



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

January 2025

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone - wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

This is the first newsletter of the year, and it's great to see what our groups have been doing, including your festive gatherings. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our group leaders for their significant contribution to making our u3a the success it is.

In this issue you will see that we are starting 'drop-in' Tech Support sessions once a month for users to bring phones, tablets or laptops along and receive individual support with particular issues that they may have - see article at News Flash.

Our monthly talks continue to be well supported, and the programme for 2025 can be found on our website [here](#). Due to some resistance, our committee has decided to revert to the previous regime for refreshments whereby volunteers will be sought at each monthly meeting. See Anne's article below.

Sixty of us enjoyed a hearty Christmas lunch at the Holford Arms barn on the 5th December. We thought the food was excellent - good quality and generous portions. The barn was warm and spacious, with plenty of room to mingle before the lunch, and nicely decorated with a festive touch. A most convivial occasion, especially on a dreich winter's day.



On the subject of lunch, you may be interested to attend the lunch club at Upton Mill - the next one will take place on Wednesday 29th January - see article at News Flash.

And last but not least, I'm continuing the informal coffee mornings which 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

On 20th January we were treated to a talk by Mark Steeds on the subject of St Wulfstan, Citizen Saint.

Mark raised the veil on the life and times of 11th century Saint Wulfstan, his influence on his peers and the subsequent history of the social justice issues he tackled. An early campaigner against the slave trade, he succeeded in having the trade of white slaves to Ireland banned. According to William of Malmesbury, who chronicles his life in detail, he was a truly pious man who renounced the distracting pleasures of the flesh - like congress with women and the eating of meat - in order to dedicate himself fully to prayer and the charitable life of a follower of Christ. His influence with monarchs, the powers of the church and ordinary people was strong because of this and he really deserves to be better known.

**Our next talk on Tuesday 18th February will be from Paul Barnett
"Port to Port - The Sharpness to Gloucester Canal"**

Join us to learn about the history of this local canal which stretched from Gloucester Docks to the Severn at Sharpness. We very much hope you can join us.

Refreshments Volunteers

u3a can only function if people volunteer for the work needed to run it. This includes your committee, group leaders and all the volunteers who help with events, giving up their time and sharing their skills and knowledge free of charge.

In the autumn, we asked group leaders to sound out their members to find volunteers to serve tea and coffee at the monthly meetings. Despite the positive response to this at the group leader party held in the summer, there was subsequent resistance to the idea so, we have decided to scrap the system and volunteers will be sought at each monthly meeting. Many thanks to participating group leaders and

their members who volunteered for the January and February slots. Your help is very much appreciated.

By Anne Cox

Speakers Secretary

speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk

News Flash

Tech Support Group

Tetbury & District u3a currently has three different groups dealing with technology - an Apple Group, an Android Group and a Windows PC Group and quite often their work is supporting individual users with technology issues. From February we are going to trial an additional type of 'Group', a Tech Support 'Group' which will be a 'drop-in' available once a month for users to bring phones, tablets or laptops along and receive individual support with particular issues that they may have, provided by experienced users.

Some examples of issues we may be able to help with are:

- Email not working correctly
- Apps/software not working or not being used fully
- Moving, copying and deleting files
- Using 'the cloud' for storage

We may not be able to solve every issue but we can offer advice and point you in the right direction if it's not something we can help with immediately.

The first drop-in will be upstairs at The Royal Oak on Thursday 13th February from 10:30-12:30. Thereafter if the demand is there we will be available on the second Thursday of every month. There is no requirement to register for this and no cost to u3a members but we

will ask attendees to buy a coffee or drink at The Royal Oak who are providing the room free of charge.

If you have any questions about this 'drop-in' support please email tech@tetburyu3a.org.uk.

Finally, if you think you would be able to help users with Apple, Android or Windows/Microsoft please get in touch as we are hoping to set up a rota of people who can offer support.

By Martin Doidge

Upton Mill Lunch Club

You may be interested to attend the lunch club at Upton Mill which is running throughout January. The next one will take place on Wednesday 22nd January, and there's another on the 29th. Here, you can enjoy a delicious freshly prepared lunch and the opportunity to meet new people in a warm and welcoming environment. To register your interest or find out more, please contact Laura, the Client Services Manager on 01666 336600 or email csm.uptonmill@porthaven.co.uk

Group News

Art Group

We have recently held our Friends and Family Exhibition of work which we have done over the past year, and were delighted that Bernadette was able to join us.



In the summer we held an en plain air session at the Goods Shed when we enjoyed painting or sketching in the warm sunshine.

Our numbers over the year have remained fairly constant however we now have a couple of vacancies so if anyone would like to join us please contact me at art@tetburyu3a.org.uk

By Gwyneth Richards

Winter Boules Group

Despite Boules being thought of as a summer sport, our Boules group tries to play all year round and while it has been chilly over the last few weeks we don't mind the cold, only the rain! Playing on frozen gravel, or around puddles occasionally presents a different challenge to playing on nice dry gravel in the summer but it all adds to the fun!

In early December, 23 of our members enjoyed a delicious Italian Christmas lunch at our regular venue Mia Famiglia just outside Malmesbury. Then just before Christmas we played some fun Boules games like 'Jack In The Box', 'Boules Tug of War' and 'Spider' with chocolate prizes for the winners. We saw the New Year in by wrapping up very warm and playing on a very frozen surface at Mia Famiglia.



Our second Boules venue at The Royal Oak Tetbury is closed for much of January but Boules will resume there shortly and we look forward to playing at both venues in 2025 as the weather (hopefully) warms up. If you are interested in joining the Boules group (no experience or equipment needed) please contact boules@tetburyu3a.org.uk

By Martin Doidge
boules@tetburyu3a.org.uk

French Group

Our group met twice in December first for our Conversation session at the Priory Inn on the theme of " A Child's Christmas", where the interpretation of the topic was as usual wide ranging and very interesting.

Our second get together was for our monthly film matinee. The film was the first of the 'Trois Couleurs' trilogy by Krzysztof Kieslowski: Trois Couleurs: Bleu (Blanc et Rouge). We watched the second of these psychological dramas, loosely based on the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, in January and the third is scheduled for February.



And on into 2025.....



At the beginning of January we had our annual Fêtes des Trois Rois party with the traditional frangipan galette and a delicious selection of bring and share savouries.

Our second meeting was to watch the second of the Trois Couleurs trilogy mentioned aboveand our third meeting was a fun games

session. Being January, we sang the French version of Auld Lang Syne and indulged in a rousing rendition of the Marseillaise then played our own board game, set in medieval Carcassonne, with cards that give forfeits relating to Huguenot Carcassonne or invite us to recount things in French.



Our activities are designed to be enjoyed by all levels, so if you are interested in joining us, please get in touch through the u3a Tetbury and District website.

By Anne Cox, French Leader
frenchconversation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

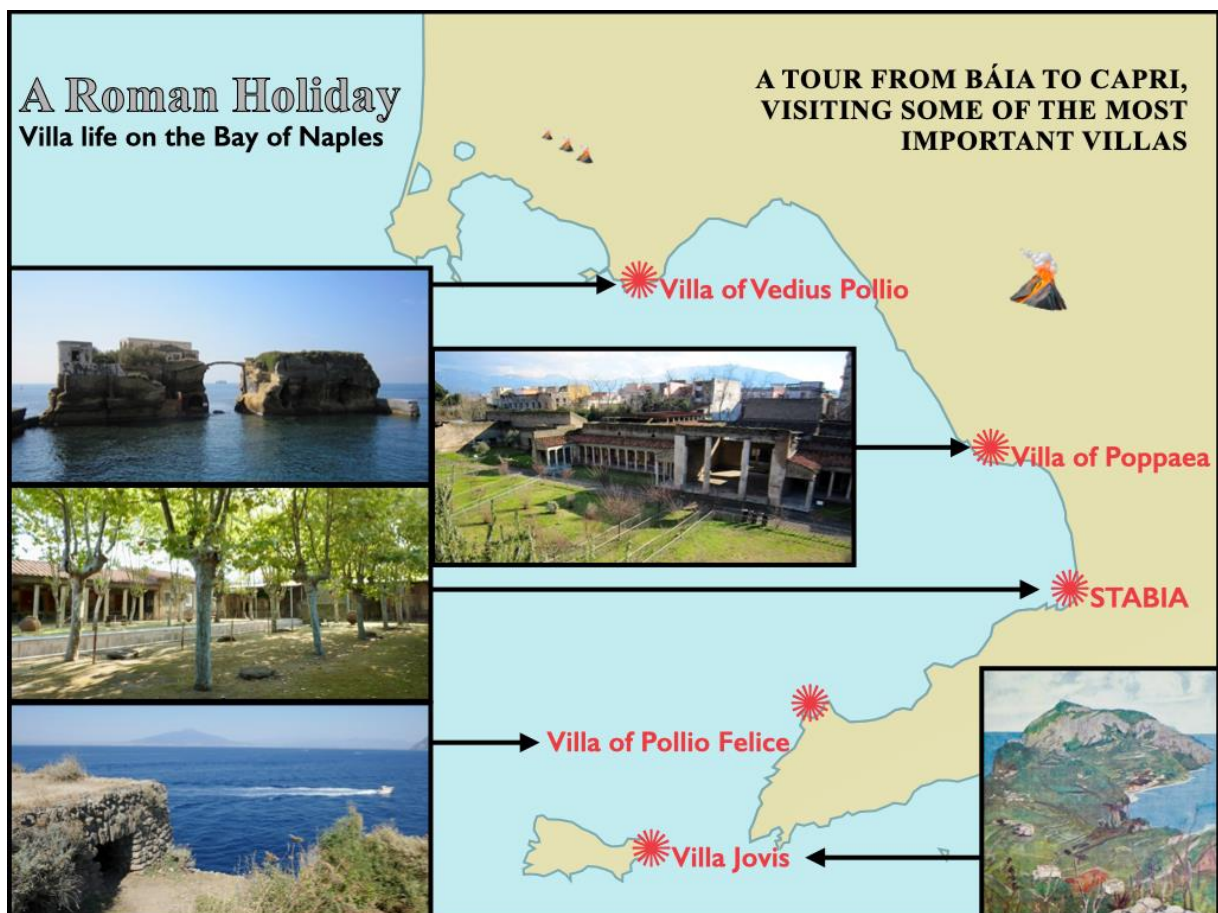
History Group

A Roman Holiday

Leaving a wet November behind we took a journey with group member George Keeling from Rome to the Bay of Naples to visit some of the greatest of the Roman Villas.

- Not normally open to the public, the Villa of Vedius Pollio is reached through a 700m tunnel; it has a 2,000 seat theatre and a smaller covered Odeon; it's extensive luxury fish farm centred around two small islands.

- The Villa of Nero's wife Poppaea is excellently preserved and includes a larger than olympic sized swimming pool.
- At Stabia the Villa San Marco has two huge gardens and still commands expensive views across the bay.
- South of Sorento the Villa of Polio Felice was just one of the three he owned in the bay and is on a promontory looking out to Vesuvius and Capri
- Finally we visited Tiberius's Villa Jovis high on Capri, a private paradise for a reclusive emperor but in contact by signal towers with the great naval base on the far side of the bay.



The annual u3a History Group Xmas lunchtime picnic party and quiz took place in the railway carriage behind the Goods Shed.



December is a busy time so some people were not able to attend, but those present all brought food, drinks and challenging/entertaining history themed questions that whiled away a convivial couple of hours. The Group thanked David Walker for leading it from the start and looks forward to his continuing as an active member after having given up the leadership.

If you are interested in history in any form, do think about joining us. You will be most welcome.

By Bob Kelley

history@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Ukulele Group

During February 2023, three ladies got together to form a Tetbury and District u3a ukulele group. Since that time the group has flourished in a variety of ways.

With no one leaving the group since its formation, and several new members joining during those two years, the group now boasts 22 members, which is its maximum number, due mainly to the capacity of the group's practice venue. The group continues to meet every Tuesday afternoon in the restaurant at Steepleton Retirement Village.

Back in the day, that initial group quickly found a leader, and took on new members until the beginning of 2024 when it grew to 19 in number. Each growth period necessitated finding a new larger practice area. Three new members have joined this January, bringing the group up to its present maximum number.

During 2023 the T'Ukes, as we are known, very quickly became involved within the local community playing and singing to entertain residents at Tetbury Care Homes, and audiences at other venues. We soon spread our wings, travelling out of county to Malmesbury and Sherston, and in county to Minchinhampton and Cirencester, to perform in various care homes, church halls and at Longfield Hospice. During 2024 we entertained audiences at 9 different venues, on 18 occasions. We already have bookings for this year, including a couple of new venues.

Our repertoire now includes over 100 songs, and it's our policy to encourage our audiences to sing along with us by providing them with folders containing lyrics sheets for those songs we will be playing. On occasions, when appropriate, we also enable members of our audiences to accompany us on small hand held percussion instruments, which we also provide. Our singalong concerts prove very popular with songs

from the 40s to 70s bringing back wonderful memories for those listening to, or singing along with us.

The ukuleles we play range from the smallest size, a soprano, to a concert, then a tenor up to the largest ukulele of all a baritone, but recently one of our members has taken on the responsibility for learning and playing a bass ukulele, so providing that steady beat which keeps us all in time!!

In August of this year, it was suggested by a member of one of our audiences that we might also raise funds for a local charity. We jumped at that idea, quickly sought the permission of Longfield Hospice, and since August have raised £500 through donations from our audiences. A cheque to that value was presented to a representative of Longfield Hospice at our practice on 21st January.



So during the short existence, the T'Ukes family has grown in number, rapidly increased its repertoire and ukulele and singing skills (the majority of the group being complete ukulele beginners when they joined), purchased new and better ukuleles and music stands, prepared and printed hundreds of song sheets, provided enjoyment and the opportunity to sing, and raised funds for a hospice that provides a wonderful service to families experiencing terminal illness.

Quite rightly, every member of the T'Ukes feels proud of what they have achieved, both individually and as a group, whilst striving to further develop their skills, and continue to entertain ourselves and others, hopefully for many years to come.

Do come along to hear us play on 16 April at the Tetbury Goods Shed, from 2pm - 4pm. The café will also be open for the sale of delicious cakes and refreshments.

By Mike Hoskin

ukulele@tetburyu3a.org.uk

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the newsletter is Monday 17th February. 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: January - AI and Education	Monday, January 27 · 9:45 - 11:30am
Staying Safe Online - A u3a Presentation with Q&A	Tuesday, January 28 · 10 - 11:30am
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie: January	Tuesday, January 28 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk One	Thursday, January 30 · 2 - 4pm
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: Zeppelin, Rise and Fall	Tuesday, February 4 · 10am - 12pm
An Introduction to AbilityNet/BT Group Partnership and BT Digital Voice	Tuesday, February 4 · 2 - 3pm

Choosing Your Next PC or Laptop	Wednesday, February 5 · 1 - 2:30pm
Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords	Thursday, February 6 · 10am - 12pm
Sociology, Gender Inequality and Feminism	Friday, February 7 · 11am - 12:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Judith: February	Wednesday, February 12 · 10 - 11am
A Few Small Nips: Frida Kahlo and the art of pain	Thursday, February 13 · 2 - 4pm
Claude Monet's Garden in Giverny	Friday, February 14 · 10 - 11am
Hadrian's Wall - A Celebration!	Friday, February 14 · 2 - 3:30pm
Agritech: Technology enhancing Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability	Wednesday, February 19 · 1 - 2:30pm
Things you didn't know you could do online, for older people	Tuesday, February 18 · 2 - 3:30pm
Mindfulness and Meditation Continuation Session: February	Thursday, February 20 · 10 - 11am
An introduction to Vedic Maths	Thursday, February 20 · 2 - 3pm
Artificial Intelligence News: February - AI in Government	Friday, February 21 · 2 - 4pm
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie: February	Tuesday, February 25 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
Penguins: Icons of Antarctica	Wednesday, February 26 · 2 - 3pm
Initiatives for Care	Thursday February 27 2pm
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Two - Vision	Thursday, February 27 · 2 - 4pm
Philosophy as a way of life	Friday, February 28 · 2 - 3pm

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 of the next year. 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](#)