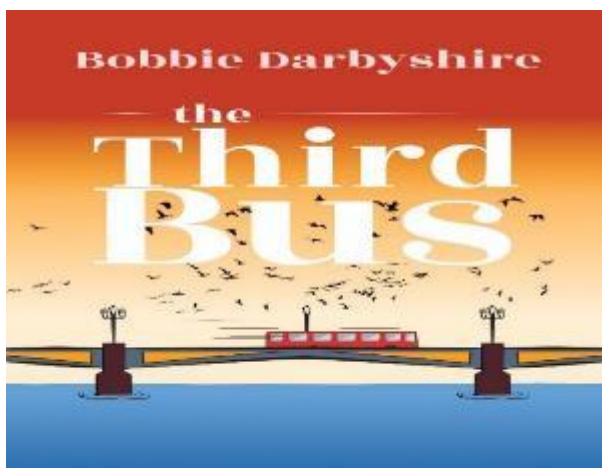


A small business owner, with a focus on writing or proof-editing business blogs, Angela is also currently the volunteer area lead for the Federation of Small Businesses.

She also sits on the committee of the Friends of Swindon museum and art gallery and the Mechanics' Institution Trust.

New book By Bobby Darbyshire

Members may remember that back in July 2022, Bobby Darbyshire spoke on the topic 'Where do novelists get their ideas from?' Her latest novel '**The Third Bus**' has recently been published.



An unappreciated man walks out of his dispiriting 42-year marriage with no destination in mind. At Victoria coach station, on the spur of the moment he boards a coach to Norwich in search of a new start. A late-life coming-of-age story, mixing humour and sorrow, hope and regret.

Copies are available from Waterstones, independent bookshops, libraries and Amazon

Swindon u3a ConcertGoers invite you to



STRASBOURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Anvil, Basingstoke: Wednesday
February 14, 2024 at 7:30pm (Free Pre-
concert talk about the music, at 6:30pm)

*Berlioz Overture:
Rachmaninov Piano
Franck
Ravel Mother*

*Roman Carnival
Concerto No. 2
Le Chasseur maudit
Goose Suite; La Valse*

"The concert opens with Berlioz' rollicking portrait of a feast day in Rome. Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto has a passionate and lyrical character has deservedly made it a favourite. César Franck's spine-tingling symphonic poem tells the tale of an arrogant huntsman cursed to be forever hunted himself for riding out on a Sunday. Ravel's two pieces include his delicate and touching evocation of six contrasting fairy-tales, and the dizzying kaleidoscope of La Valse".

Wednesday February 14, Concert 7:30pm, Talk (6.30-7.00pm) limited number of tickets available)

Coach pickup points (around 4-4:30pm) Highworth Brewery St, Ashington Way, Swindon Bus Station, Downsview Road (exact timings sent later), to arrive at The Anvil about 6pm. Cost for 30 people coming, £54-50 pp including best seats, coach & driver's tip. (If 40 come, you get a refund approx. £4 pp on the coach).

How to pay: BACS Bank Transfer (preferred) to Swindon u3a trips account, sort code 40-52- 40, account no 00022106. Please use reference 'Yourname Concert' eg Clegg Concert. Alternatively, you can post a cheque to Roger Marsden, 103 Goddard Avenue, Swindon SN1 4HU.

Please book and pay by 5 January. To book, please either complete the form below and send to Roger Marsden (RMarsden1938@gmail.com, Tel 07810 722908), or send him an email with all the following information: (NB – it's vital that we have your mobile phone no and desired pickup point):-

Name(s)

Membership Number (s)

Address

Important -Mobile Phone No

Email address

No of tickets

Amount paid (£54-50 pp) and method of payment Important –

Important -Pickup Point desired

State if you wish to book for the free pre-concert talk (sorry, limited number) ---

u3a Concertgoers to The Anvil, Weds 14 February 2023 Cost £54-50

Name(s): Membership No(s):

..... Address:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Mobile Phone No: Email (if possible):

.....

No. of tickets: Method of payment..... Amount
paid:.....

Pick-up point:

.....
.....

I wish to attend the pre-concert talk (sorry limited number): Y / N

Please return this completed form to Roger Marsden (contact info above)

Swindon u3a NEWS – a festive end to 2023!

Christmas Party 2023



Back by popular request, North Swindon Big Band entertained us with a variety of music ranging from Sinatra to Slade! Together with our own u3a Singers, they really got us in the mood for Christmas as we sang along to Christmas songs and carols. And of course, tea and cake was enjoyed by everyone too.

Some folk showed off their Christmas jumpers:





Some folk sang:



Much cake was eaten:



And Blessed are the tea makers:



Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

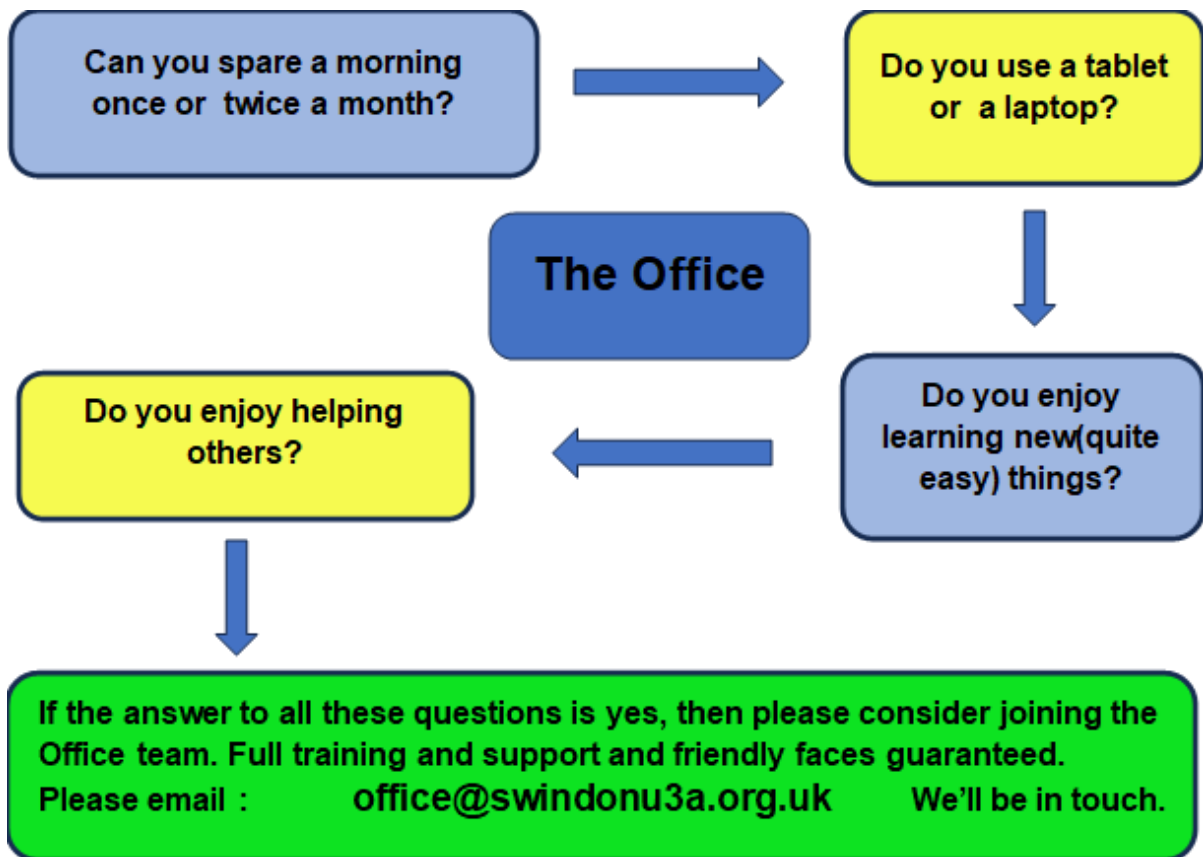
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.



Considered by some to be Frost's most perfect lyric conveying the "instant whisper of death at the heart of life". Stopping his sleigh in the midst of a snowy wood the speaker is called from the inviting gloom back to the practical duties of life.

Help wanted!



Management Committee

Chair	Vacancy
Vice-chair	Sonia Menadue
Treasurer	Vacancy
Secretary	Monica King
Office Manager	Sylvia Alexander
Membership Liaison	Jill Kelly
Accommodation	Chris Ockwell
Website Manager	Dave Todd
Groups Co-ordinator	Sharon Finch
Project Co-ordinator	Linda Young

Key Tasks (Non committee)

Assistant Office manager	Sue Carvey
Speakers organiser	Sue Cook
Minutes Secretary	Brenda Lammin

Contact any of the above via the Office

Office

Swindon u3a Office, Gorse Hill Community Centre, Chapel Street, Swindon, SN2 8DA

(entry is by middle door on right hand side of building)

Hours : Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10am until 12 noon

Telephone : 01793 614629

(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 Newsletter must be received by the Editor
by the 18th of the preceding month

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