



July 2025

Message from the Chair

Hello Everyone

I hope you're enjoying the summer and taking a well deserved break.

We were pleased with our **Open Day** on 8th July, which was well attended. I'd like to offer huge thanks to all those who were involved with this event to make it a success. Most groups attracted a healthy interest, and we have now attracted 28 new members, with hopefully more to follow. See article below.

At our Open Day we received feedback that you would like to see new groups including **Handicraft, Knit and Natter, and Card Making**. New groups can only get off the ground if somebody is prepared to lead them, so if you would be willing to lead any of these groups, please contact Caroline, Groups Co-ordinator at newslettertetburyu3a@gmail.com

I'm pleased to report that we have some potential new groups. Two of our members have offered to set up a new group to support the practice of **Mindfulness and Meditation**. The group would be for like-minded people who

would like to meditate together and explore these topics. Prior knowledge and skills are not necessary - all 'abilities' are welcome. We have four people signed up for this group, which may start in September, and would welcome more. If this might be for you, please contact Caroline at newslettertetburyu3a@gmail.com

We also have four people interested in a third **Creative Writing Group** - the other two groups are full. If you would like to join them, please contact the group leaders of the current two groups via the Groups page of the website.

Bernadette

tetbury.u3asite.uk

News

u3a Christmas Lunch - Wednesday 10th December 2025

A date for your diary!



We have reserved the Great Tythe Barn in Tetbury for this year's Christmas lunch. This beautiful building has recently been subject to a major renovation and upgrade, and it should make an ideal venue for our event.

We will be providing full details around early September, including menu and pricing. Until then, pencil it into your diary.

Open Day

Our Open Day went with a buzz! The event was well attended, the sun was shining, and visitors were welcomed in by the T'UKEs Ukulele group who played outside all morning.



The 'market stalls' all looked really creative, and it was lovely to see such a range of displays, from the slideshow, to display boards, books, board games, a quiz, pot plants, boules, and even (empty) bottles of wine.

Mayor Steve 'Scotty' Scott attended and stayed for over an hour, chatting to many of the group leaders and their helpers. He was so impressed that we believe that he may want to join u3a when he eventually stops working full-time!





We received some useful feedback such as 'I can't wait to be retired to join - so many groups!' and suggestions to start new groups. Some group leaders thought the event was a bit long, however we signed up several new members during the afternoon so that was worthwhile.

We would love to hear feedback from those who attended, including what went well or not so well. Please send this to Caroline at newslettertetburyu3a@gmail.com

Monthly Speakers

Our next talk on "The Life and Works of Henry Purcell" will take place on Tuesday 16th September 2025, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm, at the Goods Shed. Dr Timothy Brain, the former Chief Constable of Gloucestershire, shares his passion for the life and music of the 17th century English Baroque composer.

You can find our programme of monthly talks on the website tetbury.u3asite.uk

By Anne Cox

Art Appreciation

This month we looked at the work of Giovanni Antonio Canal - Canaletto- 1697 - 1768 a prolific painter of the 18th century Venetian School. His father was a scenery painter for the theatre and Canaletto initially worked with him.

He has been called "Venice's most recognisable painter", he was born and died in Venice but visited England where his work was also highly collectable. He mainly painted buildings and views, sometimes altering details and perspective - maybe with the use of a camera obscura. People on the Grand Tour would often buy a Canaletto as a "souvenir". As a consequence, his paintings can be found in all quarters of the globe.

Much of his work was bought by the British merchant and connoisseur, Joseph Smith, whose large collection of Canaletto's work was sold to George III in 1762 and remains in the Royal Collection. In the UK his work can also be found in the National Gallery, the V&A, Warwick Castle, Alnwick Castle and the Holburne Museum Bath amongst other venues. His paintings remain highly collectible with one selling in London this month for £27.5 million.

Many of Canaletto's views include the Baroque Santa Maria della Salute church which we also talked about. Construction was started in 1631 and completed in 1687 and is an "ex voto" church that holds no regular services nor has a priest but was built as thanks for surviving the plague of 1630 that swept through Venice.

The church references the architectural features of San Marco and also San Giorgio Maggiore and was designed so that the altar was visible from the entrance with the lateral altars coming into view as the visitor moves through the octagonal church. On 21st November each year - the Festa della Salute - a bridge of boats is laid across the Grand Canal, the central doors of the church are opened and Venetians cross the bridge, through the triumphal arch of the entrance and pay their respects at the church.

By Judy Greeman

Bookclub Monday Evening



Photo by Miguel Cuenca

This month we considered "The Bulls of Parral" by Marguerite Steen, a novel written in 1954 and a nostalgic recommendation by a member of our group who had worked in Andalusia in the 1970's. This led to a lively discussion about old and modern Spain, the origins of Flamenco dancing, and Spanish processions.

Spain and bullfighting must have been popular themes in the 1940's and 1950's because this book was published fifteen years after the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and in the wake of a few other notable books and films on the theme of bullfighting in Spain. Ernest Hemingway's "The Sun also rises" (1926) filmed in 1957, and "Blood and Sand" (1908) filmed in 1941 with Rita Hayworth and Tyrone Power, to name a couple.

Two of our book group had witnessed bullfights and could understand the thrill and excitement of the occasion. At times it also appeared, through the writing, that the bullfight was a spectacle made up of set moves appreciated and well-understood by the audience like a pantomime.

"The Bulls of Parral" is a book of its era, and although it is an insightful portrayal of Spanish culture, many of the characters are very faintly sketched and stereotypical. We felt that the many descriptions of bullfighting, and its technicalities, were distasteful for a modern reader.

Unusually, it is also a book with characters that sympathise with the conservative, monarchist, catholic and traditionalist beliefs of the Nationalist

faction in the Spanish Civil War. But again, this was only touched upon, and it would have been interesting to learn more.

Overall, we felt that the book was too long, and full of too many Spanish words which were neither translated, nor explained, in the small glossary at the back and this made it hard work.

As a result, we only awarded the book 2.6 stars out of 5 and decided that it was definitely not a book that could be wholeheartedly recommended to others.

The next book we will be discussing will be "Testimonies": a novel by Patrick O'Brian. Our meeting will be held on Monday 28th July 2025 at 7pm at the Royal Oak Tetbury.

By Corinne Hinton

Wednesday Bookclub

We met on Wednesday 25th of June to discuss "In the Shadow of the Banyan" by Vaddey Ratner. Semi biographical, the book is set in Cambodia when the Khmer Rouge overthrew the long established monarchy aiming to restructure society.

The Khmer Rouge were in charge from 1975 when Vaddey was just 5 years old until 1979 when they were rescued by the Vietnamese army and the United Nations. Their aim had been to rid the country of its enemies, so all those who were politically, ideologically or racially impure - about one third of the population - were executed during those years.

The story is movingly told from a child's point of view, how she tries to make sense of the disappearance of her beloved father, the tiger prince and the change in the family's circumstances as their homes were taken, the family split up and they were moved from one camp to another under horrific conditions.

Beautifully researched it feels as though the adult Raddey was on a mission to lovingly put together the pieces of her past. We all agreed that, although the book was challenging at times, we were pleased we had read it and had such admiration for the resilience they showed. As you can imagine it led to very interesting discussions!

By Pauline Whittaker

Gardening Group

This month we have visited three gardens to make the most of the summer season. On 7th July we visited two of our members' gardens, courtesy of Jane and Madeleine.



Jane's garden was beautifully designed, combining traditional and modern elements, including raised beds containing bay and olive trees, and a water feature which was very calming.

Madeleine's garden nearby was a colourful garden redesigned 2 years ago with cottage garden plants and shrubs, where every plant must earn its keep. We ended the morning with tasty refreshments.

Both gardens were a delight to see and provided much inspiration.

Then on 23rd July we visited Rodmarton Manor Gardens, which were looking fabulous - partly due to a watering system from an underground bore hole. I wish I had one of those!



This 8 acre Cotswold garden was designed originally as a series of outdoor rooms and is still the same today.

There is a wide selection of planting that has been done over the years with superb vistas and views throughout and plenty of places to sit and admire the view.

Each part of this garden has a different character, ranging from the alpines in troughs, to a large kitchen garden, and the magnificent herbaceous borders which are constantly being replanted and improved.

Afterwards some of us visited the Arts and Crafts Rodmarton house before departing to the café for tea and cake.



Our next visit will be to the Adeline Organic Farm at Long Newnton, where Ros will provide a tour showing us her organic vegetables. This will take place on Thursday 7th August at 2pm. Then on Monday 18th August at 2pm we will visit Kiftsgate Court, Chipping Campden, cost £12.50pp. Details of our programme can be found on the website [here](#)

By Caroline Hose

Historic Buildings Group

Our July visit was to Cotswold Farm nr Duntisborne Abbots Glos. We first became aware of this property when we visited it in the spring of this year with the U3A Garden Visits group. We were sufficiently impressed with the property to enquire about a house visit. The owners were keen to assist, and the visit lived up to expectations.



We were split into 2 groups, visiting the house and garden in turns. The main reason for the visit was to see the house, but the garden was an added bonus. The house dates from the 17th century, and started off as a small stone-built farmhouse, consisting of a simple central block with two wings: a cart shed and a

cowshed with a granary above. In a 1720's map of the area, Cotswold Farm is labelled as "The New Farm". In 1919, Cotswold Farm was bought by Mr Kent, who enlarged and altered the house considerably. He made the two 'wings' part of the house, turning the sloping cattle yard into the main lawn with two higher levels and built the Step Garden. Mr Kent also planted two acres of larches north of the farmhouse.



In 1925, Architect Sidney Barnsley extended the house further, adding two wings in the Arts & Crafts style for the Birchall family. Barnsley's style is evident in the leaded windows with stone drip moulds and in the old farm buildings with circular pillars.



The Library floor is entirely taken from two trees which had been lying in the Barnsley's garden for some years.

Many of Sidney Barnsley's designs for furniture and his original plans for Cotswold Farmhouse are in the Cheltenham museum.

In parallel with Barnsley's house designs, renowned Architect-craftsman Norman Jewson redesigned and extended Cotswold Farm's garden.

Today, Cotswold Farm is home to the fifth generation of the Birchall family, who provided us with a tour of their beautiful historic Arts & Crafts house. We also enjoyed a lovely lunch in the splendid setting of their dining room. The visit felt very special, as we were welcomed like family members into their home.

We will very soon be opening bookings 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.

Our September visit is to Tewkesbury. In the morning, we've got a private guided tour of the historic Royal Hop Pole Hotel, visiting rooms that are not normally open to the public. In the afternoon, we have arranged a walking tour around the alleys of Tewkesbury. It will cover the history and development of the town and the alleys, with the stories of the people who lived in them in the nineteenth century. Led by a guide from the Tewkesbury Alleycats project. £5pp. See [here](#) for more information.

Don't forget to view here our Group page on the website for up-to-date 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(n elite) group of us spent a lovely, relaxed and casual afternoon at Stroud's 'Museum in the Park' with rooms showing exhibits from geological pre-history all the way up to the kitchen equipment from our childhoods. (Quite scary that we are now part of "history", but that is part of qualifying for U3A.) Tea in the courtyard was a lovely finale.

By Bob Kelley

Photo Group

We started the meeting with a presentation of the images taken by members at both Wells Cathedral and Slimbridge. There were some really good pictures, featuring structure and form from Wells and creative and detailed images of the Slimbridge residents.



Following the presentation, the Group agreed that we would keep our meetings on the last Friday of the month (unless there is a specific need for that to be changed).

These will now take place on Friday mornings, for two hours, 10am - 12 noon. This can always be reviewed, but it was thought that this might provide us more flexibility, especially with our Field Trips.

We then discussed the future Group Programme and looked at building on the previously circulated proposals. It was agreed that, during the summer, we would have two Field Trips, followed by a Group Meeting where images from the Field Trips would be presented. This would then be followed by a topic based input/discussion related to the next field trips, or specific inputs on Group member's wishes, such as creating photobooks, mounting prints and the use of Flickr.



During the winter, it was felt that planning formal Field Trips might be more weather dependant, unless we select indoor venues (e.g. a Museum or Historic building) and therefore it was agreed that these meetings would have a topic focussed input, but rather than being followed up by a Field Trip, the Group would have the time between meetings to take the topic images at their leisure. This could be on their own, or it might be as a small group who want to work together.

These images would then be submitted before the next meeting and presented with a short commentary on why and what the photographer was doing or aiming to do. Some of the topics discussed for consideration were Animal Portraiture, Night Photography, Monochrome and Movement.

Future Field Trips and Meeting Schedule (details on the [website](#))

Friday 25th July Field Trip - Woodchester Park

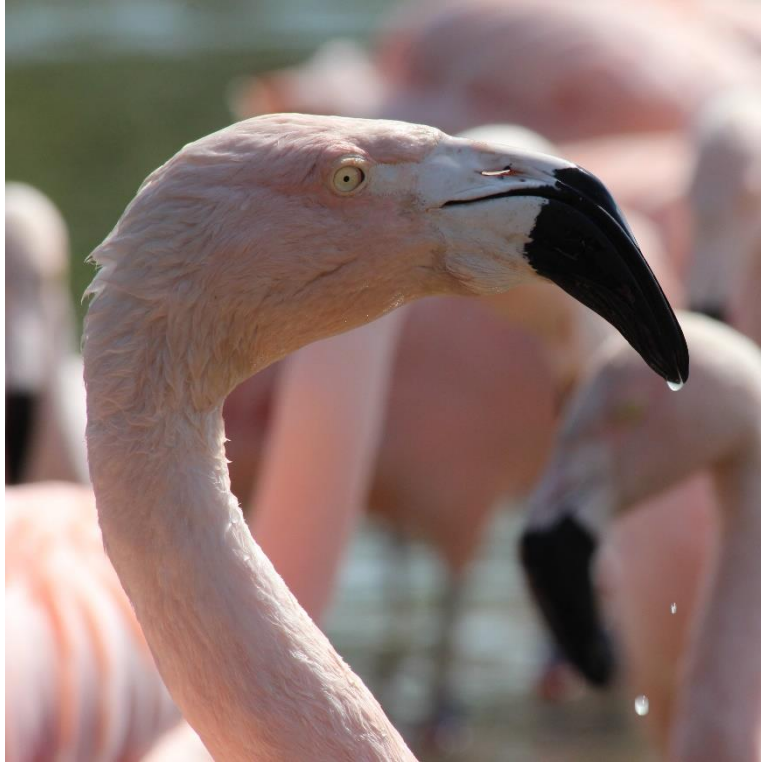
Sunday 31st Aug Field Trip - Off the Rails (The Goods Shed one day music festival (not like Glastonbury!!!))

Friday 26th Sept Group Meeting - 10-12

Friday 31st Oct Field Trip - Westonbirt Arboretum

Friday 28th Nov Group Meeting - 10-12 (possibly followed by end of year lunch TBC)

By Mark Janaway



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

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

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](#)

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](#)