



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

November 2024

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

I'd like to thank all those who supported our AGM on Tuesday 19th November, which followed a fascinating talk by Jenny Mallin, who shared her Anglo-Indian cuisine and heritage. We even sampled a delicious Christmas cake baked from her grandmother's recipe (we were reliably informed that this one contained fewer than the 150 eggs which some of her recipes included!).

Our u3a branch is thriving, and membership has increased to a current total of 368. There are currently 40 interest groups, including several newer ones added to the mix. We reflected on how our u3a has supported a number of community projects. These include work with the Lions, St Mary's playgroup, regular performances of the Ukulele group at local events, and having a presence at the Tetbury Expo event.

At the AGM we agreed our committee for the year going forward, and I'd like to extend a warm welcome to new members Maggie Roberts, Maggie Smith and Julia Walter. We will appreciate your fresh insights and new ideas, which will enrich our discussions, keeping our members at the heart of everything we do. In case you missed the AGM, a copy of the powerpoint presentation can be found on our website [here](#)

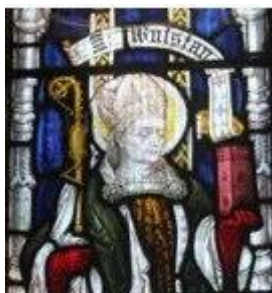
Well that's about it from me - I will be decorating our u3a Christmas tree in St Saviours Church, and attending a few Christmas lunches over the coming weeks.

There will be no newsletter in December, so I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families an enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

Best wishes Bernadette
chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Our next monthly talk will take place on Monday 20th January 10:30am at the Goods Shed, and will be provided by Mark Steeds on the subject of "St Wulfstan Citizen Saint".



Mark will talk about the geo-political background that led to Wulfstan becoming the last ever Anglo-Saxon Bishop. It will include the miracles associated with him that culminated in the banning of the slave trade between Bristol and Ireland in 1009

All our 2025 talk dates, on alternate Mondays and Tuesdays, are available on our website [here](#)

By Anne Cox
speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk

News Flash

u3a Friends

Did you know that you can sign up to receive a monthly email u3a Friends newsletter, provided by u3a National? The u3a Friends newsletter shares news, learning opportunities and member stories from across the u3a movement. Signing up to the newsletter means you are up to date and in touch with all that's happening across the movement as it happens. [u3a Friends Newsletter](#)

Cotswold Link

Did you know that the Cotswold Link is a network of u3as within the national movement and covers the area of the country defined as Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire?

In the interests of sharing and perpetuating the aims of the u3a movement, the Link has set up a reciprocal arrangement between its member u3as. Any member of a Link u3a may attend one Group activity in another Link u3a, without having to become a member of that other u3a. General meetings of the u3a do not count as a group activity. Session fees for the group activity will still apply. This is an entirely voluntary agreement between Link u3as but most participate.

Further information can be found here [Cotswold Link](#)

Group News

Art Appreciation Group

We covered two very interesting subjects this month that engendered a lot of discussion.

Firstly we looked at Donatello's David (circa 1440) in the Bargello Museum in Florence. It is an early renaissance cast bronze sculpture, relatively small at 158 cm high. It was considered revolutionary at the time as it was the first nude male sculpture since antiquity and it depicts David in Contrapposto stance, on the head of his enemy, Goliath. David is depicted as young, inexperienced and armed only with a stone (from his sling shot) thereby indicating his power comes from God.

Bronze was an expensive material associated with eternity and authority. It was commissioned by Cosimo de'Medici and thus signified the de'Medici's wealth and also their claim to power. David was therefore seen as a symbol of Florence and as the feather on Goliath's helmet represented Milan, the statue was interpreted as a representation of the superiority of "small and inexperienced" Florence over "mighty" Milan. Along the way, we learnt more about the "lost wax technique" used by Donatello on this casting.

This was followed by a look at the life and times of Marc Chagall (1887 - 1985). He was born a Hasidic Jew in Belarus at the time of Imperial Russia. His influences at this time of change were considerable and all contributed to his unique style of painting.

He spent his early years in St Petersburg studying art and left for Paris in 1910 where he stayed until the outbreak of war when he left France and returned to Russia. He was back in Paris in 1923 but left for the States as a refugee at the outbreak of WWII and returned to Paris in 1947. He continued to travel all over the world working on his commissioned wide ranging but always colourful art works, many of them depicting scenes from the Old Testament, and in diverse

locations from the ceiling at the Paris Opera House to stained glass windows including all 12 windows at All Saints Church in Tudeley (near Tonbridge). We talked about him living during a period of huge political upheaval, conflict and persecution of his race but he lived long enough to span seeing Imperial Russia, the Bolshevik Revolution and man landing on the moon.

By Judy Greeman

artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Book Club Wednesday

Five of us met on Wednesday 30th October to discuss Rory Stewart's uncompromising and candid book, "Politics on the Edge". It is the story of the challenges, absurdities and realities that he faced in the ten years of his political life.

We all admired his hard work and principled attitude to every role he was given - from MP for Penrith and the Border, he rose through the ranks, four departments and six ministerial portfolios in less than four years, finally standing for PM after Teresa May's resignation. We wondered what Britain would have been like if he had achieved it and wished that more MPs were as honest and committed!

Absorbing and fascinating, his memoir draws attention to the fact that, 'Cronyism, ignorance and sheer incompetence were everywhere.' A must read for anyone who wants to know what goes on behind the scenes.

By Pauline Whittaker

bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Pub Lunch Group

As usual this year the Pub Lunch Group are holding two Christmas lunches. The first, at the Beaufort Arms, Hawkesbury Upton on Wednesday 11th December 12.30 -13.00, is now open to all u3a members who have not found a Christmas lunch to go to. The second at the Old Royal Ship, Luckington on Tuesday 17th December 12.30 - 13.00 is getting near full. Both offer excellent value for money and the Beaufort Arms offers smaller portions.

If anybody wants a menu just drop me an email to: publunchgroup@tetburyu3a.org.uk

By Grahame Inman

Short Breaks Group

Short Breaks group got off to a slow start and, as yet, hasn't fulfilled its aim to arrange any short breaks. I blame myself as group leader for being too vague about the groups parameters so I thought I would take this opportunity to define them more clearly.

I formed this group mainly for people like myself who have a few weekday commitments but nothing to do over most weekends and would like to spend some time away but not by themselves.

The group's parameters are that travel is based on car sharing to go to a destination mutually agreed upon. We stay at an Hotel or Travelodge or similar accommodation we all agree upon, and pay our individual expenses.

The main aim is that we go away as a group, visit places together and spend meal times together, much like a family. The intention being to support each other and offer companionship to each other.

Currently I am the only driver who is willing to drive any distance and car share but I only have room for a maximum of four people with moderate luggage, five including me. More people willing to drive and car share would be a big boost for the group, as would more members.

I am suggesting that the nights we spend away are limited to Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday and possibly Tuesday. The short break can be any length we decide upon within those parameters.

The destination will be decided upon at group meetings and if we all have different ideas we will draw a destination out of a hat. It will pay to have a flexible approach to the entire short break as nothing will be set in stone until we have booked.

If your idea of a short break does not fit within these parameters then maybe this is not the group for you, but that shouldn't stop you from starting a group that fits your needs. Obviously if more drivers join who are willing to drive and car share then the parameters may change.

If you have any queries about the group or wish to join then feel free to contact me at shortbreaks@tetburyu3a.org.uk

A meeting will be set up in the new year once I know where we stand with membership.

By Grahame Inman

Storytelling Group

Imagine you are in an isolated farmhouse on Dartmoor on a dark stormy night in March. The wind is whistling in the chimney, but a bright fire lights the room and three figures huddled round it. There are no lights, just flickering shadows. Mathew is a keen walker staying at this B & B for the next few days. Newly arrived he is having a cup of tea with his host, Dick, and his wife Dorothy.

After some advice on the local walks and the likely weather pattern, Mathew is ready to see his room and settle in for the night. As he gets to his feet, a baby starts to cry, faintly, way off perhaps on the next floor or in the attic. Surprised, because the couple are well into their eighties, he asks "Do you have a grandchild staying?"

Dorothy looks uncomfortable, shaking her head. "Is it a baby you can hear? Well, I can tell you there is no baby here and the nearest house is half a mile or so. It`s probably the wind in the chimney you can hear, it really shrieks."

"Nay love, you know it is not the wind" Dick knocks his pipe out "It`s a baby all right...or was a baby. Do you believe in ghosts? Well we have lots of odd sounds and sights up here I can tell you. When you come to think about it, we humans have created ghosts of long dead people on TV, video tapes, records, photographs. If we can do it, then so can Nature, given the right conditions".

Mathew is not convinced: "Nature can bring back a spirit?"

Dick laughs; "Who mentioned spirits? When you see our late Queen on the Telly do you see her spirit? No, of course not. I think that maybe this old house acts as a record and can play back sounds or sights when the atmosphere provides the right needle....perhaps an electrical charge. Strange things happen on nights like this....there is something in the air. Now then, would you like to see your room?"

Story telling is on the last Wednesday of the month

By Jeremy North

storytelling@tetburyu3a.org.uk

And finallyWe will be taking a break from the newsletter in December, and the deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Monday 20th January. 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
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
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
Laughter Yoga with Judith	Wednesday, December 11 · 10 - 11am

The Paradigm of Plate Tectonics - a Lesson in Geology	Friday, December 13 · 2 - 3:30pm
The Hard Science of Herbal Medicine	Tuesday, December 17 · 11am - 12:30pm
AI News: December- review of 2024 and looking forward to 2025	Wednesday, December 18 · 10am - 12pm
Mindfulness and Meditation	Thursday, December 19 · 10 - 11am
Illuminating Hope: The Transformative Power of Christmas	Friday, December 20 · 10 - 11am

Interest Groups Online

Interest Groups Online offers a variety of peer led, online learning opportunities for its subscribers.

As part of the u3a movement, members generously volunteer their time and share their knowledge, skills and experience with the members in their groups. Some groups are more interactive than others, with an expectation that all members take it in turns to present their knowledge. If in doubt, give it a go. The more groups you try, the more likely you'll find the one you love.

To join a group, you must first be a paid member of Interest Groups Online. Annual membership is £12, covering the period from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. If you join after 1st October, the fee is reduced to £6.

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. Once you have decided which groups you want to join, you need to log on to the Interest Groups Online u3a Members Portal on Beacon to join a group. 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](#)