



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

June 2025

Message from the Chair

Hello everyone

Doesn't time fly! Here we are half-way through the year already - I hope you're making the most of the summer months.

Our Open Day on 8th July at the Tetbury Goods Shed is fast approaching, and I'm delighted that most of our groups will be represented to showcase what we do. I really hope that you will be able to come along to find out more about what we have to offer, and bring a friend too. You should all have received an invitation to this event by email.

Although we have nearly 40 different groups, there's always room for more, and we will be seeking suggestions for potential new groups at the Open Day. The u3a ethos is learning from each other, and I would love to hear from anyone who would be willing to set up and lead a new group. We can offer guidance and support to get you started.

Please contact Caroline, our Groups Co-ordinator, if you'd like to set up and lead a new group - details at tetbury.u3asite.uk/committee

Best wishes Bernadette

Chair

tetbury.u3asite.uk

New Tetbury & District Website

I hope that you have found the new website easy to use and informative. If you haven't already had a look at it, simply click [here](#). Don't forget to save the new website's address (tetbury.u3asite.uk) in your favourites, and remove the old website address. The old website will close down at the end of June, and you won't see anything if you use the old address after that!

Please also note that the email addresses sometimes used to contact group leaders or committee members will also cease to work. These are email addresses like name of group@tetburyu3a.org.uk. Please use the website contact form if you don't already have the email address for the person that you wish to contact.

By David Smith

IT Support

Extract from "A Way to Go" By Jeremy Iles-North

We'd like to thank all those who have shared their thoughts about Jeremy. Some of us were recently privileged to hear a reading from Jeremy's book "A Way to Go" read by one of his daughters. The family generously loaned the book to me and have allowed me to share an extract, the "Just for today" piece, with u3a members.

His book, written for his family, is an inspiration for me and I am again reminded that I should make a bigger effort to share my life and that of my ancestors with my family; savour each moment of my life and spend more time with people I think might be interesting human beings. I so regret not making that effort to get to know Jeremy.

By Anne Cox

Here is the extract:

Just for today I am going to be more aware of what greets me first thing in the morning, from the tousled hair on the pillow of my beloved Anne to the dew on the spiders web in the early morning garden sun.

Just for today I will welcome the possibility of a creator spirit in the beautiful designs provided by nature and science that I see around me and in the art produced by so many talented artists. Human and designer God working together?

Just for today I acknowledge my forebears and ancestors who are part of me and whose DNA makes me what I am. I will honour my celtish origins. I will try to persuade my successors of this too.

Just for today I will let the joys of sacred and spine chilling music wash over me.

Just for today I will break into song when the mood takes me and thus honour my two singing teachers.

Just for today I will sit still for a quiet moment and welcome peace into my life, reflecting on the birth of a sweet new granddaughter, Scarlett Winters, just a few months old, whom I may never know as an adult but who, judging from her elegant long fingers and long feet, may well be a famous dancer one day.

Just for today I will honour the values left with me by Clifton, Sandhurst, the Suffolk regiment, the Army and those who fought for us and the service they gave.

Just for today I will open my soul to thanking Anne, all my ex wives, and family & friends... blessing them all for what they have given me and continue to give.

Just for today I will look at the world and everything around me with an artist's eye and hope to be inspired to create a piece of artwork, if only in my mind.

That's only 9 Anne points out. I nod: "Here is the last one then, just for you."

Just for today I will let Anne take a piece of lettuce off my mouth and tidy up all my drawers (I could not think of a tenth item to come directly out of the book but this symbolises domestic bliss!)

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 or fascinating facts we were unaware of and it's a great chance to meet up with friends and make new ones over a cuppa.

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 June speaker, Dr James Taylor, former curator of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, gave an entertaining, witty insight into the life and times of Admiral Lord Nelson through paintings of him, his contemporaries and battles. Did you know "The Fighting Temeraire" is all wrong in terms of how the ship looked? Even the tug is wrong but Turner was in the game of conveying feelings not facts.



Our Speaker on 21st July takes us into a completely different world, "They Think It's All Over!" - A History of Sport on TV. Author and television historian Jeff Evans offers a lively, fully-illustrated talk, with lots of 'I never knew that' moments that may bring back many warm memories? Hope to see you there!

By Anne Cox

Group News

Art Appreciation

This month we looked at Paolo Uccello's "The Hunt in the Forest" 1470 now displayed at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Uccello lived in Florence, was a friend of Donatello and a skilled mathematician. He was a Mid Renaissance painter who concentrated on change and realism and applied his mathematical skills to depicting perspective to create a 3 dimensional illusion of depth and space.

The painting is an example of a spalliera - a backboard for a chest or bed - and as such intended to be viewed at shoulder height. The hunt, unusually, appears to be happening at night in a moonlit forest and is possibly symbolic of Diana the Huntress. The colours of the dark blue sky contrast with the bright red costumes of the huntsmen, the white greyhounds and the gold flecks among the green foliage of the forest, making the painting even more beautiful when viewed by candlelight.

Our second subject was "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes", a cartoon (working drawing) by Raphael - now on display in the V&A museum - for the tapestry commissioned for the Sistine Chapel by Pope Leo X in 1513. It was the same size as the finished tapestry woven in Brussels - 10ft x 15 ft. The cartoon depicts a key episode in the lives of St Peter and St Paul described in Luke 5:1-11 and shows Peter, James and John fishing in the Sea of Galilee.

The tapestry woven from the cartoon is now in the Vatican Museum although still occasionally displayed in the Sistine Chapel. The picture is symbolic - St Peter's in Rome is in the background, the ravens in the sky signify sin and the cranes on the shore depict vigilance. A comparison with the tapestry shows significantly different colours, partly as the tapestry weaver would exercise discretion in choice of colour and partly as the cartoon has faded. Because of the weaving process - on a low warp loom - the tapestry is a mirror image of the cartoon. By Judy Greeman

Bookclub Monday Evening

"The Amur River" by Colin Thubron

A map of the Amur River drainage basin



Kmusser, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

This book is about a journey along the tenth longest river in the world that nobody has ever heard of, probably due to its very remote location as a border between Russia and China. The river rises in Mongolia and ends at the Pacific Ocean.

Colin Thubron has been writing travel books since 1967 and he was a new author to many of us in the Book Club, despite being shortlisted for the Mann Booker Prize in 2002 and holding the role of President of the Royal Society of Literature from 2010-2017.

Colin Thubron's journey begins in Mongolia as he rides on horseback for ten days through the marshes (with a couple of guides) after just after celebrating his 80th birthday; an awe-inspiring feat of bravery, or as he put it "foolish optimism". He continued to travel the 2,800

kilometres of the river by car, boat, train, and bus for a total of five months.

The travelogue is a mix of lyrical geographical description, personal experience and historical narrative. And overall, we enjoyed the history. We found his interpretation of the cultural differences and antagonisms between the Russian and Chinese people on either side of the river very interesting and informative. It made us all realise that the political relations between the two nations were a little more complex than we expected. However, at other times the chapters were long and dry.

On the whole this is a great read, which was reflected in our 3.49 stars out of 5, our highest rating of the year so far.

The next book we will be discussing will be fiction set in Spain, "The Bulls of Parral" by Marguerite Steen first published in 1954. Our meeting will be held on Monday 30th June 2025 at 7pm at the Royal Oak Tetbury.

By Corinne Hinton

Wednesday Bookclub

Nine of us met on Wednesday 28th May to discuss "I Dreamed of Africa" by Kuki Gallman. We were all gripped by Kuki's fascinating life story. Born in Italy but longing to live in Africa where she moved with her husband Paolo to start a new life.

Such a resilient character, overcoming disability after a car accident, the death of her husband and later her son from a snake bite. It lead us to question both colonialism and the rights of man over nature. Although we didn't all like her style of writing we agreed that her imagery was beautiful, showing her love of the land.



Still alive in Kenya and an active conservationist, she founded The Gallmann Memorial Foundation in memory of her husband and son.

At our next meeting we'll discuss "In the Shadow of the Banyan" by Vaddey Ratner.

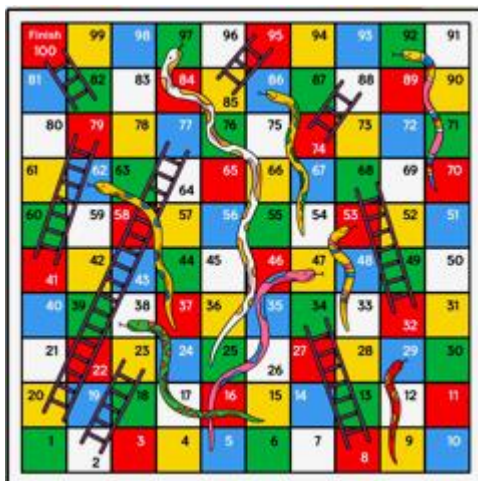
By Pauline Whittaker

French

The group continues to build confidence and fluency in the language with three meetings a month and the occasional celebration on a French holiday.

In July we'll have a stall at the u3a Open Day to demonstrate what we do to improve and keep up our French. We hope you'll come up and talk to us about what we do. We'll also be celebrating Bastille Day in July with a bring and share lunch.

Our regular sessions are: Conversation- sharing things we've prepared for a topic; a Monthly Film Matinee - films in French (with subtitles); and Games and Song- playing card and board games to improve our vocabulary, grammar and fluency. We've recently added a Snakes and Ladders game (to practice verb structures) to the Happy Families (for vocabulary building) and Carcassonne board game (for holiday phrases and conversation practice).



In June, before launching into an, at times raucous, game of Snakes and Ladders (permitted to climb the ladder or avoiding sliding down a snake by getting a conjugation right) we sang a favourite of mine, *Sous le Ciel de Paris*. Most of us were in tune and the overall effect was an atmospheric stroll along the Seine.

Did you know a nickname for Paris is Le Paname? The most widely held theory about the origin of this is linked to the Panama Canal scandal of the late 19th century. This scandal involved alleged corruption and financial mis dealings related to the construction of the canal, with many Parisian figures and businesses implicated. The scandal led to Parisians being nicknamed "panamistes" and, by extension, the city itself being called "Paname"

Our sessions are accessible to all levels of French and enjoyable events with friendly support and fun so if you'd like to join us, visit our group page on the website and get in touch

By Anne Cox

Gardening Group

The summer garden season is well and truly happening now. This month the Gardening Group visited not one, but two of our members' gardens. We had a splendid time in early June visiting Michael and Rosemary's delightful garden, which contained mixed borders, a fruit and vegetable patch, and a small meadow. Michael and Rosemary continue to adapt their garden, and we were impressed to see their new water feature, rose arch and new planting.



Rosemary shared a few gardening tips - including putting water cress into your pond to cleanse it and block some of the light (too much causes algal bloom). And it works - I went straight home, added some to our pond, and it's now flourishing.

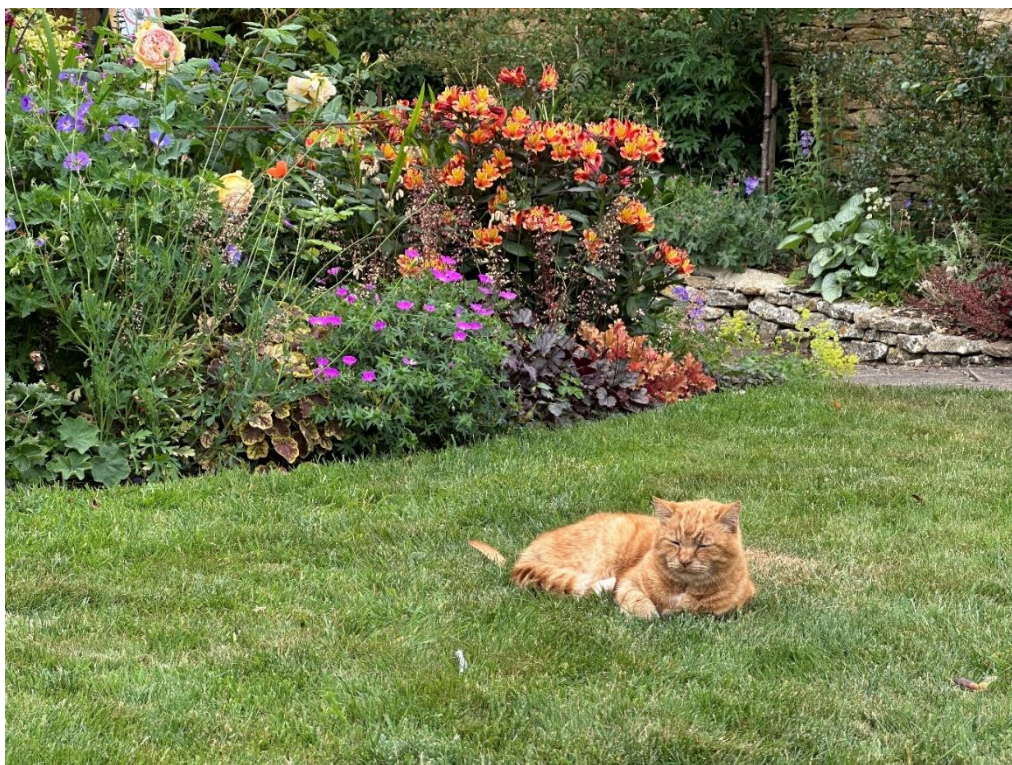
We also had a plant swap, which is a great way to acquire new plants for free. We finished our visit with delicious home-baked cakes and biscuits, enjoying the view to the hill beyond from the patio.



A few weeks later we were treated to Maggie and David's garden, a day after they opened for the Tetbury Secret Gardens in aid of Tetbury Hospital. This was previously an overgrown and neglected garden when Maggie (the gardener) and David (the handyman) moved in, which has been rejuvenated over 6 years, and contains a good variety of shrubs and perennials.

It was certainly looking very colourful, with prairie style planting, herbaceous borders, fruit and vegetables. Maggie had been busy potting on plants to sell at the Secret Garden fundraising event, and

we were able to take some of the ones which were left. We also enjoyed tea, coffee and cakes in the garden afterwards, which has become a custom at our local garden visits.



Our next visit will combine two adjacent gardens in Tetbury, and will take place on Monday 7th July at 10.30 am. Details are on the website at the Groups page. Then on Wednesday 23rd July we will visit Rodmarton Manor Garden at 2pm. Come and see us at the Open Day.

By Caroline Hose

Historic Buildings Group

We normally report here on latest Group visit, but unfortunately, our planned visit to the Bromesberrow Estate in June was cancelled by our host with less than 24hrs notice! Needless to say, we were all very disappointed.

Our July visit is to Cotswold Farm nr Duntisborne Abbots Glos on 23rd July. This trip is already fully booked.

We'll be taking bookings towards the end of July for our August visit to Llanthony Secunda Priory, Gloucester. The priory was very influential, and one of the richest Augustinian houses in the country. The priory boasts a mix of architectural styles, including medieval, Tudor, and Victorian. Some parts of the building are in ruins, while others have been restored. The surviving buildings include the Medieval Range, Victorian Farmhouse, Brick Range and the Tithe Barn. £10pp inc tour and refreshments on arrival. See [here](#) for more information.

Please see our entry on our website [here](#) for more information about this year's events, and download the programme. If you are interested in joining our Group, please send us a message via the contact form using the link on the above web page.

Please note that we only take bookings on a visit-by-visit basis. Email invitations to book will normally be sent out around a month before

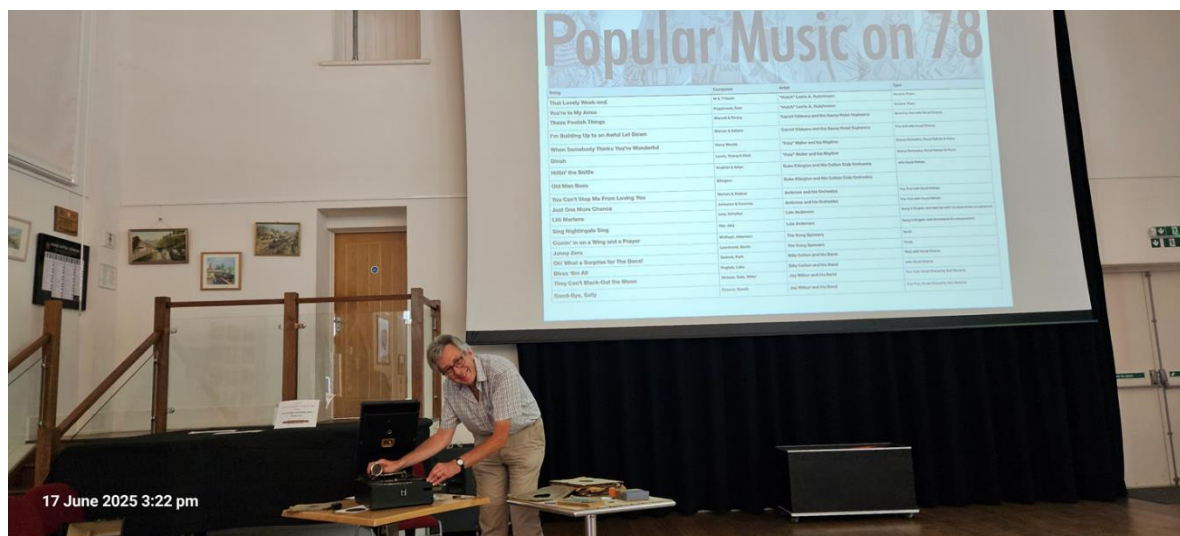
each visit. We cannot accept bookings or payments before then. Keep your eyes open for emails from us, as visits often sell out very quickly!

By David & Maggie Smith - Group organisers.

History Group

A well attended meeting on 17th June saw a review by George Keeling of fashions in the 1920s and 30s before listening, enthralled, to some of his large collection of 78rpm records dating from 1926 to 1948, played on his vintage gramophone.

Our next History Group meeting, on Tuesday 22nd July, will be a visit to the Stroud Museum in the Park. All are welcome.

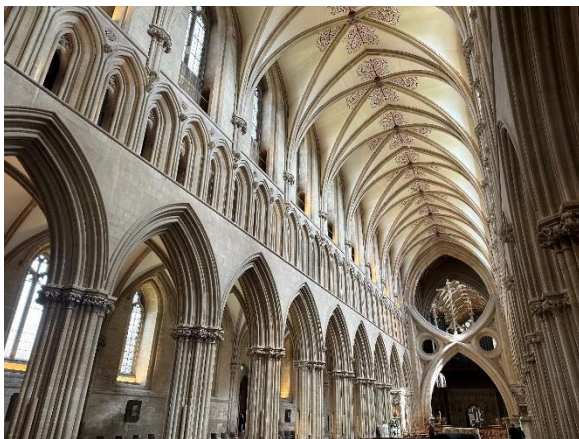
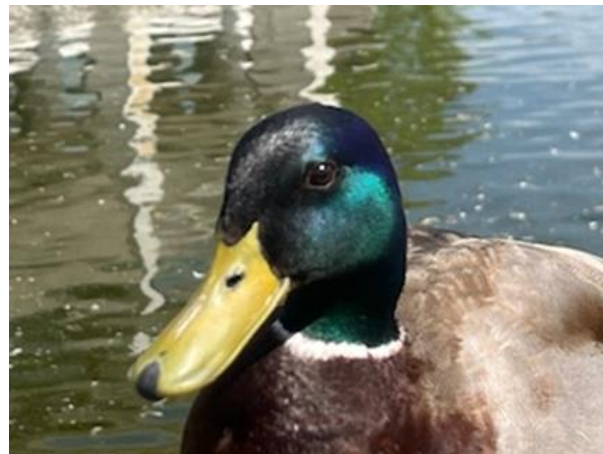


By Bob Kelley

Photo Group

On the 23rd May, six members of the Group visited Slimbridge Wetland Centre www.wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres/slimbridge

As usual, we all met up in the café for a coffee and chat before setting off to observe and photograph the spectacular wildlife and scenery. After two hours of gentle wandering around the Park, we met up in the café for a debrief, and another drink!!



Members were asked to submit five photos (from the previous trip to Wells Cathedral and Slimbridge) for showing to Group members at our next meeting on the 27th June.

We are also going to be discussing how the Group is going to move forward, including trips, meeting themes, and the timing, location and length of meetings.

By Mark Janaway

Play Reading Group 2

We met for our usual monthly meeting at Steepleton. It was quite a lot of reading for the main parts of Salieri but it was read very ably by Malcom Parish.

We read the play "Amadeus" and several of our group had seen the film, which was helpful, because this script was from the London stage production and they used lighting and sound to denote the changes of scene, but we all got the gist with some laughs along the way.

We were delighted to have 3 gentlemen from Steepleton to join the group and they all read really well and will be a great addition.

Our next meeting will be at Steepleton on the first Monday of July at 2pm.

By Margo Smith

And finallyThe deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Monday 21st July. Keep those reports coming in!

Please send your articles to Caroline, your newsletter editor, at newsletttertetburyu3a@gmail.com

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
The Oceans and Climate Change	Monday, June 30 · 10 - 11:30am
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: The Man Who Tested Parachutes	Tuesday, July 1 · 10am - 12pm
Upgrading Your Old PCs, Laptops and Macs to ChromeOS Flex	Wednesday, July 2 · 1 - 2:30pm
Ice to Athelstan - The Emergence of England	Thursday, July 3 · 10 - 11:30am
Artificial Intelligence News: July - Amazing AI All Around the World	Friday, July 4 · 10 - 11:30am
An Introduction to the Arts and Crafts Movement	Monday, July 7 · 2 - 3:30pm
Laughter Yoga with Judith: July	Wednesday, July 9 · 10 - 11am

Time to get out the BBQ!	Thursday, July 10 · 10:30 - 11:30am
Exploring World Faiths: Friendship	Monday, July 14 · 10 - 11:30am
Plants, Medicine and Magic	Tuesday, July 15 · 11am - 12:30pm
Mindfulness and Meditation Continuation Session: July	Thursday, July 17 · 10 - 11:30am
Turner's Timeless Treasures	Thursday, July 17 · 10 - 11am
Planning Ahead: Age-proofing Your Home	Thu, 17 Jul 2025 15:00 - 16:00
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Six - Taste and Smell	Thursday, July 31 · 2 - 4pm
Staying Safe Online - A u3a Presentation with Q&A	Friday, August 1 · 10 - 11:30am
Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: The History and Future of Drones	Tuesday, August 5 · 10am - 12pm

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](#)