



## Tetbury & District u3a Newsletter

February 2024

### Message from the Chair

This has been another busy month for our Tetbury u3a, with an excellent presentation by Michael Norton on 'The Colour of Water'. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

Earlier this month I was invited to give a talk to some of the residents at Steepleton on the u3a, which may add to our membership. It's always good to spread the word, and do what we can to promote our u3a to potential new members.

Our committee meets regularly, and there's always plenty to discuss over a cuppa and cake. We are currently a bit low on numbers however, and I would like to make a plea for more committee members to join the team. You would be more than welcome to come and join us at a committee meeting to see what it is like.

Best wishes Bernadette  
[chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## Monthly Speakers

**Tuesday 20th February Michael Norton 'The Colour of Water'.**

It was great to see so many of you at the Goods Shed for this talk. Despite some technical problems with the sound equipment, this fascinating talk was extremely well received and we thank Michael for opening our eyes to the importance of water in our lives, and issues around global and national water supply and usage. Our dependence on produce and products from abroad that use copious volumes of water, and often come from water poor countries, was especially sobering and gave serious food for thought.

**Our Next Talk is 10:30am Monday 18th March at the Goods Shed.**

The speaker is Chris O'Grady who gave us a very popular talk on Rome back in 2021. The eagle-eyed among you will notice the subject of his talk has changed. He is no longer talking about his experiences in Japan, instead we'll be treated to:

**'Keep the Sea to your Left, Remember to turn right at Land's End'. Walking the entire coast of England and Wales, Tales of a haphazard trek around the edge of our 'Sceptred Isle'**

Hope to see you there.

Anne Cox

[speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:speakers@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## Group News

### **Art Appreciation Group**

For our February meeting the picture chosen to discuss was 'The Blue Silk Dress' painted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1868. This was particularly apt as it is a 'local' painting hence some of our group were

lucky enough to have viewed it at Kelmscott Manor. It depicts the wife of William Morris, Jane Morris, who came to embody the ideal image of female beauty to the group of artists and painters collectively known as the 'Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood'. The 'PRB' consisted of a group of well known artists and craftspeople which at various times included Rossetti, William Morris, John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt and Edward Burne Jones amongst others. The movement was originally set up with the intention returning to the realism, detail, intense colours and complex compositions of 'Quattrocentro' Italian Art (1400 - 1499) i.e. before Raphael, who they believed had been a corrupting influence on art.

Our discussion expanded to the clothing worn by the women in their paintings - looser, less corseted and less formal dresses giving woman more freedom than that usually afforded by Victorian dress. We also talked about the Arts and Crafts movement in general, the houses that William and Jane Morris in particular had lived in and two of the talented women connected to the group including Christina Rossetti (poet) and May Morris (embroidery). A very wide ranging subject that generated plenty of lively discussion.

By Judy Greeman

[artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:artappreciation@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Badminton Group**

Unable to find a good date in December for a Christmas celebration, at the end of January we thoroughly enjoyed a belated meal at the Priory, but only after some energetic games at our usual Monday session.



By Val Pearce  
[badminton@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:badminton@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## Wednesday Book Club

Seven of us met on Wednesday 31st January to discuss 'A Fine Balance' by Rohinton Mistry, a beautifully written book set in India in the 70s during the Partition. We found it staggering that we were carrying on with our lives here and had no idea of what was going on in India, a time under Indira Ghandi of 'Beautification, Sterilisation and Elimination' which was so corrupt, cruel and dangerous.

Not an easy read but it made us aware of how lucky we are to live in Britain with all its faults!



A select six of us met on Wednesday 28th February at The Royal Oak when we discussed 'The Salt Path' by Raynor Winn. The story of a couple who lose their house at the same time the husband is diagnosed with a terminal illness. We all agreed that we would not have made the

same decision as Ray who decided to take Moth, her husband and walk 630 miles of the south west coast path, camping wherever they could with very little money. Treated with kindness by some but judged by many. Were they brave or foolish?

Well written, we learnt about their past as well as their present, interspersed with many historical and geographical facts - we all commented that a fuller map would have been helpful.

We welcome new members at our meetings at The Royal Oak, 2.30pm on the last Wednesday of the month.

By Pauline Whittaker

[bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:bookclubwednesday@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## **French Conversation Group**

We had great fun at our last games session of February on illnesses and things to do with body parts.

March is almost upon us and here is what we have in store:

**Monday 4th March 3pm Royal Oak Hotel - Conversation**  
We'll be sharing our takes on the subject of Spring.

**Saturday 9th March Lions Quiz Great Tythe Barn Tetbury**  
Our team, "Les Folles" will yet again court embarrassment at the regular Lions festival of ignorance.

**Friday 15th March - French Film Matinee**

At our first French ever film session we'll be watching *Etre et Avoir*, a gentle documentary with English subtitles. Hopefully it will be the first of many.

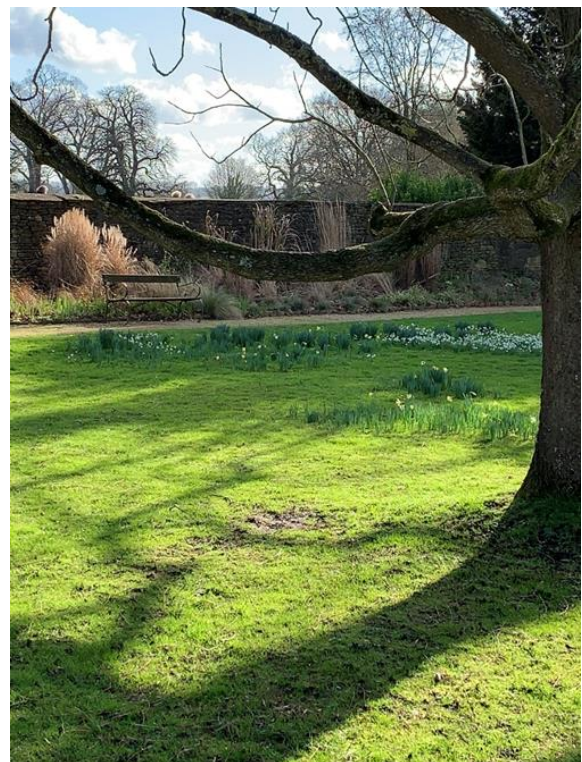
If you like the sound of what we do and would like to join us, please get in touch.

By Anne Cox

[frenchconversation@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:frenchconversation@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Gardening Group**

We were blessed with glorious sunshine for our first Gardening Group visit of 2024 to Lacock Abbey gardens. The snowdrops were just about still in lovely bloom but were already being outshined by carpets of purple crocus and bright yellow aconites. It was a real tonic for all the members who attended to see the first signs of Spring in all its glory.





We hope to visit Hortico Nursery near Sherston in March, and Caroline and Philip Langston have very kindly agreed to open their garden in Tetbury to Gardening Group members in April.

If any u3a members reading this feel able to invite our group to visit their garden we will be only too delighted to accept.

By Judith Walker

[gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:gardening@tetburyu3a.org.uk)



## Historic Buildings Group

We have now published our programme of visits for this year.

DATE	VENUE & DETAILS
Wednesday 10th April AM	Cirencester Guided Walk
Thursday 9th May PM	Stanway House, Fountain & Water Mill
Sunday 19th May AM	Frocester Court & Manor
Wednesday 5th June All day	Sezincote
Tuesday 2nd July All day	Eastnor Castle
Wednesday 14th August AM	Corsham Court
Wednesday 4th September PM	Painswick guided walk
Tuesday 22nd October AM or PM	Gloucester Prison

Please get in touch with us if you wish to join our Group  
[historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:historicbuildings@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

David & Maggie Smith, Anita Stride

## Playreading Group 1

Well, we had a hoot at our January meeting at the Royal Oak. The play chosen was 'Allo Allo' a comedy written by Jeremy Lloyd and David Croft. Now those of a certain age will remember this comedy which had us in stitches in the 1980s. For those too young to have a clue as to what we are referring to, here is a brief synopsis.

Set during the Second World War the action takes place in a cafe in France owned by the character Rene. He is helping two English airmen to escape back to England. He is also trying to pretend to keep in with the Germans plus coping with his wife Edith and his relationship with a number of attractive young women.

So basically it is a very funny farce which resulted in much hilarity with some very bad French and German accents on the part of our group. I am sure if you google Allo Allo you will find some episodes which I guarantee will put a smile on your face.

By Dee Buss

[playreading1@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:playreading1@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Storytelling Group**

This new group got off to a flying start sitting round a mythical log fire in a mythical cave, passing on stories by word of mouth in ancient times before the written word was invented, thus no notes are allowed - this did not seem to inhibit anyone.

Five 'ancients' and two listeners heard eight stories and here is just a flavour of five of them.

Stephanie told us of the destruction of Malmesbury Abbey by an earthquake - or was it caused by someone leaving the gas on to cover up the leak of Radon Gas which would hit house prices locally?

Robert spun a yarn about a local doctor who loved looking at nudes in classical paintings, standing absolutely still. He did not want his images to move. One day he fell in love with a statue of Aphrodite in the local museum and was distraught when it was taken off display. His lovely wife comes to the rescue.....

Malcom gave us a true history of a member of his family. Let us call him Bill, who has just left his wife in hospital, heavily pregnant. After dinner with friends he spots a shortcut home down a narrow country lane. Out of nowhere a black labrador runs out...big thud...dead! Owner distraught, begs Bill to bury the dog in his garden. Unknowingly he is observed by neighbour who is unaware Bill's wife is in hospital - this leads to a visit by the police carrying spades. Yes, of course he should have taken the dog to a vet.

Jackie entertained with a short but beautifully constructed piece which surprised us all with a denouement - after teasing us with how badly she was being treated by two men and how much pain was in, she revealed she was a tree being chopped down! Brilliant!

Jeremy took us back to the Great War with a romance under enemy fire with an unusual ending. The two main characters were his mother and father. She was his driver - he never asked how they met so made this episode up.

We have room for three more members at 12 Helena Court. The last person to leave should put out the log fire!

Join us at [storytelling@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:storytelling@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

By Jeremy North

## Potential New Groups

We have received the following from a new member, John, who is interested in setting up a new music group.

'The idea would be that anyone who plays an instrument or sings can get together with other musicians (beginner to advanced) and play together. Can cover a variety of styles, any instruments.

My personal interest is 'classic rock' era and blues, but willing to jam with anybody in any style.'

Please contact our Groups Co-ordinator, Caroline, if you would be interested [groups@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@tetburyu3a.org.uk)

## 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
Aviation Network Meeting: Time is money, Concorde was Prestige	Tuesday 5 March at 10am - 12pm
Mindfulness and Meditation Series	Wednesday 6 March at 10am
Artificial Intelligence News	Thursday 7 March at 3:30 - 4:30pm

Exploring World Faiths: Women in Faith	Monday 11 March at 10 - 11:30am
Laughter Yoga with Judith	Wednesday 13 March at 10am
An Introduction to Influencing and Social Change	Wednesday 13 March at 10am
Using AI to Fight Climate Change	Tuesday 19 March 19 at 10 - 11:30am
John Snow and the hunt for the source of cholera in Victorian London	Wednesday 20 March at 10 - 11:30am
Mindfulness and Meditation Continuation Sessions	Thursday 21 March at 10am
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	Tuesday 26 March at 3.30pm
Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Three: Brain & Behaviour	Wednesday 27 March at 2pm
Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords	Thursday 28 March at 10am - 12pm
Suffering and hope in Tolstoy's Anna Karenina	Thursday 28 March at 2pm
From Pleasure Gardens to Theme Parks	Friday 5 April at 2 - 3pm
Electing the President in 2024 - an Update	Tuesday 9 April at 2 - 3pm
Live Cookery Demonstration - spring recipes	Thursday 11 April at 10:30 - 11:30am
Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance	Monday 15 April at 10 - 11am
Live Cookery Demonstration - more spring recipes	Thursday 18 April at 10:30 - 11:30am
The Climate Crisis - and some solutions	Friday 19 April at 10:00 - 11:30am

## 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 2023 to 31 March 2024. 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](#)

**And finally** .....The deadline for contributions to the March newsletter is Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March. Keep those reports coming in!

Please use the contact [newsletter@tetburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tetburyu3a.org.uk) to send your articles to Caroline, your newsletter editor.