



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

August 2024

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

It's been a fairly quiet month, as many of you will have taken a break to catch up with family and friends. We look forward to activities stepping up in September.

I thought it would be worth promoting potential new groups, including Board Games, Short Tennis, Apple iPhone, Short Holidays and a third Creative Writing group - further information can be found in the Potential New Groups section of this newsletter below.

We are taking part in the Tetbury Expo at the Dolphins Hall on 14th September, 10am - 2pm. This will give us an opportunity to showcase what we have to offer and a chance to recruit new members. Please pop in and join us if you can.

And last but not least, do have a look at our list of future Online Learning Events at Annex - everything from yoga to cryptic crosswords, art history and beyond.

Wishing you an enjoyable Bank Holiday.

Bernadette

chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Our next talk will take place on Tuesday 17 September, 10.30 at the Goods Shed, and will be provided by Roger Browne.

We will revisit American culture with another musical treat:

"The Great American Songbook" and it's political, musical, and cultural roots. Cotton Fields, Places of Worship, Low Down Dives, Minstrel Shows, Ragtime, Blues, Vaudeville, Operetta, Music Hall and Tin Pan Alley.

The fascinating lives and the memorable music and lyrics of: Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, George and Ira Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter, Lorenz Hart, Oscar Hammerstein, Harry Warren and many others.

Roger came to us in 2022 to much acclaim. He is an accomplished pianist and an amusing and knowledgeable speaker.

Anne Cox speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Potential New Groups

There are a number of potential new groups starting up:

Board Games, including Rummikub and Squeeze.

Please contact boardgames@tetburyu3a.org.uk if you would be interested.

Short Tennis - We plan to utilise the Badminton courts in the Leisure Centre at Sir William Romney School, the days and times have yet to be decided. The game can be quite fast and furious, is played with short rackets, and foam balls. The rules and scoring are the same as for Tennis.

Please contact groups@tetburyu3a.org.uk if you would be interested in Short Tennis.

Computing - Apple iPhone class

Lawrence is planning to restart the Apple iPhone classes in September following a summer recess during July and August. The class is ideal for beginners, and the starting point is how to switch the iPhone on and off. The class includes how to use App Store, Email, Internet searching, Camera, Notes etc.

Over time we progress to using and becoming confident using many apps including Car Parking, Navigation, Language Translators, Royal Mail and others. The emphasis is on how to use the iPhone, not how it is engineered.

Given sufficient demand an intermediate class could also cover Security, Financial, Banking and Authenticator apps.

Please email Lawrence at apple@tetburyu3a.org.uk if you are interested or would like more information.

Short Breaks is a new group that has been formed to organise short breaks/long weekends in the UK, mainly for people who would rather go with other people than by themselves. We are looking for additional members.

Bookings would be made as a group to ensure we all get separate rooms within the same Hotel/B&B but individuals would be responsible for their own expenses. The focus is on car share as this has nothing to do with coach based short breaks or tour operators. Destinations, attractions to visit etc would all be discussed as a group and democratically decided.

Please contact shortbreaks@tetburyu3a.org.uk for further information.

A third **Creative Writing** group is proposed, due to the popularity of the first two groups. The aim of this group is to improve the quality of our writing, enjoy the company of other authors and learn from each other. Please contact creativewriting@tetburyu3a.org.uk if this is for you.

Group News

Art Appreciation Group

J W Turner Chichester Canal (c 1828) was our first choice of discussion this month. The painting belongs to the Tate London collection but is on permanent display at Petworth House in Sussex.

Turner frequently stayed with Lord Egremont, the owner, who was one of his patrons. He also had shares in the Chichester Canal that opened in 1822, and hence he commissioned the picture. The picture reflects the tension between nature and the gradual encroachment of industrial development. The tall mast of the collier brig transporting coal is reflected in the distant spire of Chichester Cathedral whilst the sides of the picture show a fishing boat and wild ducks. The centre of the picture shows a pool of light from the low sun reflecting off the clouds and the water which shows up well in its darkened display room in Petworth.

In contrast, the outer parts of the picture are represented by warm shades of rust and ochre. It was suggested at the time that these colours were a result of a volcanic eruption in Indonesia in 1815 that affected the climate worldwide. The Canal never fulfilled its potential due to the contemporaneous growth of the railways that were more efficient at transporting freight although it did ship gold bullion for a number of years from Portsmouth to the Bank of England. Parts of the canal still survive.

For our next discussion we then looked at Body Art. Tattoos have been evidenced worldwide since Neolithic times, and amongst tribal peoples in particular, served to integrate people into the social fabric of the community and religious life by reflecting the wearer's ancestry and history. Tattooing spread in Europe, triggered by tattooed sailors from Captain Cook's voyages in Polynesia where they first encountered the practice. As a result, tattooing was largely

associated with the navy for many years and sailors' tattoos often reflected where they had sailed e.g. an anchor denoted that you had crossed the Atlantic.

We considered the different motivations for tattoos. To denote membership of a group or gang e.g. the Triad in China or the Yakuza in Japan. Nowadays in the West a tattoo is often seen as fashionable and a form of art and self-expression - there are hardly two identical tattoos in the world. Tattoos have also been used more practically for medical purposes to disguise disfigurement, to ensure accurate targeting of radiotherapy and to act as a medical alert e.g. displaying blood group. We agreed though that however cool a tattoo may look on young people, it inevitably became less so with age!

By Judy Greeman

artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Wednesday Book Club

At our meeting on a very hot July afternoon we discussed "The Woman in the White Kimono" by Ana Johns. A fascinating saga set in Japan in 1957 when a young Japanese girl, Naoko, falls in love with an American sailor much to the shame of her family who want her to marry the son of a Japanese business colleague. She was forced to make unimaginable choices with far-reaching consequences which led to an interesting discussion on mixed marriages in the 1950's and the difference in cultures.

Running alongside is a parallel story set in the modern day. Tori Kovac is an investigative journalist, and when her father dies she finds an unopened letter which makes her think she didn't know him at all so sets off for Japan to solve the mystery.

Beautifully written and inspired by true stories from a little known era in American and Japanese history - a nation concerned about etiquette and appearance. We all agreed that it was a gripping tale.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 28th August at 2 o'clock in The Royal Oak when we'll discuss Hilary Mantel's short stories in "The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher". New members are welcome.

By Pauline Whittaker

bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Gardening Group

The garden attached to the Special Plants Nursery near Cold Ashton is astonishingly beautiful and our visit this August did not disappoint.

Built from scratch since 1996 and planted with all manner of rare and interesting plants, it is like an oasis in a turbulent world and all the members who attended were very happy to have seen it. We liked it so much we are returning next month, this time to visit the Nursery, which is next door, and hear a talk on seed collecting. The photographs below do not do it justice but if you like the look of it they have lovely pictures on their website.

<https://www.specialplants.net/about-the-garden/>





By Judith Walker gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk

The Historic Buildings Group

The group recently visited two properties, Woodchester Priory and Corsham Court.

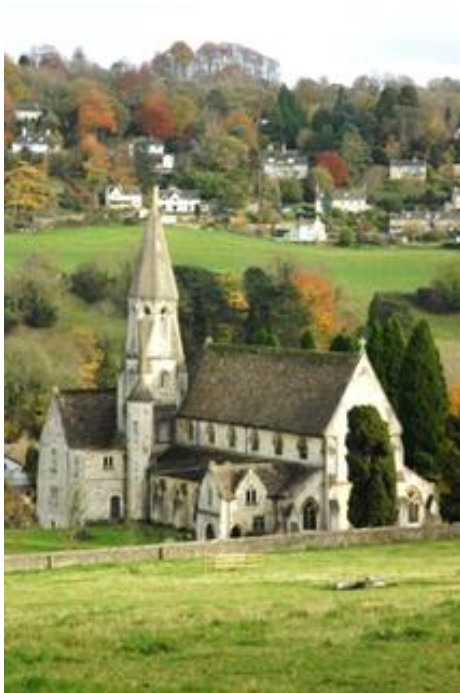
Woodchester Priory

At the end of July, 32 members of the Historic Buildings Group visited nearby Woodchester Priory. William Leigh was a landowner from Staffordshire with lucrative property interests in Australia. Disillusioned with the Established Church, he converted to Catholicism in 1844. In 1845 he bought the Woodchester estate from Lord Ducie and planned to finance a new religious community at the east end of his property. Pugin was invited to make designs but withdrew when Leigh decided to scale down the Church. The commission then passed to Charles Francis Hansom.

The foundation stone was laid in November 1846 and the Church was consecrated in October 1849, when the Priory was also inaugurated. The Priory buildings were completed in 1853, also to Hansom's designs. From 1855 Leigh's own house, Woodchester Mansion, was under construction. Designed by Benjamin Bucknall, who had worked in Charles Hansom's office, this was unfinished at the time of Leigh's death in 1873. William Leigh had simply run out of money because of his expenditure on the Church and Priory. Long abandoned, the Mansion is now in the care of the Woodchester Mansion Trust. The Group had visited Woodchester Mansion in 2022, so this visit was a continuation of the saga of William Leigh's involvement in Woodchester.

The Priory buildings closed in 1966 and, grievously, were mostly demolished in 1970; unfortunately, it wasn't listed. The buildings were riddled with damp and dry rot, and repair was deemed uneconomical. Apart from parts of the undercroft, hardly anything remains of the original Priory building. Fortunately, the magnificent church remains and is Grade 1 listed - so it shouldn't suffer the same fate as the rest

of the Priory. It is now known as the Church of the Annunciation and is part of the Stonehouse parish.



We were shown around the graveyard, crypt and church by Jane, an enthusiastic parishioner and historian, and her husband John. They were incredibly knowledgeable about the history of the Priory.

Apart from the many friars buried here, there were graves belonging to the two sons of Prime Minister William Wilberforce, and Elgar's sister. The stories behind these plus other burials were explained to us.

We then visited the crypt, containing the remains of many of William Leigh's family. Unexpectedly, another person interred in the crypt is the Bishop of Corfu! He fell ill while on a visit to England, and was invalided. William Leigh generously looked after him until his death. He was honoured with a place in the family crypt.

The Church itself is a splendid example of mid-Victorian decorated Gothic style, that remains almost unaltered since its completion. Our guides showed us around pointing out many of the outstanding features. We spent some time examining the original architectural model of the (now demolished) Priory. It was very instructive and allowed us to imagine what it must have looked like, and how it functioned.



The highlight for many of us was the fresco painted over the chancel arch. It depicts The Last Judgement, which Henry Doyle, the uncle of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, painted. It was restored in 2015, and looked magnificent when illuminated by spotlights.

We made a donation towards the maintenance of the fabric of the Church. It will be put towards replacing and improving the lighting of the Last Judgement fresco - a very fitting use!

Corsham Court

On a slightly damp Wednesday, 14th August, two groups from Historic Buildings visited the stunning Corsham Court, home of the 8th generation of Methuen-Campbells.

Dating from 1582, the Elizabethan house was modernised in 1760 and 1805, firstly by Capability Brown, who also remodelled the park and,

later, by John Nash, although his ambitious gothic design for the north front was so top-heavy that it had to be demolished forty years later, resulting in a court case. In 1760, Capability Brown planted an oriental plane tree which is known to be the "most spreading" tree in the UK (64 ft.). This can be seen in the extensive gardens.



The house was purchased by Paul Methuen in 1745 principally to house an extensive art collection he was to inherit. The state rooms, and particularly the gallery, are home to a vast art collection including works by Fra Filippo Lippi, Van Dyke, and Sofonisba Anguissola, and many others, and also Chinese and English ceramics and Chippendale furniture. There was so much to see that many were talking about a future visit, preferably on a sunnier day.



Next month, we will start taking bookings for the visit to Gloucester Prison on Tuesday 22nd October. Our full programme can be found here:

<https://tetburyu3a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Historic-Buildings-Programme-2024-v4-May.pdf>

By David Smith and Maggie Smith and Anita Stride - Joint Organisers
Historic Buildings Group.

historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Playreading Group 2

Our next reading is "Candied Peel" by Falkland L Cary. on Monday 2 September at 2pm. You will find a write up of Falkland Cary on Wikipedia, but not the play. If you google the play title you will get quite a few write ups by different acting groups. If you would like to attend as a guest to see how you get on you will be very welcome.

The Group Leader, Jeremy North, writes: "Due to the fact I now have problems with my eyes that make reading difficult, I now need to hand over group 2 to someone else. I can continue to host and organise it for the moment, to ensure this successful group continues."

By Jeremy North

playreading2@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Storytelling Group

The next session is at 2.30 pm on 28 August and we have room for two more members. Just come and listen or try the challenge.



The challenge: Tell a story about the Peace Rose!

Short or long, compose it in your head and deliver it without notes or write it down and read it if you prefer. Or choose a subject yourself from real life or from your imagination. 10 - 15 Minutes is ideal, but we have no time limits.

To join us contact: storytelling@tetburyu3a.org.uk

By Jeremy North

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is **Monday 23rd September**. Keep those reports coming in!

Please use the contact newsletter@tetburyu3a.org.uk to send your articles to Caroline, your newsletter editor.

u3a National Events

Online Learning Events

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership. Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves, sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. There is also a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations, plus in-person events at venues like the Royal Institution.

All of these events can be booked at the link below via Eventbrite. Online events are hosted on Zoom - further information and 'how to' guides are here <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Want to be the first in the know? Sign up to receive regular monthly updates on upcoming events: [subscribe here](#)

List of future Online Learning Events

On-line Event	Date and Time
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Thursday, August 29 · 10 - 11am
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: WWI Aviation	Tuesday, September 3 · 10am - 12pm
Mods Versus Rockers: A 1960s 'Moral Panic'?	Thursday, September 12 · 2 - 3:30pm
City Streets, Scottish Islands and Silhouetted Hills: Bet Low (1924-2007)	Friday, September 13 · 2 - 3:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Judith	Wednesday, September 11 · 10 - 11am
Exploring World Faiths: Charity	Monday, September 16 · 10 - 11:30am

Staying Safe Online - A u3a Presentation with Q&A	Tuesday, September 17 · 10 - 11:30am
Mindfulness and Meditation Continuation Session	Thursday, September 19 · 10 - 11am
Artificial Intelligence News	Monday, September 23 · 2 - 3:30pm
Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords	Tuesday, September 24 · 10am - 12pm
Mindfulness and Meditation Series	September 25 · 10am - 11:30am
u3a Week - Barnsdale Gardens	Tuesday, September 24 · 2 - 3:15pm
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Tuesday, September 24 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
Upgrade your Brain	Wed, 25 Sep 2024 14:00 - 15:30
u3a Week - The Secret Lives of Garden Bees	Thursday, September 26 · 2 - 3pm
Decimals Numbers Old and New with Dr Knott	Thu, 26 Sep 2024 14:00 - 15:00

Interest Groups Online

Interest Groups Online is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home. Like with a u3a, the activities are run by members and are a great way to meet people from all across the u3a movement.

It costs £12 to join for the year, equating to £1 per month. Membership runs from 1 April to 31 March. Membership and your groups are managed via the u3a Beacon Members Portal.

To become a member of Interest Groups Online you will need to fill out a short form and make your payment on the u3a Beacon Members Portal. As part of your subscription to Interest Groups Online, you can opt in to receive a free copy of the u3a magazine, Third Age Matters (TAM).

Take a look at the groups page for details on the wide variety of online groups, courses and talks, and how to join [interest groups online](#)