



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

February 2025

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

In this issue you will see that we have started to offer 'drop-in' sessions for members needing help with a wide variety of issues on their phones, tablets and laptops. The next opportunity to ask for 'tech support' will be Thursday 13th March from 10:30-12:00 upstairs at The Royal Oak.

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. I also hope to see you at our next monthly talk on 17th March, after which you can meet other members over a tea or coffee - following your feedback we are now using coffee bags which might be more appealing.

Don't forget to look at the list of future Online Learning Events at the Annex - covering a huge range of topics from yoga to Artificial Intelligence and Cryptic Crosswords for beginners.

And finally, we have some places available on both our wine groups - see article below.

Best wishes Bernadette
chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Our next monthly talk will take place on Monday 17th March 10:30am, at the Goods Shed, and will be provided by Paul Riddick and Roger Bellairs on "Community Connections". They will talk about the service provided by Friends of Tetbury Community Transport and Cotswold Connections.



TETBURY VOLUNTEER CAR SCHEME
IN COLLABORATION WITH AND SUPPORTED BY
FRIENDS OF TETBURY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

This service is provided to residents with a **GL8** postcode, who have no transport of their own and are unable to use public transport.
Our DBS checked drivers are local volunteers.

Community Connexions
CC

Call to book!
Bookings are taken on a first come first serve basis and are subject to volunteer availability.
Essential escorts travel free!

VOLUNTEER
0345 680 5029

An annual £20 registration fee is payable

www.communityconnexions.org.uk
info@communityconnexions.org.uk
Registered Charity No:1119310 Company No:05880006

A local community transport charity helping those with mobility issues in your area.

By Anne Cox
speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk

News Flash

We held our first 'Tech Support' drop-in session this month at The Royal Oak which was attended by ten u3a members needing help with a wide variety of issues on their phones, tablets and laptops. Our 'experts' were able to offer solutions to most of the problems and some of the attendees had problems that had frustrated them for some time resolved.

We will hold these 'drop-in' sessions on the second Thursday of each month so the next opportunity to ask for 'tech support' will be Thursday 13th March from 10:30-12:00 upstairs at The Royal Oak.



Potential New Groups

There is a list of potential new groups on our website, which were suggested by u3a members some time ago.

Cryptic crosswords	Calligraphy
Board games	Craft
Safari supper	Astronomy
Investment group	Aviation
Military History	Sign language
Line dancing	

Regrettably we have not received sufficient interest to make any of these groups viable, therefore we thought we would give you the opportunity to express interest in creating or joining any of these, before removing them from the website.

Please contact groups@tetburyu3a.org.uk to express an interest in creating or joining any of these potential new groups. Please note that we cannot guarantee setting up any of these groups, as this would depend on finding willing group leaders.

Group News

Art Appreciation Group

This month we looked at the work of Antony Gormley, in particular the Angel of the North in Gateshead. He was born in 1950, and after a broad education - Ampleforth, Cambridge and travelling to India and Sri Lanka to learn more about Buddhism - he returned to the UK, made his first artworks and attended Central Saint Martins for a post graduate degree in sculpture.

Perhaps his most influential work is the Angel of the North, completed in 1998 and seen, it is estimated, by 33 million people a year, either passing by on the A1 or visiting the fully accessible site of its construction, the site of a former colliery pithead baths.

It was commissioned in 1994 with the express purpose of creating a memorial "embracing the open air" to the miners who for two centuries worked in the dark below. It was also to act as a "focus of hope at the painful time of transition for the people of the North East" and was a catalyst for the cultural regeneration of the area which led to the construction of the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, the Sage and the Baltic.

It is 20 m high and is made of steel with a small amount of copper - which creates the surface patina - and it will deteriorate gradually over more than 100 years. Fittingly, it was also made in the North East. We had a wide ranging discussion about the Angel ranging from its location, the response it engenders in the viewer, the significance of an Angel as a subject, its construction and its wind resistant aerodynamics.

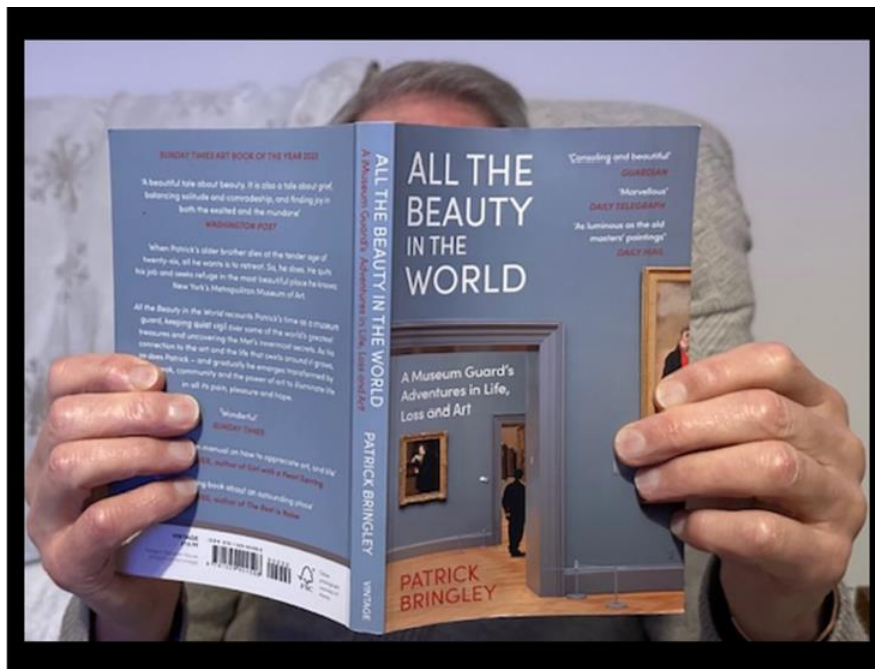
By Judy Greeman

artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Book Club Monday

Our January book choice was 'All the Beauty in the World' by Patrick Bringley, written by him following the death of his beloved elder brother, when, needing time for grieving and private reflection, he applied to be a guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The book offered a rare insight into a profession we've probably all encountered but, equally probably, taken for granted - the museum guard - and lifts a veil on those we see as "simply standing around" without ever wondering how they interact with the masterpieces around them and how they regard and classify us, the visitors.



This prompted a lively and wide-ranging discussion on how we engage with art and why we often rely on others - critics - to interpret it for us. Given that the author was struggling with bereavement we also ventured into reactions to that and, in particular, his forsaking his high-powered publishing job for an, ostensibly, unskilled role.

On balance the group liked the book, although some found it a little marmite - either loved it or not - which resulted in the whole group awarding an average of 3.8 out of 5.

Next month takes us into the world of Italian detectives, not Montalbano, but Donna Leon's Commissario Brunetti.

By Douglas Looman

bookclubmonday@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Book Club Wednesday

Eight of us met on Wednesday 29th January to discuss "The Lost Bookshop" by Evie Woods.

A mixture of fantasy and reality, it was quite challenging to unravel the threads and work out where the magic began and ended. It led to a very interesting afternoon discussing the book as we all had different questions and images in our heads. Definitely a book that cries out for discussion, I found I had much cleaner ideas after our meeting so thanks to all present.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 26th February when we'll have read "The Figurine" by Victoria Hislop.

By Pauline Whittaker

bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Gardening Group

About twenty of us braved the chilly but sunny weather for our first visit of the season on 17th February, to see the snowdrops at the Cotswold Farm Gardens, near Duntisbourne Abbots.

Described as an enchanting Arts and Crafts garden designed by renowned architect-craftsman Norman Jewson in the 1930s, the garden is laid out with terraces on descending levels, enclosed by Cotswold stone walls and yew hedges, and topiary.



We had not visited this garden before and were pleasantly surprised.

The mature garden overlooks a peaceful valley, and we enjoyed the views from the comfort of the conservatory with a hot drink or soup.

The garden will be open for [National Garden Scheme](#) on certain dates in May, June and August.



Our next visit will be to Newark Park on Monday 10th March.
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/gloucestershire-cotswolds/newark-park

New members are always welcome - please contact me for further information about our programme of visits.

By Caroline Hose
gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk

The Historic Buildings Group

We are still busy working away at putting a full programme of visits together for 2025. It's been slow progress getting replies from some organisations, but we do have some confirmed dates at this stage to put into your calendars. At this stage, we are only taking bookings for Stratfield Saye.

April 30th - Kingston Bagpuize House and Garden. Kingston Bagpuize House remains a family home. Surrounded by garden and parkland this beautiful early Georgian style house is in red brick with stone quoins, banding and window surrounds. The entrance hall is dominated by the handsome cantilever staircase, and the elegant reception rooms have period furniture and paintings.

May 8th - Stratfield Saye House is the ancestral home to the Dukes of Wellington since "The Grand Duke" bought it with funds donated to him by a grateful nation after the Battle of Waterloo. The House retains many artefacts from the 1st Duke of Wellington. We are now taking bookings for this trip.

June 12th - Bromesberrow Place, nr Ledbury. Private group visit behind closed doors to see this classical Greek Revival house. Introductory talk about the House, followed by a tour of the House and gardens.

July/August/September - to be confirmed

October 22nd - PM - Chavenage House tour & afternoon Cotswold tea.

We also hope to arrange another Sunday morning visit to Frocester Court when the owner can spare some time from his farming. A small group visited last year and we found it an extraordinary experience.

If you are interested in joining the Group or for further information about any of the visits, please contact the Group Leaders at

historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk



By David & Maggie Smith
historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk

History Group



The Group's January meeting was a really enjoyable, informed discussion of the deeds, misdeeds and legacy of the Prince Regent, later King George IV.

Members focussed on various aspects of his life, resulting in a fun and educational session.

Portrait by Thomas Lawrence, 1821

Our topic for February will be "Industrialisation and Reform in Victorian Britain" covering the period from roughly 1830, where we left off in January, to 1851 - The Great Exhibition.

We are happy to welcome new members, so if you are interested, please contact us via the address below.

By Bob Kelley

history@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Playreading Group 1

The author of our latest reading of a play was by Bernard Shaw - 1856 to 1950 - who wrote over 60 plays, with "Pygmalion" being the most famous. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature and was a political activist which influenced his writing.



Twelve members of the Play Reading Group met this month to read through "The Apple Cart". This play was first performed in 1929 and set in 1967. The meeting between King Magnus (all names are Roman) and his government takes place in the Royal Palace. The government's aim is to depose the King and remove all his powers, but the King outwits the government by bowing to their demands and announcing he will stand as Prime Minister.

The play took some reading, being nearly 100 pages long with many characters, but we met the challenge with determination and a few laughs.

By Dee Buss

playreading1@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Wine groups

There are two wine groups and both currently have some vacancies.

We expect that most members will be free to attend each monthly meeting. We take it in turn to host an evening which entails deciding on a theme and buying some wines to illustrate it once or twice a year, e.g. wines of the Loire, or Morocco.

The member hosting has free reign to set the agenda and choose the wine. It is very democratic! The host is re-imbursed by the group, typically £10/head. Sometimes the groups combine for a summer evening or vineyard visit. One of the groups meets on the second Monday evening each month at 7pm, the other meets on an ad hoc basis.

You would be most welcome to come to a meeting as our guest. Please contact the Group Leaders at winetasting@tetburyu3a.org.uk

By Robin Voice

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Monday 24th March. Without your reports there would be no newsletter, so keep those coming in. Do continue to send me your photos of group activities, as they liven up the newsletter, but please confirm with anyone featured that they are happy to be seen.

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 - AI in Government	Friday, February 21 · 2 - 4pm
Nanophotonic Devices for Healthcare Applications	Wednesday, February 26 · 11am - 12:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Tuesday, February 25 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
Penguins: Icons of Antarctica	Wednesday, February 26 · 2 - 3pm
Future Lives Panel: Initiatives for Care	Thu, 27 Feb 2025 14:00 - 15:30
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Two - Vision	Thursday, February 27 · 2 - 4pm
Philosophy as a way of life	Friday, February 28 · 2 - 3pm

The Lifecycle of a Laser: From Prototype to Making Stars on Earth	Monday, March 3 · 10 - 11:30am
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: Artificial Intelligence in Aviation	Tuesday, March 4 · 10am - 12pm
Apps to help seniors being out and about: A travel focus journey	Tuesday, March 4 · 2 - 3:30pm
The Climate Crisis and Some Solutions: The Truth in Ten	Wednesday, March 5 · 10 - 11am
How Best To Use Facebook	Wednesday, March 5 · 1 - 2:30pm
Growing Up Human: The Evolution of Childhood	Thursday, March 6 · 10am - 12pm
The Gothic: Tracing the Genre from Medieval Architecture to The Goths	Friday, March 7 · 2 - 3pm
Exploring World Faiths: Faiths and Water	Monday, March 10 · 10 - 11:30am
Dorothy Levitt: The Fast Lady	Tuesday, March 11 · 2 - 3:30pm
The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare	Wednesday, March 12 · 10 - 11:30am
Sustainable Travel in Europe	Wednesday, March 12 · 7 - 8:30pm
From Turmoil to Joy: The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin	Thursday, March 13 · 2 - 3:30pm
Making your smartphone easier to use as you get older	Tuesday, March 18 · 2 - 3:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Judith: March	Wednesday, March 19 · 10 - 11am
Recording and Editing a Video on your Smartphone	Wednesday, March 19 · 1 - 2:30pm
Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners: 6 Session Course (March 2025)	March 20 · 10am - April 24 · 11:30am

Artificial Intelligence News: March - GPT, Agents and Healthcare	Friday, March 21 · 10 - 11:30am
LEO - the World's First Business Computer	Friday, March 21 · 2 - 3:15pm
How Many Letters in the Alphabet? A tour of the world's writing systems.	Monday, March 24 · 2 - 3:30pm
Lung Disease in advancing age: identifying new treatments	Tuesday, March 25 · 11am - 12:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie: March	Tuesday, March 25 · 3:30 - 4:30pm
A Glimpse of Anglo-India	Wednesday, March 26 · 10 - 11am
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Three - Sleep and Dreams	Thursday, March 27 · 2 - 4pm
Smart Tech for Older and Disabled People	Tuesday, April 1 · 2 - 3:30pm
Robotics and Automation	Wednesday, April 2 · 1 - 2:30pm
How to get published with Writers & Artists	Starts on Tuesday, April 8 · 2pm

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](#)