



u3a

North Cotswold

September 2026
Newsletter

A Message from your Chairman

Dear Members

Welcome to the September Newsletter as we embark upon the new full season of u3a activities. I hope that you have all kept well during this very hot summer as we watched with dismay our garden borders and lawns wilt away in the heat. I know that some members have suffered health scares over the summer and I hope you are all on the road to recovery now. We all welcomed the recent rain and the lawns have begun to show signs of green. It was great to have a long period of time when washing dried so quickly and you did not have to worry about whether to take a coat when you ventured out.

In the height of summer, the Architecture group ventured to Stowe House and Park. Under the grand porticoed terrace we were served refreshments and smashing cakes before the tour of the public rooms. From a professional point of view, I was delighted to hear that teenage boys in an elite fee-paying school were no different from my students. A chandelier in the 18th century grand library/ study room was damaged when they were throwing about a tennis ball. One parent came up with the cash to have it repaired!

By the time that you read this newsletter, the Committee will have already met to plan the next few months. We welcome two new committee members, Judith Pilling and Geraldine Rogers. I look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible at our first Open Meeting on Thursday, 10th September, when we welcome Mark Kershaw to talk about The Golden Age of Television. He will talk about television in the 1970s and 80s when we only had three television channels and colour TV was very new. How did we ever manage when we had to watch a programme live and had no streaming platforms allowing us to binge on a whole series? This should be a wonderful trip down memory lane. However, I recently watched the lost recording of an early episode of Morecombe and Wise which seemed so amateurish and very politically incorrect. The 8th October talk will be on the Arts and Craft Movement in Cotswold Churches.

After the AGM we discovered a slight correction needed to be made to the accounts 2025–2026. Therefore, we need the revised accounts to be audited and then presented to members to vote on them. Therefore, the Open Meeting on 8th October will begin with an extraordinary AGM to present to members for approval.

Very best wishes. Jeff Price, Chairman

YOUR COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS CAN BE FOUND ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER

Current Membership (full members) – 326
Number of (active) Groups – 30

<https://north-cotswold.u3asite.uk/>

Open Meetings Programme

From Janice Fisher

Our Open Meetings take place in Willersey Village Hall at 2pm on the second Thursday of the month.

A suggested donation of £2 is payable at the door for both members and non-members.

Do you need, or can you offer members a lift to Open Meetings?

The Committee would like to facilitate lifts for those u3a members who wish to attend but do not have transport. If you are a member who would like a lift or a member prepared to offer a lift, please contact Hilary Rowlands (Welfare Officer) tel. 01386 858575, email hilaryrowlands@hotmail.com

10th September **The Golden Age of Television? A Personal Journey** – Mark Kershaw

A talk about television in the 1970s and 80s, when there were only three channels and colour TV was very new.



Mark Kershaw joined the BBC at Television Centre in London in 1970 and rose from being a lowly camera assistant to an executive producer. He witnessed programme making in what many have described as 'the golden age of television'. He will discuss being involved in a multitude of dramas, comedies, and current affair programmes as well as state events. Intermingled with these will be stories from behind the camera as well as what happened in front of it.

8th October **The Arts & Crafts Movement in Cotswold Churches** – Kirsty Hartsiotis

The Arts and Crafts Movement made a big impact on country churches – from church building to stained glass, from woodcarving to conservation. Kirsty will explore the impact of 'artists' from William Morris through to the Guild of Handicraft, Gimson and the Barnsleys', Christopher Whall to 20th Century artists such as Edward Payne who worked in the tradition.



12th November **The Gordon Russell Design Story** – Christopher Holton

Gordon Russell was a pioneer—a furniture designer, maker, calligrapher, entrepreneur, educator, and advocate of accessible, well-crafted design. Educated in the Arts and Crafts tradition of the Cotswolds. He believed that good design profoundly impacts people's lives. His great skill lay in bridging the gap between hand and machine, craft and design, theory and practice, landscape and architecture.



Welcome New Members

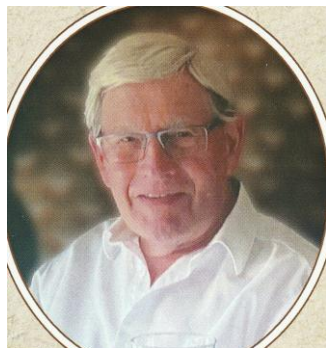
Susan Coyne Kate Guest

Diane Bromilow

Rachel & Nigel Surman

John Bissett

John died at the end of June, aged 88. On 20th July more than thirty members of the u3a joined family and friends for his funeral at The Vale crematorium.



Members may best remember John as our Membership Secretary, a post which he held for many years, seeing in the transition to 'Beacon'. On the door at Open Meetings, he knew everyone by name! He became one of our first Honorary Members earlier this year.

National Service in the army took him to Germany after which he joined BMC as a draughtsman until his retirement, through its transition to British Leyland, and BMW when they acquired the Rover Group.

He was a heritage railway enthusiast, caravaner, volunteered at *Signpost* and supported Evesham United F.C., regularly travelling to their away fixtures in the Southern League Premier South.

Naturally he joined the Engineering and Transport Group. He started the popular Sunday Lunch Group at the House of the Open Door in 2013 and was the group leader for 12 years. He attended the History Group for more than 15 years. He was a keen walker, always with a few membership forms in his backpack, played skittles until quite recently, and was a regular on our summer 'charabanc outing'.

Editor.

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'Thank you to those of you who wrote remembrances of John, these were sent to the family and were greatly appreciated'.

Hilary Rowlands – Welfare Officer.

Group News

History Group Programme

The History Group meets in Weston-sub-Edge Village Hall at 10am. prompt, on the first Tuesday of the month. [New and occasional members are always welcome, so if there is a talk that might interest you, please come along.](#)

October 6 Sally Ferrers

[Battle of Trafalgar, Lord Nelson and Emma Hamilton](#)

Members of the Architecture, Buildings and Archaeology group will remember Sally's excellent talk last year about Inigo Jones and Sir Anthony van Dyck. Trafalgar, one of history's greatest sea battles in which Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson fought and died. His scandalous love for Emma Hamilton is background to this history-changing event. How did the battle happen? Who was Nelson's adversary? Sally's talk features a short film reconstruction of the battle on 21st October 1805.

November 3 Mike Bottomley

[Rudyard Kipling](#)

Rudyard Kipling had a troubled childhood. He was sent back to the UK from India at the age of 5 but returned at 16 to run a newspaper in Lahore! We learn of the sadness of losing his young daughter to a fever and then his son John in WW1. Mike reminds us of all the wonderful stories and poems Rudyard wrote and will entertain us by performing one or two.

December 1 John Putley (Community Heritage Officer, Gloucestershire Heritage Hub)

[Treasures of the Archives](#)

Followed by our Christmas Lunch.



POETRY

The small **Poetry Group** continues its monthly meetings and here is a foretaste of what we hope to delve into during the autumn.

Monday, 14th September John Clare (1793–1864).

From a poor, rural, Northamptonshire background, and with little formal education, Clare provides evocative portraits of the countryside and rural life during the early 19th Century,.

Monday, 12th October William Blake (1757–1829).

Poet, painter, print maker, and author of *‘Jerusalem’*, he produced a diverse, rich collection of work which muses on themes religious and human. A profound and revolutionary thinker he is more recognised in death than in his lifetime.

Monday, 9th November War Poetry.

Suitably, for our season of national mourning and as we remember the sacrifice and death of war, we will be led in consideration of some of the inspired, profound poetry which captures the atmosphere, landscape, and wounds of War – often expressed bitterly and vividly.

Monday 14th December Mary Oliver (1935–2019)

An American poet who found inspiration in nature and quiet places, her work reflects the wonder of the natural environment with vivid imagery and simple language.

Our group is open to new people who might like to try it. For details of where we meet, etc. contact – johndthompson@gmail.com

Effortless Entertaining

Restarting this September

Contact Fiona Tierney, [email fiona@cotswoldcooking.com](mailto:fiona@cotswoldcooking.com)

Exploring Literature – a new u3a discussion group

Have you always meant to read *The Odyssey*, *Beowulf* or *The Divine Comedy*, but never quite found the impetus? Or perhaps you've read a classic in the past and would enjoy returning to it with others?

Exploring Literature is a new discussion group for anyone who enjoys reading and talking about great works of literature, history and biography. Together we will read texts at a relaxed pace and explore the ideas, characters, historical context and timeless questions they raise. The emphasis will be on sharing different perspectives and enjoying thoughtful conversation in a friendly, informal setting.

This is very much a shared endeavour in the u3a tradition. I won't be teaching the group; instead, members will be encouraged to take turns introducing a text. No specialist knowledge is needed – just curiosity and a willingness to join the discussion.

Unlike a traditional book club, our focus won't be on reviewing books or deciding whether we liked them. Instead, we'll ask what they have to say about the world, about history and, perhaps most importantly, about what it means to be human.

Possible texts might include:

Homer – *The Iliad* or *The Odyssey*

Beowulf

Dante – *The Divine Comedy*

Roy Jenkins – *Churchill*

A Shakespeare play, such as *The Tempest* or *Macbeth*

Dan Jones – *Henry V*

'The Roman Trilogy' perhaps, Tom Holland

If this sounds like something you would enjoy, please email **Victoria Law** at bellini40@hotmail.co.uk to register your interest.

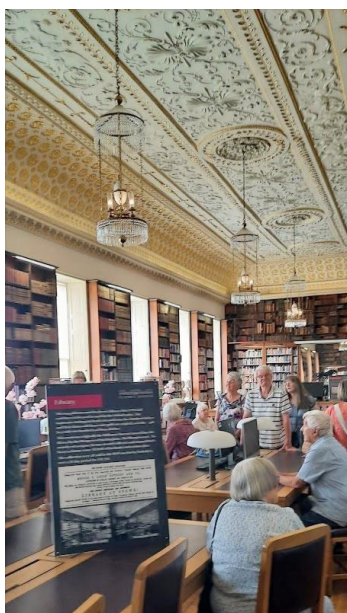
If there is sufficient interest, our first **planning meeting** will be held on **Tuesday 27th October at 2.30 pm** (the fourth Tuesday of the month) at my house. At this meeting we will decide together on the future programme, format and frequency of meetings.

Proposed New Group

History of Art

For more information, please contact Charles Nixon (Groups Coordinator).

The **Archaeology, Buildings and Architecture Group** visit to **Stowe House**, one of England's most iconic and architecturally significant buildings and estates.





"I'm no different from you just because I wear a dog-collar."

I turned my collar round!

John Thompstone writes -

60 years ago, in fact!

And on Sunday, 27th September at 11.00am., in Childswickham Church (WR12 7HH), our Vicar, Shellie has given me permission to celebrate Holy Communion and preach.

This invitation goes out to friends 'old and new' in the u3a who might care to join Rosemary and myself as we commemorate that far off Sunday morning in Chester Cathedral, when I was ordained priest, as well as the passage of ensuing years. There will be a drink and nibbles after the service.

[Further details from – johndthompstone@gmail.com](mailto:johndthompstone@gmail.com)

Keith Horden's Quiz

1. In which country is the source of the River Amazon?
2. In the Jeeves and Wooster stories, what was Jeeves's first name?
3. Who wrote 'Wuthering Heights'?
4. What was Father Ted's surname?
5. Which US State has Jackson as its capital?



Q.5 This river **doesn't** run through Jackson



Question 8



Question 14

6. In the TV thriller series, 'Luther', who played Luther?
7. Branston, where the pickle is manufactured, is in which county?
8. What was the name of Captain Nemo's submarine?
9. In a list of European capitals, which capital comes last alphabetically?
10. What was the name of Jennifer Saunders's character in 'Absolutely Fabulous'?
11. Who wrote the music for the opera 'Don Giovanni'?
12. Where is the headquarters of the Royal Mint?
13. Who wrote the orchestral piece 'The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra'?
14. Which royal residence has a Slough postcode?
15. The non-fiction book 'Ghosts in the Hedgerow' by Tim Moorhouse, features which animal?
16. In which city was Tony Blair born?
17. Who wrote 'The Man Who Died Twice'?
18. Who is the Chancellor of the Exchequer?
19. Whose novel 'Silverview' was published posthumously in 1921?
20. In pre-Euro days, which country had the Guilder as its currency?

NORTH COTSWOLD U3A ACTIVITIES 2026

Group	Venue	Day	Time	Contact
Archaeology, Buildings and Architecture	Wickhamford Memorial Hall	4 th Wednesday	10.00 am	Charles Nixon 07860 662486 Jeff Price 07791 054231
Board Games	Private House Chipping Campden	2 nd Wednesday	2 – 4pm	Caroline Anstey 07980 586823 Anne Bunce 07743037164
Bridge for Improvers (Tuition, monitored duplicate, Teams)	Willersey Village Hall	Every Thursday	10.00-12.00	Michael Robinson 01386 852675
Coffee and Conversation	Various – eg. Moreton-in-Marsh, Broadway, and Chipping Campden	Various	10.30am monthly October to April	Hilary Thornburgh 01386 701235
Effortless Entertaining (Regular and Aga Cooking) Restarts in September	Private House – Willersey	4 th Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	11.00 – 2.00 pm	Fiona Tierney 01386 854654
Exploring Literature Proposed new group	Private House Chipping Campden			Victoria Law bellini40@hotmail. co.uk
Exploring Music Currently inactive				
Family History	Private House Mickleton	2 nd Friday	2.00 pm	Liz Reeves 01386 430039
French Group 1 (Intermediate)	Eight Bells Inn, Chipping Campden	3 rd Wednesday	2.30 -4.00 pm	Penny Hanes penny.hanes @gmail.com
French Group 2 (Improvers)	Eight Bells Inn, Chipping Campden	3 rd Wednesday	2.30 -4.00 pm	Reg Pritchard 01386 849318
Gardens & Gardening	Childswickham Memorial Hall (winter) Garden visits (summer)	2 nd Friday	10 am (winter) 2.30 pm(summer)	Fran Geering 07392114870
Golf Croquet	Behind Methodist Church, Willersey	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	PM May to October	Richard Ingles 01386 853306
History	Weston-sub-Edge Hall	1 st Tuesday	10.00 AM	Pamela Endicott 01386 854812
Kurling	Willersey Village Hall	4 th Monday	AM	Sandra Spensley 01386 858637 Christine Sneddon 01386 854841
Mahjong	Moreton-in-Marsh	2 nd & 4 th Monday	PM	Diana Lucas 01608 238092

Group	Venue	Day	Time	Contact
Opera Appreciation (In conjunction with Winchcombe u3a)	Burland Hall, Stanton	3 rd Wednesday	2 – 5pm	Colin Davison 01242 603317 Ann Pitcher 01242 621328
Photography	Willersey Village Hall	2 nd Monday	AM	David Lees 07710 336031 Clive Lockyer 01386 858458
Pickleball	Toddington Village Hall	2 nd & 4 th Thursday	10 - 11.30am	Charles Nixon 07860 662486 Hazel Cook 07503185215
Poetry	Private Houses – Various	2 nd Monday	AM	John Thompstone 01386 852930
Reading for Pleasure	Private Houses – Various	1 st Monday	PM	Phyllis Andrews 01386 641361
Science for All Meetings, field trips and videos	Willersey Village Hall (Jubilee Room)	3 rd Friday	AM	Marilyn Watts 07747186282
Scottish Country Dancing	Bourton on the Hill	2 nd & 4 th Friday	AM	Diana Lucas 01608 238092
Skittles	The Snowhill Arms	3 rd Thursday	6.30 for 7.00pm	Brian Thackeray 07504 911892
Sunday Lunches	The Village Barr, Weston-sub-Edge	2 nd Sunday	12.00	Judith Pilling 07984 303443
Table Tennis	Willersey Village Hall	1 st & 3 rd Thursday	5.00 – 6.00 PM	Helen Trussell 07496 112706
Theatre and Concert Going	Various	Probably 3 visits a year		Charles Nixon 07860 662486
Touch Tennis	Willersey Village Hall	1 st & 3 rd Mondays	10.00 – 11.30 AM	Richard Sutcliffe 01386 300263
Ukulele	Private House – Blockley	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday	PM	Lekh Richardson 01386 701072
Walking - ‘Amblers’, 2 to 3 miles	Optional pub or café lunch	3 rd Tuesday	AM	Hilary Rowlands 01386 858575
Walking – ‘The Friendly Fours’ – up to 4 miles at a gentle pace from Broadway and surrounding villages.	Optional pub or café lunch	1 st Friday	AM	Joan Rees 01386 300916 or 07801 480703
Walking – Medium Walks	Optional pub lunch	4 th Tuesday	AM	Chris Selby 01386 853512
Walking – Long Walks (6.5 to 11 miles)	Optional pub lunch	1 st Friday & 3 rd Thursday	AM	Anne Robertson 01386 701564

Any changes or additions please contact Charles Nixon (Groups Coordinator), mob. 07860 662486

CONTACT YOUR COMMITTEE



Jeff Price, Chairman 07791 054231

Charles Nixon, Vice-Chairman & Groups Coordinator 07860 662486

Margaret Oliver, Secretary (Business) 01386 832627

Angela Hope, Treasurer 07768 013107

Anne Nixon, Minutes Secretary 07719 526492

Elizabeth Reeves, Membership Secretary 01386 430039

Hilary Rowlands, Welfare Officer 01386 858575

Anne Bunce 07743037164

Marion Davies 01386 842944

Judith Pilling 01386 718979

Geraldine Rogers 0775738814

Janice Fisher (Open Meetings Organiser) 07485 257918

Your next Newsletter will be published in November

The deadline for copy is 24th October

Your Newsletter Editor can be contacted via the Contact Link on the North Cotswold u3a website.

Keith's Quiz – the answers

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|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Peru | 8. The Nautilus | 15. The hedgehog |
| 2. Reginald | 9. Zagreb | 16. Edinburgh |
| 3. Emily Bronte | 10. Edina Monsoon | 17. Richard Osman |
| 4. Crilly | 11. W. A. Mozart | 18. John Healey |
| 5. Mississippi | 12. Llantrisant | 19. John Le Carre |
| 6. Idris Elba | 13. Benjamin Britten | 20. The Netherlands |
| 7. Staffordshire | 14. Windsor Castle | |