



Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

June 2022

A Message from the Chair

It's lovely to see signs of summer. Fingers crossed that we will get a lovely fine day on July 18th for our picnic!

Do come along if you can , bring your own picnic and feel free to invite friends too. I hope that it will be a lovely opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones. The picnic will follow after the July talk. Non-members may attend the talk for a £5 fee , which would be offset against the membership fee if they decide to become a member. Attendance at the picnic is free !

It has been good to hear about the formation of not just one, but two book groups. This came about as a result of a suggestion from a member , so if you have ideas for new groups do let us know. There may be other members who would also be interested. A full list of our existing groups can be found on our website www.tetburyu3a.org.uk

chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Monthly Speakers

Monday, 18th July 10.30am

Brian Barber - A radio station under fire in Liberia

Brian has worked as an Aid Worker for fifteen years in many African countries and in Afghanistan.



His work was particularly about establishing lines of communication, often in war zones, and attracted a great deal of dangerous resistance.

Air-lifted by French Special Forces during a civil war, finding mass graves in Rwanda and caught up in a gun battle between bandits and government troops in Nigeria, trailed by Secret police in Liberia and arrested as a suspected terrorist in Kenya, it is a wonder our speaker is here today to talk to us.

After the Monthly Talk/Meeting it is proposed to hold a picnic outside the Goods Shed so members can have a longer time for socialising and meeting new members. So, bring a packed lunch, pray for fine weather and be prepared to enjoy yourself!

Group News

Gardening Group

The group visited Lydiard Park Walled Garden near Swindon in May. The Park, gardens and Lydiard Park House are all under the care of Swindon Borough Council and as such the gardens are very well kept. We found some quite unusual plants thriving in the sheltered garden and had the opportunity to buy some of them too. We decided it would be an ideal place to bring visitors during the summer months.



Photo by Martin Doidge

<mailto:gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Playreading Group

One of our members, with the help of the library, has been compiling a list of plays with 10 plus parts. Together we will go through the list to eliminate certain plays e.g. The Railway Children/ The Elves and the Shoemaker. We will then go through the plays' synopses to see if they seem suitable for the reading group.

At our last meeting we read an Agatha Christie classic, Murder at the Vicarage. We had two new members come along to the group. They listened to the performance and then joined us for tea and coffee. It is good to see new faces, but we could certainly do with some budding male readers.

On Monday 27 June we will be reading Habeas Corpus by Alan Bennett.

<mailto:playreading@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Classical Music

Four of us (one carful) are going to La Traviata on 30 July at 7.30pm (picnic 6.30pm) Details are:

"Gates open at 6-30pm for you to enjoy the gardens before the performance. The performances take place on the circular lawn in front of the stunning backdrop of Rodmarton Manor. Performance times 7-30pm to approx. 10-15pm with a 30-minute interval. Please bring a picnic , a rug and a chair for your comfort. These are always magical evenings at Rodmarton and tend to get sold out early so do not miss this fantastic opportunity to feast your eyes, ears and anything else on a glorious evening of outdoor opera from Opera Brava - Britain's leading outdoor touring opera company."

If you want to join us and can offer a lift please let me know but book direct on Opera Brava website.

Also coming up: The Thames Head Singers, "Gloriana", a very British concert with afternoon tea at St Cyr's Church, Stonehouse on Sunday 17 July at 3pm, directed by Andrew Hopwood. Including: Lennon & McCartney, Lloyd Webber, Themes from 007, Choral Dances from Britten's 'Gloriana', Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Tea and cake will be served, with proceeds to St. Cyr's Church. Tickets £12 in advance, £14 on the door, under 16s free.

Book online at

ticketsource.co.uk/thamesheadsingers/thames-head-singers-gloriana-concert/2022-07-17/15:00/t-xmvrrel

Box Office: 0333 666 336 www.thamesheadsingers.org.uk

The Thames Head Singers are a Stroud-based chamber choir established in 1980.

classicalmusic@tetburyu3a.org.uk

Short Walks Group

The Short Walks group has continued to enjoy some excellent walks over recent weeks. They enjoyed the bluebells at Hare Covert, ice creams on Minchinhampton Common and the very pleasant river walk in Malmesbury. Fortunately, the weather has been kind although the temperature did soar to 31.5C on our walk in Malmesbury. Nevertheless, there was some shade, and the walkers were well equipped with hats and plenty to drink!



<mailto:shortwalks@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Creative Writing Group (2)

As creative leisure activities are known to have a beneficial effect on mental well-being I am very pleased to be the co-ordinator of this group. Our inaugural was held last October where, to begin to become acquainted with each other, we each read out a short piece disclosing

something that few people knew about us. Then, together, we decided on the format for each meeting would be and discussed what we wanted to achieve. From that discussion we drew up our terms of reference. To ensure that newer members of the group can also have their input, this document will be reviewed at next October's meeting.

Our present our aims are:

□ to improve our creative writing skills and to enjoy each other's company, and I'm pleased to report that these are being met in full and we all contribute to meetings. These are held on the first Tuesday of each month in The Royal Oak at 2p.m..

Current Format of meetings:

Each month we address a different aspect of creative writing. Each member contributes to the initial warm up writing exercise designed to get our brains working creatively. This activity lasts approximately fifteen minutes. The second activity involves each member reading out a piece of writing of up to 1000 words from a task set at the last meeting. As we all bring different qualities and attributes to our work the writing that each member produces from the same task is very different. This encourages and inspires us all to write in a variety of genres and from different points of view. The final activity is related to the next month's task. At most meetings, resources and handouts are provided to inspire and inform, however, members are not restricted by the suggested task and may write about anything that inspires them.

Aspects of creative writing addressed to date:

□ The format generally used for a short story.

□ Effective beginnings and endings

□ Writing a short memoir

□ Taking inspiration from the world around us

□ Writing in different genres

These common threads are referred to as we develop our writing skills. For example, our current project is to write a story from a given scenario, this provides opportunities to use most of the above.

The next skill to be introduced will be characterisation and the way that a person's character emotions are revealed by body language, facial expression, word and action.

Currently, there is space for just one more member in our group.

<mailto:creativewriting@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Singing For Fun

Our first meeting in the Priory Inn was on the day the new managers Natalie and Matthew moved in. Our cheerful singing was enjoyed by them and their family as well as their removal men and Accountant working on his Spread sheet!

Initially eight members signed up for the group. We now have 11 members with 6 in regular attendance. Although we are still looking for an accompanist, we find lots of enjoyment singing well-known and loved ditties with a little help from a small speaker and a mobile phone. No tiresome singing one phrase repeatedly until you get it right! We get through about 10 songs and lots of memories.

The Priory has been an excellent host to our monthly singsongs and for the princely sum of £2 we get the use of the room, coffee or tea and a great boost to our wellbeing. Do come along: The more the merrier. Email me your favourite songs and give us a try.

Our next meeting will be on the 27 July 2-4pm: before the August break when entertaining grandchildren, gardening and holidays take over.

Happy harmony

<mailto:singing@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Pub Lunch Group

In May, twenty-two of the Pub Lunch Group enjoyed a very nice meal at The Priory Inn, Tetbury. We had a nice room, The Cotswold Suite I believe, to ourselves and Matt and Natalie Starkey (the new owners) formulated a menu especially for us at a set price which was both varied and tasty, and very reasonably priced. The service was also very good. Since taking over the Priory Inn I have found Matt and Natalie very helpful towards the U3A as a whole and also very community minded.



In June we are having two meals. On Thursday 16 June, eight group members attended lunch at The Beaufort Arms, Hawkesbury

Upton. The food was hot, properly cooked and delicious, all at a reasonable price and good service. Our group members made good lunching companions and, as there was a lot of chatter and a lot of eating, I took that as a sign that everybody enjoyed themselves.

We are now gearing up for our second June lunch at The Greyhound, Siddington on Wednesday 29 June 12 - 12.30. There is still time to sign up to join us but don't leave it too late as we might be required to pre-order as our numbers grow.

<mailto:publunchfroup@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

French Conversation

The French group continues to meet twice a month at The Priory - although we are missing our leader, Anne Cox, who kept us on the straight and narrow and stopped us back-sliding into English when the topic gets too complicated! We hope she'll be back to guide us soon.

Recently we have discussed why we enjoy living in Tetbury, our favourite recipes and holidays. If anyone would like to join us we meet on the first Monday of the month at 3pm and the third Thursday at 10am. Our next topic is hobbies!

<mailto:frenchconversation@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Historic Buildings

The Historic Buildings group recently paid a much-enjoyed visit to Rodmarton Manor. Despite the fact that we were deluged with rain, it was a very successful visit with very knowledgeable guides who were able to tell us about the various craftsmen who had created the wonderful furniture and decorations. A few brave souls equipped

with umbrellas ventured into the gardens but mostly felt this was a treat which could be reserved for another, drier, day.

Future visits in the pipeline include Woodchester Mansion, Bath and Chavenage House. Please get in touch with the Group Leaders if you are interested in any of these visits.

<mailto:historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Wine Tasting

Tetbury U3A has 2 Wine Tasting Groups. One of them meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm at members' homes. The format is relaxed, and the members choose the topics for the following meeting.

Last month we tried wines of the same grape but from different supermarkets. They were all blind tasted and the results were mixed. The most expensive bottle isn't necessarily the most popular. Next month's topic is North American wines. A trip with the other group is being organised, to visit a nearby vineyard.

Our group has lost several members recently, for differing reasons - covid, moving house etc, so if anyone is interested in joining us, please get in touch.

<mailto:winetasting@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Discussion Group

The Discussion group enjoyed a meeting in a lovely garden this month. The topic was 'the cost of living, the reasons for it, both economically and politically, and what suggestions we have to soften the

consequences. We have a mixed range of thoughts throughout the group, and everyone has the opportunity to voice their opinion. We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 4pm at members' homes. There is room for a few more members to join us. The subjects range from political discussions, "How do we see Donald Trump affecting world politics?" to more lighthearted ones, "Is fun the same as it was when we were younger?" Let's just hope the weather holds out for another meeting in the sun next month.

<mailto:discussion@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Art Group

We have grown over the past few months and now have 16 on the books averaging around 9-10 per session, although the numbers have fallen for the last two sessions due to holidays etc. We have enjoyed doing our own projects and the beginners among us have benefitted from some tuition in watercolours with one of our group.

In September we will be looking at the possibility of getting local artists to come and give some tuition on a specific topic or medium, or who might be able to offer a workshop. Also, if the weather allows we might be able to do some painting en plein air or visit a local garden to do some flower painting.

All kinds of medium are used from oils, through to watercolour pencils and pen and ink. Our members range from experienced artists to beginners. The sessions are very relaxed, and we hope to offer a tea/coffee break next term to encourage social engagement.

<mailto:art@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Boules Group

THE GREAT TETBURY HOSPITAL BOULES COMPETITION 2022

The u3a boules group entered two teams of four players into this fun afternoon of competitive boules, at the Royal Oak with proceeds being donated to the Tetbury Hospital. After coffee and croissants, 17 teams battled it out for a place in the quarterfinals and the "u3a Hotshots" made it through but were defeated by the eventual winners after lunch.



Photograph: Jeremy North

Join this friendly group which plays at the Red Bull, Malmesbury, every other Friday morning, from Spring to Autumn.

We are launching a new session on Wednesday morning and/or afternoon on alternate Wednesdays, avoiding the weeks we are playing on a Friday. The Royal Oak is offering the pitch free, hoping we will buy drinks! It is an excellent pitch, well maintained, but can only accommodate one game at a time, say 6 people playing as individuals or as two teams. Jeremy North has offered to run this. He suggests

that group members would need to book in with him on a first come first served basis. He will operate a reserve list in case of cancellations. If there is a lot of support we could play 6 in the morning and 6 in the afternoon and have lunch there for those who want to be social.

Whether you are a current member of the group, or a prospective new member please would you let Jeremy know asap whether you would want to support this regularly. The first date would be 13 July, then every two weeks. His contact is jeremy@jeremynorth.com 01666 502974

Contact for joining the group and for playing on alternate Fridays is:

<mailto:boules@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

Monday Book Club

We held our first meeting on Monday 30 May at the upstairs room in the Priory Hotel. There were ten of us present and after introducing ourselves we talked about at least one book that we had enjoyed and what it had meant to us. From the list of books discussed we picked our first two books in order to give us plenty of time to procure them. The first book we chose to read was *Freezing Order* by Bill Browder which is a true story of Russian money laundering, murder and surviving Putin's wrath. This is Bill Browder's second book and is a New York Times best seller chronicling how he became Vladimir Putin's number one enemy.

Our second book is *The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams, born in London but now living in Australia with her husband and two sons. This was her debut book, and it was the best-selling new novel of 2020 in Australia. She started writing her book when she discovered that the word 'bondmaid' was not in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Our next meeting is at 7pm at the Priory Hotel on Monday 27 June and we are looking forward to meeting the new members that have asked to join the group.

<mailto:bookclubmonday@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

The Group has now split into 2 groups - the Monday Book Club and the Wednesday Book Club. The Wednesday Book Club will be meeting at 2:30pm at the Priory Inn on Wednesday 29 June.

<mailto:bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

And finally.....

Institute of Advanced Drivers (IAM) Driver Assessment

One of our tetburyu3a members (Minchinhampton) has recently taken a 1-hour IAM Mature Driver assessment, found it to be most helpful and asked Lawrence Moss (our Webmaster) to compile a brief newsletter report.

The IAM Mature Driver Review is a relaxed, 1-hour session with an IAM RoadSmart expert. Together, you'll drive in your own vehicle on roads familiar to you, and at the end of the session will receive guidance on how to continue driving safely for years to come.

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/non-members-driving-assessment>

IAM have also created an enjoyable and supportive 1-hour Young Driver Assessment to give additional knowledge and skills. There's no scary test to pass or examiner watching your every move, an IAM expert will give a few pointers about how to take your driving skills to that next level and get the most out of those new experiences.

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/courses/young-driver-assessment>

You may wish to take your driving to the next level by preparing and taking the IAM Advanced Drivers Test. The nearest contact is Cirencester, a small and friendly group. Any driver who holds a full driving licence can purchase the IAM's Advanced Driver Course (ADC) and join the group as an Associate. They will be assigned an Observer to provide the necessary guidance and advice to enable them to reach the required standard to pass the IAM's Advanced Driving Test.

<https://cirencester-advanced-motorists.co.uk>

Lawrence is an experienced IAM RoadSmart Mentor and can tell you about the training and course options. All about staying safe and enhancing our driving skills on ever more crowded roads.

<mailto:businesssec@tetburyu3a.org.uk>

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com>

If you have any news for next month's Newsletter then please submit it to me or Audrey (Groups Coordinator) by 15 July at the latest. All contributions gratefully received!

newsletter@tetburyu3a.org.uk