



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

October 2024

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

As we are well and truly into Autumn and the nights are drawing in, some of our outdoor u3a activities are wrapping up until the spring, and indoor activities are becoming more popular. But there's still plenty going on, including our monthly meetings - see article below by Anne Cox.

Our next monthly meeting on Tuesday 19th November will be followed by our AGM at 11.45am. We need 10% of our current membership to attend for the AGM to be quorate, so please come along if you are able to. The AGM documentation including the agenda is available on the website [here](#)

Many of you have booked a place at our Christmas lunch, to be held on Thursday 5th December at the Holford Arms, Knockdown, Tetbury, from 12pm to 4pm - and there are still a few places left. The lunch will

be in their newly-built Party Barn. For more information about the venue click [here](#)

The cost is £35 for 2 courses or £40 for 3 courses, all including tea/coffee and gratuity. Drinks at your own expense. If you wish to attend please contact support@tetburyu3a.org.uk

And last but not least, I have started the informal coffee mornings which will take place every Friday at the Goods Shed between 10am and 11.30am. These are available to any existing member or prospective members who would like to join our u3a. Feel free to pop round for a chat and bring a friend.

Best wishes Bernadette
chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Can I encourage you, if you haven't yet attended one of our monthly meetings at the Tetbury Goods Shed Arts Centre, to give it a try.

The speakers invariably open our minds to worlds we are unaware of and it's a great chance to meet up with friends and make new ones over a hot drink. The talks start at 10:30 am and there is a chance before, from 10am, and after the talk to meet up over refreshments.

Our October speaker took us on a railway journey from Pangbourne, near Reading, to Split, with stop-over tours of the cities of Munich, Ljubljana and Zagreb before finishing off in Split. An inspiring talk illustrating the possibilities and advantages of European train travel.

Our November Speaker: Our final talk of the year will be on **Tuesday 19th November, 10.30 at the Goods Shed**, from Jenny Mallin: A

Taste of India: My Grandmother's Kitchen at Christmas. This will be followed by our AGM, with refreshments.

Jenny's earliest memories are of her mother in the kitchen, tapping a wooden spoon against the side of the metal dekshi and then tasting her curry sauce, checking the seasoning. From that moment, Jenny was hooked.....

Jenny continues to raise awareness of both the Anglo-Indian Cuisine and her family heritage through her talks and cookery classes. With this talk, Jenny will take us into her grandmother's kitchen at Christmas.

By Anne Cox

speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk

News Flash

There are a few spaces on both **wine groups**. Wine Group A, which meets on the second Monday of the month, has a couple of spaces, and there are 3-4 spaces available on Wine Group R which meets on the first Tuesday of the month.

There are also places available on the **Friday iPhone class for beginners**, however the Tuesday iPhone class for beginners is full.

If you're interested in joining any of these available groups, please contact our group leaders via the email addresses shown on our website <https://tetburyu3a.org.uk/groups/>

Group News

Art Appreciation Group

This month we looked at Perspective specifically in connection with Italian art from Brunelleschi - who is generally considered to have pioneered its use - onwards.

There are different types of perspective which are used as a way of organising space within a picture and creating the illusion of three dimensions. How and where the painting is intended to be hung is significant. A painting made to be sold will invariably have an eye level perspective, paintings commissioned for cathedrals, however, will be displayed at a higher level and hence the perspective will reflect that the viewer is looking upwards.

Perspective can become complex - Canaletto's "Piazza San Marco, Venice, looking South and West" creates a panoramic view of Venice which, by use of Camera Obscura, appears to have been made by creating views from two slightly different viewpoints which would be impossible to see together in reality. Similarly, Raphael's "Coronation of the Virgin" depicts events on earth on the lower part of the picture which accords with the eye line of the viewer and a different perspective for the view of Heaven above it. A sense of aerial perspective was also briefly looked at - warm colours come forward and cool colours, like blue, are recessive.

This was followed by the life and times of Gwen John 1876 - 1939. She was born in Wales, the sister of Augustus John, and although as talented as her brother, she was not automatically offered the same advantages and had to fight her way to acceptance at the Slade Art School - the only art school that accepted female students albeit segregated from the males.

She received a thorough training in all aspects of drawing, including anatomy. She left for Paris in 1898 and went to Whistler's art school, Academie Carmen, where she learned how to paint. She was a very

insular person although at the same time intense and she had a rather obsessive relationship with Rodin whilst in Paris. She was fortunate enough to acquire a patron, John Quinn, an American, who bought most of her pictures. This enabled her the freedom to paint whatever subjects she liked and hence they are highly representative of her life and interests.

She converted to Catholicism and many of her pictures depict the back view of people in her church. She painted a number of small, beautifully still and contemplative paintings of nuns, solitary women, cats and of empty interiors with light streaming in. She led an increasingly solitary existence, became reclusive and died in Dieppe on her way back to England.

By Judy Greeman

artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

French Group

The group continues to build confidence and fluency in the language with prepared conversation topics, games and a monthly film matinee.

In November, we'll be watching the second part of *Les Enfants du Paradis*, a two-part French romantic drama film by Marcel Carné, produced under war conditions in 1943, 1944, and early 1945 in both Vichy France and Occupied France. Set in the theatrical world of 1830s Paris, it tells the story of a courtesan and four men — a mime, an actor, a criminal and an aristocrat — who love her in entirely different ways.

By Anne Cox

frenchconversation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Gardening Group

The Courts Garden is an English country Arts and Crafts garden in Holt, near Melksham, Wiltshire. The garden has been in the ownership of the National Trust since 1943 and is Grade II listed.



We had to park in the nearby village hall and then cross a busy road to enter the garden, but we had some inkling of how beautiful it would be as we made our way along a path lined with pleached beech trees to pay for our tickets.



The garden was an absolute delight and even so late in the season there was plenty to see. Even the weather was fairly kind, although the sun was rather elusive and there was a definite nip in the air. The autumn colours were beginning to arrive in the arboretum, which is what we had hoped to see in an October garden.

We did have a drive of nearly an hour to reach the garden but all of us felt it was worth it. It was one of the most beautiful gardens we have visited this year, and we all agreed it would be worth visiting again in a warmer season. This was the last garden visit of the year and what a high note to finish on!



By Judith Walker

gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk

The Historic Buildings Group

Visit to Gloucester Prison

The Historic Buildings group decided that a visit to prison would be interesting so made enquiries regarding the historic prison in Gloucester. There were several options; a ghost hunt at night by candle light, a paranormal investigation, a zombie apocalypse (guns for hire) afternoon or a straight-forward historic tour. Somewhat unadventurously, we decided on the historic tour!

Gloucester prison was built on the site of a Norman castle, rumoured to have been larger than the Tower of London. This was demolished in 1791 and a new County prison built. In the 1820s, the prison was rebuilt again, with the perimeter walls being extended, a new debtors' prison being added and a new gatehouse being built in the north-east wall. Executions took place on the roof of the new gatehouse from 1826 until 1868 when public executions became illegal.

Increasing in size over the ensuing years, the prison was finally closed in 2013 due to over-crowding and the expense of the upkeep of such an old building.

Our guide, Clive, gave us a fascinating and sometimes gory insight into prison life right up to the not-too-distant past, with details of public hangings, segregation of prisoners and the horrific ways the prisoners sometimes attacked each other. We were all relieved to be allowed out into the sunshine.

The whole site is due for redevelopment, so this was a unique opportunity to see the historic buildings in their historic form. It's a prime site in the city centre. It will be interesting to see how it is redeveloped.

By Anita Stride, Joint Group Leader Historic Buildings



Inside one of the wings of the Victorian era prison designed by Jeremy Bentham. Note the serpents on the balcony brackets reminding the prisoners of their fate in hell if they don't repent!



Outside one of the original prison gates dating from the late 18th century. The stone is recycled from the original Norman castle on the site.



19th century graffiti carved in the bricks of the Victorian debtor's prison. The artist was no doubt counting down his repayment of the debt.

A note from David & Maggie Smith

Anita has decided to step down for personal reasons from a direct role as (joint) Group Leader for our Historic Buildings Group after 4 years. It's been extremely valuable working alongside Anita in running our programme of visits. Anita has taken on her fair share of organising visits. We know how much time and effort it takes for each visit, and some can be more challenging than others depending on the communication skills of the hosts! So a big "thank you" to Anita from all our 133 members!

historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Playreading Group 1

September's read took place at the Royal Oak on the 30th. Ten members were present when we read Flat Spin by Derek Royle. Unfortunately information about the author is limited to an acting career. He died in 1990 at the age of 61. The play is a farcical comedy involving the frantic efforts of a young couple to keep their marriage secret so that she can take a much needed job.

I must admit it took a bit of following with lots of coming and going by a number of characters and, of course, it had a happy ending! So thanks to Bernadette for once again finding us an amusing play which certainly raised a few laughs.

By Dee Buss

playreading1@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Short Walks Group

Despite the weather, we have had two very enjoyable walks this month. The first was in lovely sunshine from the Trouble House to the Norman church in Ashley. This walk gives good views of Kemble airfield and a stroll through the very pleasant village of Ashley. Walkers had a good look around the church (see photo below).



Our second walk this month was from Chavenage Green to the, now re-opened, Tippet's Inn on the A46. Despite a rather muddy section close to the beginning of the walk, the track was good and we saw a range of wildlife including deer, hares, grouse and various birds of prey.

We had a short stop at the Tippet's Inn for refreshment before retracing our steps back to Chavenage Green.

As November is approaching our walks will be on hard surfaces in the coming months, the next one around Tetbury. In December, the u3a Christmas lunch is on our walk day, so we will walk to the Trouble House on Thursday 12th December for our annual glass of mulled wine and mince pie. If you are a member of the short walks group and haven't been for a while, we'd be pleased to see you.

By Judith Richardson

shortwalks@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Storytelling Group

Story of the month: Romance and Dust

Arras lay in ruins by October 1918 but the battle of Cambrai had broken the German front with over 200 allied tanks rampaging through France. The end was very near.

Imagine then, this ray of sunlight striking the steeple of a half ruined church in the main square of Arras, filtering down through the dust and piles of rubble all around. In front of the church is a young brunette in uniform, sitting on a racing motor bike. She is waiting for the army car that will bring her future husband to her.

She is thinking of how they met in battle when, as his corporal driver, they were both nearly killed by shell fire. She shivers at the memory of him pulling her from the wreckage and finding herself looking deep into his concerned eyes. Both of them had been lost in that moment and for ever. Today they would leave the church as husband and wife, with him in the sidecar, on a short honeymoon on the coast.

Her thoughts dwell on life after the war together, now that it is clear it would be over soon....after that appalling 4 years of wasted life and destruction. How lucky they were to have survived and could they just get through a few more months?



Her thoughts are interrupted by a battered army car coming round the corner and her heart leaps! There is her handsome engineer captain whom she last saw helping to clear the roads, just after the battles around Amiens, a month ago. There had been nothing for her to do as his driver these last

few weeks, except he had suddenly proposed to her in that funny bar behind the lines thus giving her a few weeks to get used to the idea! Sitting in the car with her future husband is the army chaplain. He will marry them on the ruins of the altar, using the cloth and chattels that chaplains carry with them into battle. ...how many brides can experience such a wedding as this?

Suddenly this all seems so symbolic. She knows that when they leave the church on their motorbike that this will be the start of new things rising out of the dust and rubble, just as France would rise up too. Tears well up as she remembers dead friends killed in battle. She knows she wants him and his children but what she needs deep down is peace of mind. Silently she vows that this must be the war to end all wars and nothing like this must ever happen again.

She is not to know that she would live through three more wars and lose a son in one of them. Dust to Dust.

Join us and take part or just listen.

By Jeremy North
storytelling@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Ukulele Group

The Tetbury and District u3a ukulele group (T'Ukes) was formed in March 2023, with seven members. This soon grew, and by the start of 2024 we numbered nineteen. The majority of the group, none of whom have left, were inexperienced ukulele players, or complete beginners, when they joined.

In May 2023 we entertained our first audience of residents, family and friends at Upton Mill Care Home. By the end of 2024 we will have played to 29 audiences in a variety of venues in Tetbury, Minchinhampton, Cirencester, Sherston and Malmesbury. Some of our

members have also twice supported ukeStroud playing at the Tetbury Goods Shed.

Our performances are all "sing along" concerts, whereby we encourage and enable our audiences to join in the singing. We do this by providing them with folders containing the lyrics of our songs, which mostly come from the 50s, 60s and 70s.

If you would like to see and hear us in action, why not join us at the Dolphins Hall on Thursday 19th December, 10am - 12 pm, when we'll be entertaining members of the Tetbury Friendship Cafe, at their Christmas Party.

By Mike Hoskin

ukulele@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Wine Tasting Group A

The Monday evening wine group generally meets on the second Monday of each month in members' homes - or gardens when weather permits in the summer months - and occasionally at Upton Mill or other venues. We also enjoyed a summer barbecue this year.

We have tasted a good selection of wines: wines from Portugal, wines from Aldi/Lidl, comparisons of Chablis, petit Chablis and Grand Crux, Holiday wines from Valencia, French Wines plus wines from around the world. Members all contribute some nibbles to enjoy with the wine. We are a very friendly group with lots of laughs and fun.

A couple of vacancies have now arisen in our group, so if you're interested in joining us from January, do contact our group leader at winetasting@tetburyu3a.org.uk

by Audrey Hateley

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the November newsletter is Monday 18th November. Without your reports there would be no newsletter, so keep those reports coming in!

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

See Annex below for list of u3a National Online Learning Events.

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
Artificial Intelligence News	Monday, October 28 · 10am - 12pm
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Tuesday, October 29, 3:30 - 4:30pm
Sustainability	Thursday, October 31 · 2 - 3pm
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting	Tuesday, November 5 · 10am - 12pm
Live Cookery Demonstration - Hearty Comfort Food	Thursday, November 7 · 10:30 - 11:30am
Summing up the 19th Century	Thursday, November 7 · 2 - 3pm
Exploring World Faiths: Faiths in Society	Monday, November 11 · 10 - 11:30am
Laughter Yoga with Judith	Wednesday, November 13 · 10 - 11am

The Drifting Continents - a Lesson in Geology	Friday, November 15 · 2 - 3:30pm
A Deep Dive into the 1921 Census	Monday, November 18 · 10am - 12pm
Cohousing: Collective Housing for Healthy Ageing	Tue, 19 Nov 2024 14:00 - 15:00
Mindfulness and Meditation	Thursday, November 21 · 10 - 11am
Artificial Intelligence News: November - AI and the Human Brain	Friday, November 22 · 10am - 12pm
Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance	Monday, November 25 · 10 - 11am
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Tuesday, November 26 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
What is Social Class?	Friday, November 29 · 2 - 3:30pm
Exploring the Universe with the James Webb Space Telescope	Wednesday, December 4 · 11am - 12:30pm
Live Cookery Demonstration - Christmas Special	Thursday, December 5 · 10:30am - 12pm
Artificial Intelligence: Present and Future	Friday, December 6 · 10 - 11:30am
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: Electric Powered Aircraft	Tuesday, December 10 · 10am - 12pm
Illuminating Hope: The Transformative Power of Christmas	Friday, December 20 · 10 - 11am

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 2023 to 31 March 2024. 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](#)

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the September newsletter is Monday 18th September. Keep those reports coming in!

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