

# *THE TUBA*

The  
Newsletter  
of Towcester  
U3A

PHOTO: SUSAN RALPH

## View from the Chairman - Editor

Our 2019 monthly meetings ended on a high note in November. The speaker was one of our own members, Andy Tennet, who gave an excellent presentation entitled “My 30 years in the Northamptonshire Police”. This was followed by seasonal refreshments. In December we enjoyed another superb Christmas co-ordinators’ lunch.

Here at the U3A, a New Year is always a time not only to reflect and review the journey we have been on but also to look forward to the times ahead and we certainly have exciting times ahead as we look forward to our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Our U3A has changed over the years both in size and the variety of activities available but its basic purpose remains the same: enabling like minded people from a wide variety of careers to meet with others and enjoy activities together.

I can appreciate that many members choose to focus only on their activities and monthly meetings etc and that is as it should be. It is the responsibility of the committee to ensure that all proceedings are in accordance with our constitution and that we follow Trust advice and guidance regarding Charity Commission requirements. This is not a choice. It is necessary to ensure good practice.

We have taken the view that it is better to be proactive rather than reactive and on our website, in addition to our Financial Controls Policy and our Membership Policy, you will now find our Equalities, Diversity, Accessibility, Inclusion and Safeguarding policy and our Complaints policy.

We have been pleased to welcome 2 new committee members. Amanda Campbell and Janette McTeer have joined the committee as co-opted members.

In January we launched our Helping Hands initiative. We are so grateful to everyone who has signed up. So far we have called upon and been grateful for help at quiz afternoons and the monthly meeting. However, it would be good to have more names on the list. If you feel you can give occasional help to set up at quizzes or meet and greet and sign in at monthly meetings please contact myself or our Helping Hands co-ordinator, Kate Bartlett (katebartlett@btinternet.com)

As I write this in February, the nights are getting lighter and the garden is budding up nicely. Despite storm Ciara, which has just passed, my brave little snowdrops are still standing; a positive sign that spring is on the way. We look forward to the year ahead. We continue to be grateful for your support and hope to make 2020 another memorable year. *Thank you so much Carol x*



### An important announcement from our Membership Secretary Penny Bennett

At the end of last year, the committee discussed whether people joining towards the end of the membership year should pay the full yearly fee. The consensus was that we should offer a reduced fee for people who join Towcester U3A between January to May. To this end we have introduced a new £8 part-year membership fee with renewal of the full fee in June. The part-year application form is now on the website. The 2020/21 payment year begins at the end of May. As notified at the 2019 AGM, the full fee for 2020/21 is £16.

Our new membership system means that we can send out reminders when the yearly fee is due, but if you have an urge to pay the fee before you get the reminder, we will be accepting renewals from March,

*best wishes Penny*

## The First Notes of the Tuba

“Keep it light” and “Get the members involved”. These two thoughts were common to all the founding mothers and fathers of the new Towcester U3A and I had no doubt that they were key to our newsletters.

Yes, it was just a newsletter to start with, but the very first edition set a competition for a better name. It was Ian Miller who came up with the brilliant idea of “The Tuba”. Not only in the great musical tradition of titles like “Bugle” or “Clarion” or “Herald”, but a superb visual pun. If you haven’t got round to thinking about that, just add a down stroke to the “3” in **TU3A**. I don’t remember Ian actually getting

a prize for this so let his name be recorded for history. The little tuba player motif has survived and I am glad about that.

That met the “keep it light” criterion from the outset and there was wonderfully little difficulty in getting people involved. It needed to be a record of the things we were getting up to so all the Group Co-ordinators were invited to contribute news of their activities both past and programmed. The result was a fantastic tapestry (would medley be a more appropriate metaphor for our musical title?) of an organisation that had hit the ground running. Thank you to all those who provided the threads (or notes).

We had reports of all our activities. Inevitably, there was more interest in the “out and about” groups like London Explorers or Ramblers or the coach outings; we would pick people at random and ask them if they could write a report. We were treated to a fine range of travel writing, often illustrated by photographs. We also reported on monthly meetings so anyone picking up a copy at random would get a good impression of the breadth of our interests. For this we employed a promising young cub reporter who went on to greater things, becoming the second Editor in due course and from there graduating to chair of the whole U3A. The very professional publication we have today is all down to Anne.

It was print only in the early days. Although cost was an important consideration while we were working out a practical budget. You would be surprised how many people even as recently as ten years ago were not digitally savvy and did not use e-mail. Distribution was a bit of a headache, but again people chipped in and delivered around their own neighbourhood or village. Also hard copies were a useful means of advertising: we could give them to potential new members, we could put them in places like doctors’ waiting rooms or the library or as we still say on the back page they might be picked up by the bin men. Nice to see some of my deathless prose still there, (thank you Anne). And of course only black and white, the Treasurer keeping his watchful eye on me.

Being in on the birth of something new in the community is a privilege and a very exciting thing. Great fun too. The early Tubas were edited to reflect this and to encourage it. And Anne and Carol have picked up the score. From where we are today it looks as if it contributed its bass notes to the rhythm of U3A life quite satisfactorily.

*Richard Bird [inaugral editor of The Tuba]*



## The Events Pages - At A Glance

For a full update on events go to the website at [www.towcesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk)

Thur 20th Feb	Quiz	Sawpits Centre	2.00 pm
Wed 26th Feb	Monthly Meeting	Milton Keynes to Mississippi	
Wed 4th Mar	Theatre Trip	The King and I	2.30 pm
Wed 11th Mar	Garden Visits	Greyfriars House and Garden	
Wed 25th Mar	Monthly Meeting	Radio Days	
Wed 25th Mar	Theatre Trip	We Will Rock You	2.30 pm
Wed 8th Apr	Garden Visits	Hanbury Hall	
Wed 14th Apr	Theatre Trip	Dial M for Murder	2.30 pm
Thur 23rd Apr	Northants U3A Network	An Afternoon with Gervase Phinn (see p 10)	
Wed 29th Apr	Monthly Meeting	Scott's Voyage to Antarctica	
Thur 30th Apr	Theatre Trip	Cinderella	2.30 pm
12th -15th May	Church Visits	Exploring Norfolk Churches	
Wed 13th May	Garden Visits	Mottisfont Abbey	
Wed 27th May	<b>AGM &amp; Monthly Meeting</b>	My Book of Genesis - being the band's roadie	
Wed 10th June	Theatre Trip	The Birthday Party	2.30 pm
Wed 10th June	Garden Visits	Nymans Gardens	

## The Events Pages - At A Glance - *continued*

For a full update on events go to the website at [www.towcesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk)

Wed 24th June

10th Anniversary Celebration Event Towcesterians (see pages 12 & 13)



Wed 1st July

Theatre Trip

Footloose

2.30 pm

Wed 8th July

Garden Visits

RHS Wisley

Wed 29th July

Monthly Meeting

My Farcical Life as a Cruise Ship  
Entertainments Officer

Wed 12th Aug

Garden Visits

Chartwell

Wed 26th Aug

Monthly Meeting

Musings from the Amateur Stage

Wed 2nd Sept

Theatre Trip

Sunny Afternoon

2.30 pm

Wed 9th September

Garden Visits

Calke Abbey

Wed 18th Nov

Theatre Trip

My Best Friend's Wedding

2.30 pm

Wed 25th Nov

Theatre Trip

The Commitments

2.30 pm

### AGM 2020

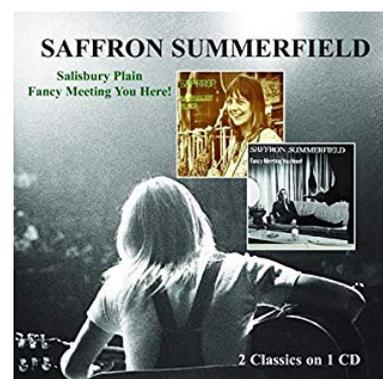
Members are reminded our 2020 Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 27th May. This will be the next opportunity for members to elect who they would like to represent them on the committee. A nomination form for members to nominate their chosen representatives, together with a draft agenda for the meeting, will be issued in late March.

## The *Diary* Pages - monthly meetings

2.00PM ON THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT TOWCESTRIANS' SPORTS CLUB

### 26th February Saffron Summerfield "Milton Keynes to Mississippi"

Saffron's presentation describes her life as a working musician. This is a lively, entertaining show featuring different styles of guitar music from 15th Century to Spanish and Mississippi Blues along with her own songs and tunes on 2 guitars and Cuatro. There will be anecdotes and stories from a career which started in North Bucks folk clubs to performing live on John Peel's BBC Radio Shows, recording at Abbey Road Studios, writing songs for BBC Radio 4's 'Start the Week', two Channel 4 films and playing guitar with Blues Musicians in Mississippi cotton fields.



### 25th March Kevin Varty "Radio Days"

Kevin is a popular and entertaining speaker who always impresses his audiences with his well researched talks. On this visit to Towcester he will be taking a nostalgic look at radio programmes from Childrens' Hour to Mrs Dale's Diary not forgetting The Goon Show and Family Favourites. Kevin will transport us back to the days of the 50s and 60s via these popular radio programmes. We will be invited to participate as he plays theme tunes to many old favourites. He will also share some amusing anecdotes about the programmes.

### 29th April Gary Shaeffer "Scott's Voyage to Antarctica and the work of Herbert Ponting"

This is an illustrated talk by Gary featuring the work of Herbert Ponting. Herbert took up photography as a hobby with no training and quickly established himself as an international competition winner. He was also a travel and war correspondent. He was selected from 100 applicants to accompany Scott's second and last tragic expedition to the Antarctic. It was always known that Herbert was not going to be one of those to reach the pole so he taught those that did photography. When the men were found after their ill fated adventure so were their iconic photographs.





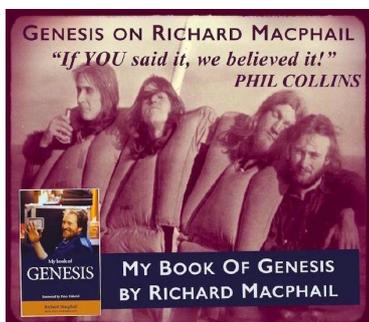
## The *Diary Pages* - monthly meetings *continued*

Wednesday 27th May

Towcester AGM Towcesterians' Sports Centre

2.00 pm

followed by



### Richard Macphail “My Book of Genesis”

School friend, aide-de-camp and tour manager, Richard Macphail was for almost 5 years, the glue that held Genesis together and has now written his affectionate memoir entitled “My Book of Genesis”.

Richard will tell us his unique story of the group’s early years. He was the singer in Anon, the Charterhouse School group that included Mike Rutherford and Anthony Phillips, which would later merge with The Garden Wall to become Genesis. Richard then became their one man road crew shepherding them from gig to gig, providing a cottage where they could live and offering them support when it was most needed. He was in the thick of it as they went on to fulfil their ambitions.

Richard has an ongoing friendship with them, a friendship that has endured for over 50 years.

### 29th July Colin Bower “My Farcical Life as a Cruise Ship Entertainments Officer”

Colin has been associated with the entertainment world most of his life. He has worked as a TV announcer, newsreader and interviewer for Anglian Television. He has appeared in Coronation Street, Emmerdale, Brookside and many other television shows as well as appearing on stage.



He has been a guest speaker on cruise ships and at one time was Passenger Liaison Officer on the British cruise ship Nevasa. Today his job would be called Cruise Director.

Colin's talk today will be mainly about life on the cruise ship and the passengers he encountered in this role.



**26th August Mike Brook “Musings from the Amateur Stage”**

Mike is a retired Chief Librarian who enjoys playing sport and taking part in amateur dramatics.

His talk includes anecdotes about some of the plays and shows he has been involved with during his 30 plus years with drama groups in York and West Berkshire. He will also give 2 or 3 actual performances of short comic pieces originally written and performed by heroes of comedy such as Alan Bennett and Peter Cook.

**TEA & COFFEE ROTA**

Please provide about 4 helpers to serve the refreshments. All the tea/coffee supplies are provided by the committee. If you belong to one of the groups mentioned below - please help out your co-ordinator by volunteering your services. Many thanks.

Month	Group	Coordinator
26th February	Ramblers 1	Jemima Wooding
25th March	Ramblers 2	Ian Miller
29th April	Reading Between The Crimes	Denise Rowe
27th May	Recorder Playing	Lynn Tebbenham
24th June	10 year Anniversary Celebrations 	Volunteers, Please
29th July	Science for all	David Wilcock
26th August	Scrabble	Claire Griffiths
30th September	Table Tennis	Jonna Conquest
28th October	Theatre trips	Marion Wilson
25th November	Striders	Peter Warden
30th December	NO MEETING	Happy Christmas!!
27th January 2021	Ukulele	Mary Golcher

## News from Northamptonshire U3A Network

Northamptonshire Network of U3As invite  
you to

An Afternoon with

**Gervase Phinn**

On

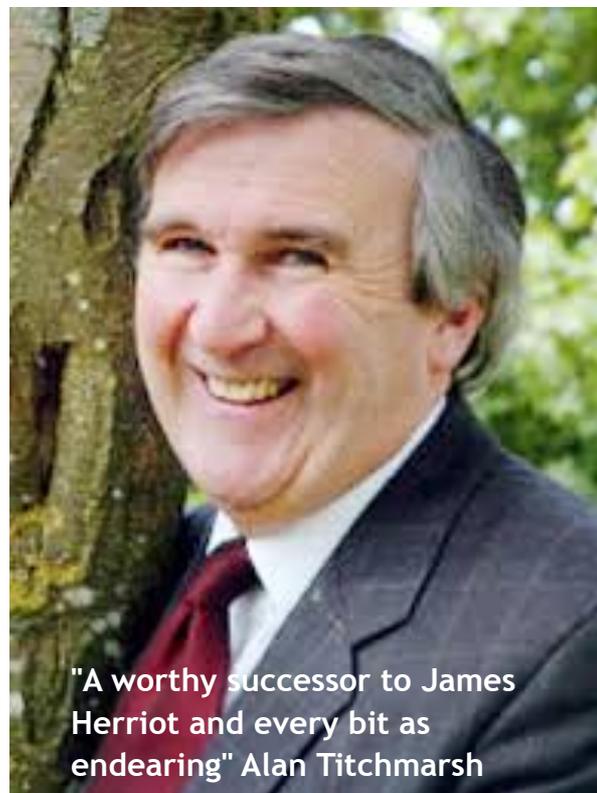
Thursday 23rd April

at

1.30 pm

At the United Reformed Church

High Street Wellingborough NN8 4HW\*



Tickets are £5 per person to include refreshments

To book your seat email [u3anorthantsnetwork@hotmail.com](mailto:u3anorthantsnetwork@hotmail.com) or use the booking form attached at the end of this issue.

\* The committee has agreed to arrange for a coach [cost to be advised] if there is sufficient interest. Please contact Carol Lucas if you would like to add your name to the list of those interested in taking the coach if it is available.

**Never heard of Gervase Phinn? - don't let that dissuade you!** Gervase is one of the country's most popular raconteurs and best selling authors (such as "*A Wayne in a Manger*"). He entertains with the hilarious stories of his time as a teacher and later as a schools' inspector in the Yorkshire Dales. Gervase's sell-out shows fill theatres the length and breadth of the country. Dr Phinn is the visiting Professor of Education at the university of Teeside and one of the nicest people you'll ever meet.

The Northants Network have done extremely well in being able to book Gervase, as he is extremely popular. We have had to be patient...we've waited two years!

You are guaranteed to have a fun, informative and enjoyable afternoon with this gentle mild mannered man who has the gift of storytelling at its very best.

Please take the chance.....you will not be disappointed! It will be one of the best £5 you'll ever spend.

Anne

## News from The Groups

Throughout the year the Photography group try to expand their skills by taking part in a versatility challenge. Then at the beginning of of the year we come together to view each other's photos. Equipment can be as simple or complicated as you want, phone, tablet, cameras. Feel free to join us.

### Versatility challenge titles 2020

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Through a spiders web.   | 6. Shadows                    |
| 2. Wasi Sabi (see footnote) | 7. Blue is the colour....     |
| 3. Monochrome               | 8. Action                     |
| 4. Portrait                 | 9. Gates, entrances, doorways |
| 5. Curves                   | 10. Street photography        |
|                             | 11. Low viewpoint             |

Wasi Sabi- is the Japanese idea of taking delight in the impermanent, the transient and the imperfect. Hence it appreciates the chipped cup more than the perfect one. Surfaces and objects which have been subject to the processes of time are appreciated as beautiful. Rusting, flaking, chipping, peeling, erosion, weathering and fading are all signs of process and change and are to be valued as are drift wood, seaglass, ripped jeans, old leather and vintage tools.

*Jeanette*

### Riviera Travel Promotion Scheme

Some of you may have noticed an advert by Riviera Travel in the National Magazine describing a scheme where they will donate money to local U3As.

Riviera Travel is a holiday company specialising in River cruises and worldwide escorted holidays.

In their current promotion they will make a donation to the local U3A of **10% of the cost of any U3A members' holidays.**

They have similar schemes for other voluntary/charitable organisations.

If you are thinking of taking a holiday with Riviera Travel, please consider this scheme. **It will not increase the cost of your holiday** but it will increase our funds!

All you have to do is **inform them that you are a Towcester U3A member at the time of booking.** Later you will be asked to provide more information about Towcester U3A. When you pay for your holiday they will ask you again about Towcester U3A and its bank account details.

Rather than publish our bank account details, please contact our Treasurer Mike Willis by email [treasurertu3a@gmail.com](mailto:treasurertu3a@gmail.com) or telephone 01327 353745.

Please understand we are not trying to promote Riviera Travel ahead of any other holiday company. It's just that if you were thinking of booking with them anyway, participating in the scheme could help Towcester U3A.



# News from *The Groups*

## THEATRE GROUP



If you are a relatively new member of Towcester U3A, the theatre group is easily accessible. Find the list of shows on offer look either below, or in the monthly bulletin, choose what you would like to see and then add your name to the list by either phoning, emailing, or speaking to me at the monthly meetings. Then either send your money to me by the pay-by date, or tell me if you are no longer interested in the tickets. We all make our way to Milton Keynes theatre independently, but all sit together, usually in the circle. Parking is plentiful near to the theatre, but buses from some villages get even closer! Quite a few people make a day of it, either shopping or lunching before the show.

I try to book shows for all tastes, but it has to be said that musicals and ballets are by far the most popular. Part of the ethos of U3A is to try new things so is it worth trying a different genre?

Wed 4th Mar	<b>The King and I</b>	2.30 pm
Wed 25th Mar	<b>We Will Rock You</b>	2.30 pm
Wed 14th Apr	<b>Dial M for Murder</b>	2.30 pm
Thur 30th Apr	<b>'Cinderella' (Northern Ballet)</b>	2.30 pm

**The following shows are all available to reserve your tickets now:-**

Wed 10th June	<b>The Birthday Party (Harold Pinter)</b>	2.30 pm	£18	pay by tba
Wed 1st July	<b>Footloose (Gareth Gates as Willard)</b>	2.30 pm	£15	pay by tba
Wed 2nd Sept	<b>Sunny Afternoon</b>	2.30 pm	£30	pay by tba
Wed 18th Nov	<b>My Best Friend's Wedding</b>	2.30 pm	£24	pay by tba
Wed 25th Nov	<b>'The Commitments' Musical featuring soul classics such as <i>River Deep Mountain High</i> and <i>I Heard It On The Grapevine</i></b>	2.30 pm	£30	pay by tba

Please note that some of these pay by dates may be extended, but these are the latest times I can get on reserving seats.

**Money should be sent to Marion Wilson with an sae by the pay by date. Cheques made payable to Marion Wilson please. Please note the new address**

41a High Street, Roade, Northampton, NN7 2NW

Phone 01604 864254

**24th June Monthly Meeting!** This takes on a different guise from our normal format. In order to celebrate our 10 years of existence, we are doing something a bit special....



### **And Now We Are 10**

Towcester U3A 10 year celebrations

Once upon a time, in a land not far from here in around the year 2010, Towcester U3A was formed by some very imaginative people.

Denise Rowe, a member of Northampton U3A realised that there was a call for such a group in Towcester.

The launch meeting was addressed by Denise Rowe. Denise explained how she contacted Northampton U3A, for information about how to go about setting up a U3A. She was given information after being invited to a meeting and later found herself on the committee at Northampton!

You will be able to learn more about how Towcester U3A started from Denise at our 10 year celebrations.

#### **The start of Towcester U3A -timeline.**

The Setting up meeting held at The Saracens Head 11.00am 23rd March 2010.

- Those who were present at the meeting were, Hilary Bradley, Richard Bird, Ian and Jane Miller, Chris Lofts and Denise Rowe.
- Pre Launch meeting at The Saracens Head 13th April 2010, Debs Hucker and Alan Ross joined the group.
- Launch meeting at Towcester Town Hall Wednesday 28th April 2010.
- Inaugural meeting, Towcester Town Hall Wednesday 26th May 2010.
- Subjects discussed included publicity and advertising as well as funding.

All the above mentioned people were the main force in forming Towcester U3A as we know it today. Many of this original group are still members together with around 50 others of the initial members!



### Help us celebrate Towcester U3A reaching its 10th anniversary,

After much discussion, in which some of you have been involved, we have chosen to celebrate this notable event with a gathering on Wednesday 24th June. This is the date we would normally hold our monthly meeting. We have chosen the Towcestrians' as a venue, mainly because of its size and accessibility to our membership and ample free parking.

We are asking all our Towcester U3A groups to be involved to see if they would like to 'showcase' their group.

For example, **Reading for Pleasure** is having a **book swap**, and possibly the **Gardening group** may have a **plant swap**. The **Science For All group** have some **exciting demonstrations** in mind, and possibly our **Food and Wine Appreciation group**, could have **some samples.....???** Our **Creative Writers** are compiling an illustrated book of **stories for 5 to 8 year olds**, hopefully the proof will be ready by then.

Other groups have already shown an interest, some displaying photographs and items of interest.

Our intention is to provide a welcome drink, finger food and free raffle, as well as our usual monthly refreshments.

The 10th Anniversary Committee and Main Committee are still investigating other items that we hope our members will enjoy, so please feel free to contact any of the committee if you have any suggestions.

'Helping Hands' during, prior and after the event would be most welcome.

Hopefully tickets for this event will be available at the February monthly meeting and other meetings up to June.

We hope you like our ideas and wish to be involved with this exciting event.

# News from *The Groups* - continued



## London Explorers 2 [Tuesday]

### List of places to visit 2020

18th Feb	Kensington Palace	21st July	The Charterhouse
17th Mar	Tutankhamen Exhibition (Saatchi Gallery)	18th Aug	Fulham Palace and Gardens
21st Apr	The British Library	15th Sept	Kew Gardens and George II Exhibition (Kew Palace)
19th May	Royal Institute and Faraday Museum	20th Oct	London Walk (Food and Drink tour)
28th June	Crossness Pumping Station	17th Nov	Houses of Parliament

## Antiques and Collectables

We meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at The Sawpits Centre. We are a lively group of enthusiasts and are always on the look-out for new members.

We had our planning meeting in January and have decided on some interesting topics for the year. The first 6 months are as follows:-

25th Feb	<b>Stationary (postcards, pen and pencil of interest)</b>
24th March	<b>Chamber pots.</b>
28th April	<b>Tools.</b>
26th May	<b>World War 2 memorabilia.</b>
23rd June	<b>Maps.</b>
28th July	<b>Kitchenalia.</b>

You don't have to be a collector or 'antique' to join us but I promise you will learn some fascinating facts as I have done.

*Diana Duckworth*



The Canasta Group had a New Year's lunch followed by a game of Canasta.

What better way to start the new year !

## News from *The Groups* - continued



### Garden Visits

We had a very good 2019 with many monthly garden visits starting with snowdrops at Welford Park. We also visited Bowood, Kentwell, Ickworth, Peter Beale's Roses, Lavenham, Exbury, Kew Gardens, Seizincote and Batsford Arboretum, all of which were beautiful.

By the time the Tuba is published we will have returned to Welford Park for the snowdrops. On the table at the February monthly meeting will be these three visits.

Wednesday 11th March **Greyfriars House and Garden.**

Wednesday 8th April **Hanbury Hall.**

Wednesday 13th May **Mottisfont Abbey.**

The following garden visits will become available later

Wednesday 10th June **Nymans Gardens.**

Wednesday 8th July **Wisley.**

Wednesday 12th August **Chartwell.**

Wednesday 9th September **Calke Abbey.**

Wednesday 14th October **TBA**

All the above are National Trust Properties. The cost for each visit will be £13pp for the coach ( + entrance for non-NT members).

### Table Tennis

The U3A Table Tennis group has successfully moved and settled into our new premises at the A5 Rangers club, where we are able to use the cycling club's table. We now have 18 members divided into two 'teams', and we all have a very enjoyable time.

Table tennis not only helps to keep you fit (picking the ball up from the floor is great exercise), it keeps you alert, as that ball seems to come back at you with great speed! We have a huge amount of fun which gives you that "feel good" factor, which of course is so important for one's emotional well-being.

The abilities of the players range from beginners to fairly useful players, so if anyone is thinking of joining us, I am sure you would fit in somewhere within that range. Some of our group are so keen that they have joined the Towcester League Table Tennis Club in order to develop their skills further.

No matter your skill or your age, it is a great sport. Our oldest player is 91 and fighting fit, so there is no excuse, you are not too old to take part.

*Jonna Conquest Co-ordinator*



## News from *The Groups* - continued

### Card Making

Ladies from the Card Making Group took a break from their industry and met for a cuppa and a chat at Bell Plantation.

This group is a wonderful example of where a group of people, with a similar hobby, have come together on a regular basis and have become firm friends who now enjoy each other's company outside the group activity.

The U3A at its very best!



### Music For Pleasure

This month, the Music for Pleasure group enjoyed listening to an interesting selection of American Folk Music on CDs and YouTube. We learned about the origins and different styles of the music. Two examples were a Moonshining song, 'Copper Kettle' sung by Joan Baez and 'We Shall Overcome' sung by Pete Seeger, a song borrowed from the church which then became a Civil Rights anthem.

The group listen to a wide range of music at our meetings and next month it will be compositions featuring woodwind instruments.



### London Explorers 1

Our group has now been running for 9 years and visited many interesting places and walked through many areas of London. Our trips are on the 2nd Thursday of the month from March to November, meeting at Milton Keynes station to catch the 9.41 to Euston and visit various places of interest. We also do guided London Walks.

Our November trip was to watch the majestic Household Cavalry change guard at their barracks. This daily ritual takes place at about 11.00 come rain or shine. Fortunately for us, the rain had just stopped - as the ceremony takes about half an hour! Afterwards, you can view the soldiers dismount and untack the horses via a two-way mirror in the museum.



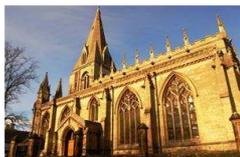
In March we plan to go to another exhibition at the V & A museum. We usually try to arrange a talk along side these exhibitions to enhance our experience and knowledge.

In April, we will be revisiting our first ever trip to the **River Police Museum**. This is not open to the general public but only by special arrangement. It is a most fascinating museum with a huge breadth of historical significance.

Later in the year, we plan to visit **Docklands museum, Apsley House** (AKA Number 1 London - home of the Duke of Wellington) and **Wellington Arch, Chelsea Hospital** and the **Museum of Brands**.

If you would like to join any of the group's visits please contact David Powell (david@bengallane.plus.com)

## News from *The Groups* - continued



**Church Visits** We finished up a successful 2019 with a social morning in December at the Chantry House in Towcester. Around 25 group members attended and enjoyed a slide presentation highlighting the year's visits, accompanied by tea and coffee, mince pies and sausage rolls. A good time was had by all and we hope to arrange a similar event at the end of this year.

Our first visit of 2020 was to Bugbrooke Church and visits for the rest of the year are currently being finalised.

We still have availability on the 4-day coach holiday we have organised to Norfolk between 12 and 15 May 2020. We will be staying in Norwich and will be visiting several churches in the surrounding area as well as having a guided tour of Norwich Cathedral. There will also be a boat trip on the Broads and a trip on the Bure Valley Railway.

The cost for coach travel and half-board accommodation will be £349 per person with a single supplement of £45 per person, plus approximately £25 for the additional tours.

The holiday is being organised for us by Avalon Tours and their representative will accompany us. Full details can be obtained from the group co-ordinators, Gill Phillips (gillp1903@gmail.com) or Sue Richards (sue\_e\_richards@yahoo.co.uk). This is open to all U3A members and friends.

If you are interested in joining the group or in going on the holiday, do get in touch.



### Folk Dancing

Folk Dancing was featured recently on a local news item as an enjoyable way of keeping active. Come along to Towcester Town Hall any Thursday afternoon, 2.00 pm, which is when the U3A Folk Dancing group meet and you can keep fit while having fun!

No previous dance experience is necessary as we have an excellent caller and walk dances through before attempting to dance them to music. We have a refreshment break during the afternoon and are a very sociable group so why not join us one afternoon.

please contact:

Lynne Tebbenham 01327 352139 or Margaret Ball 01908 542383

**Guitar group** has now grown to a point where we can no longer accommodate everyone in each other's homes. After discussion and considering different options we are lucky to have been offered use of the conference room at the Boat Inn, Stoke Bruerne on the proviso that we purchase tea/coffee in return. Seemed a fair deal, so that is now the venue for all meetings in future. Currently, meetings are still on a fortnightly basis except when it clashes with U3A monthly meetings.

**Exploring London 3** toured London's loos! Needless to say, they started at Waterloo!

Their tour guide [with the plunger] was called Rachel...and not, unfortunately, Louise!



# News from *The Groups* - continued

## Art Appreciation 1

We have started the year looking at David Hockney, one of the outstanding artists of modern times. A DVD of him at work in his native Yorkshire Wolds showed both the man and his methods in a very interesting way.

In March we shall move on to the Northern Renaissance, with artists like Dürer, van Eyck and Hieronymous Bosch no doubt featuring strongly. Another one, Lucas Cranach, is perhaps less known, but we shall be going to Compton Verney, the wonderful country house art gallery near Kineton, to see some of his work.

We don't do lectures or formal tuition; our aim is to learn for ourselves by doing our own research and sharing it with the group. And we also enjoy a cup of coffee and a Kit-Kat.

We offer a warm welcome to new members, and if you are looking to fill in a gap on the third Tuesday of the month in the morning, come along to the Volunteer Bureau, or get in touch with me, Richard Bird, on 01327 704734 or rmb339@gmail.com.

## Amanda's Chocolate Workshop

Amanda Campbell held a chocolate workshop in her home in December. Members had a fantastic afternoon learning new skills. It was described as a lovely way to spend an afternoon with delicious results. Amanda was thanked for her time, her patience and her hospitality.



## Winter Quizzes

By the time the Tuba is published we will have had two of our 3 quizzes for this winter. The last one is this Thursday 20th February at 2.00 at the Sawpits Centre, a change from the Town Hall.

The first quiz in December was led by John Braybrook. Despite attendance being low, everyone had fun and the fact that the questions were deemed to be quite easy meant competition was fierce.

In January, we took advantage of our new facility for e mailing all members with a reminder of the quiz. As a result our attendance doubled. On this occasion the quiz was led by Anne Webb, who kept the quiz moving in her usual calm and unflappable manner even when challenged about answers. In the break the quizzers enjoyed tea or coffee and cakes.

On a very dark, damp miserable January afternoon many people said how much they welcomed being able to get out of the house and having a positive event to attend.

As one member said "Once again it's a big Thank You to the U3A". Hopefully you can join us on Thursday.

## News from *The Groups* - continued

### Boys Toys

The “Road Engine “steam traction engine stopping at Macdonalds is being driven by its builder and owner Tim Watson who came to speak to our Boys Toys Group. He does marathon charity drives raising money for a Parkinsons’ charity. He was an excellent speaker and the Group had a collection for him after his presentation.



**Boys Toys and Boys Toys 2** combined for a visit to the new Silverstone Experience. It was an excellent couple of hours followed, for some of them, by lunch at the pub.



### Co-ordinator’s Christmas Lunch

This end of year ‘thank you’ celebration was once again held at Silverstone Golf Club. The club was very welcoming and looked very festive when we arrived. After drinks and some chatting at the bar we made our way to our tables. Crackers were pulled, jokes shared and our meal was served. In addition Jeanette Waite provided Christmas quizzes for the tables.

After the meal, thanks were expressed to the co-ordinators and to Eileen Dickens who had organised the event. Thanks were also expressed to the staff and they were presented with our gratuity.

Amanda Campbell a new committee member, had made a chocolate reindeer which was raffled and won by Andrew Bailey.

So another successful Christmas lunch concluded and we went home looking ahead to Christmas and to 2020.



# New Groups' news

## New Craft group- Felting

3rd Tuesday of the month 2-4pm in Pattishall.

Needle felting is a fun craft which can involve making 3D objects or animals or 2D pictures out of natural wool.

The group will work together to complete individual projects. This is a fun craft that embraces simple pieces which can be completed in a single session to more involved projects which will take longer.

Personally, I find felting very relaxing, even if I do occasionally stab myself with the needle. No sewing or knitting experience is required. The natural wool is simply stabbed with a needle which causes the fibres to stick together. The more you stab, the smoother the outcome. This, together with different colour wool, allows for variation in texture as well as colour for a unique finished product.

Materials (wool and needles) will be provided for initial meeting, so members can try out the craft without having to buy anything upfront.

Contact Amanda Campbell 01327 831362; Mobile 07525 468495; email [amandajcampbell15@gmail.com](mailto:amandajcampbell15@gmail.com)



## Caption Competition

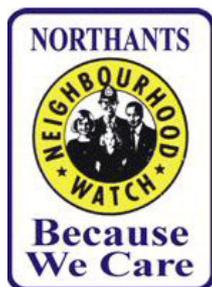
We are looking for amusing captions for this issue's photograph [right]. These should be sent to the editor at [lucasrl@aol.com](mailto:lucasrl@aol.com) before 3rd June 2020

There is no prize but you may have the pride and pleasure of seeing your caption in the next edition of The Tuba.

### Last issue's caption competition.

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Steve Maclean  | "Quick Gladys think of something witty to say. Those awful U3A people are here again" |
| Ray Paice      | "This bench has a 5/5 hygiene rating"   |
| Eileen Dickens | "I dont think this tupperware stuff will take off"                                    |
| Carol Lucas    | "What time are the Teddy Bears arriving?"   |
| Mary Griffin   | "Cucumber sandwiches? Are we expecting the vicar?"                                    |
| Joanna Hart    | "I had forgotten how disgusting spam sandwiches are!"                                 |
| Ray Paice      | "My i-phone is in here somewhere"   |





Hi there, my name is Mike Hornett and I have been around Towcester for quite a few years. I am a member of Towcester Rotary Club and other organisations in our town. I was asked a few months ago about standing again as Chairman of the Towcester Neighbourhood Watch. **Well here I am.**

Did you know there are 166 Streets in Towcester, there are lots of Facebook groups with thousands of followers but many are just posting updates which frankly are just ways of letting off steam? You must report all incidents via 101 or if an Emergency 999. **Too much talk not enough done.**

It's about time we had the old method of contact with Street Representatives back. Street Representatives are needed to help monitor what's going on and help in reporting this to the Police. We will monitor and report back; in return you can opt to receive County Alerts from the Police and local information updates from us.

#### Neighbourhood Watch signs around town.

Someone has to put them up and see they are in good order.

**Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)** There are a number of active signs which are helping to reduce speeding in the Town. They collect data about speeding vehicles. The last was put on Northampton Road [sponsored by the Town Council]. These need to be maintained, batteries changed and moved around.

#### Speed watch

Not really Neighbourhood Watch but carried out in conjunction with the Police. We have been made aware that speeding is a problem and so a small group manage this twice a year. Both this and the VAS Team are helping reduce speeding in our Town.

#### Street Watch.

Again not part of Neighbourhood Watch but run in association with the Police. They do low key patrols in pairs wearing high visibility jackets rather like the Street Pastors, low key but an important new activity.

**So there you go sounds easy doesn't it?** I am looking for assistance with all these projects and also somebody to assist with marketing.

Why not volunteer, all we need is a few hours of your time to help us improve the security of our town. If you want to help then please let us know on

There is a safety event (in conjunction with the Police) is taking place at the Sawpits Centre on the 7th March 10:00 - 15:00hrs come and have a chat with us and the Police, if you are interested it would be good to see you...

Mike Hornett - Chairman Towcester Neighbourhood Watch. e-mail [mike.hornett@gmail.com](mailto:mike.hornett@gmail.com):  
Facebook safer Towcester

## INTERESTING EVENTS FROM OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

### TOWCESTER LIBRARY

#### REGULAR EVENTS:

Every Monday	Library Bounce and Rhyme	11.00 am
Every Tuesday	Colouring Therapy	10.30 am - 1.00pm
Every Thursday	Health Walk - Tea & Coffee £1 donation	10 - 11.30 am
Every Friday	Gaming: Video games, Wii, age 8+	3.15 - 5.15 pm
Every Saturday	Nordic Walking Tea & Coffee £1 donation	10 am - 12.00 noon

Contact: email : [towlib@firstforwellbeing.co.uk](mailto:towlib@firstforwellbeing.co.uk) or call in. Towcester Library, The Mount, Northampton Road. [Disabled parking available and general parking nearby].

Road Community Orchestra is celebrating its 20th Anniversary with a joint concert with Northampton Male Voice Choir.



**ROADE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA** 20th Anniversary Concert

**Road Community Orchestra**  
Conductor Ian Riley

with special guests

**Northampton Male Voice Choir**  
Conductor Stephen Bell

&

Soprano: Helen Wilson  
Compere: Peter Heffron



Saturday 21st March 2020  
7.00pm

Northampton High School  
Newport Pagnell Road  
Hardingstone. NN4 6UU

**Tickets £10**

Tickets available from [roadeorchestra@gmail.com](mailto:roadeorchestra@gmail.com) tel 01604 831311

The Towcester and District Local History Society has monthly meetings with a speaker on the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at 7.30pm.

For a full list of speakers/programme visit [www.mkheritage.co.uk/tlhs/TDLHS/Speakers.html](http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/tlhs/TDLHS/Speakers.html)

# The Committee Page

Your Towcester U3A Committee Members

Carol Lucas lucasrcl@aol.com 01327 605713	Chairman	Carol Lucas lucasrcl@aol.com 01327 605713	Speaker Seeker Tuba Editor
Jeanette Waite	Business Secretary	Ray Paice raypaice@aol.com publicity@towcesteru3a.co.uk	Publicity Vice chairman
Penny Bennett membership@towcesteru3a.co.uk	Membership Secretary	Kate Bartlett	General Committee member
Mike Willis treasurertu3a@gmail.com 01327 858278	Treasurer	Amanda Campbell	General Committee member
Eileen Dickens eandgd17@gmail.com	Groups' Liaison	Janette McTeer	General Committee member
Jenny Carter	New Members' Liaison	Jo Hart	Secretary to the Committee

If you are at all interested in joining your committee or would just like more information then please do contact any of the members above or come along to one of our meetings which are held at the Sawpits Centre on the first Monday of the month, 10.00 am. You will be made very welcome!

## HOW DO I JOIN TOWCESTER U3A?

Most of you reading this will know of course because you already have. But sometimes our newsletter is passed on by friends or picked up in the library, doctor's surgery or by the bin men... and your interest is awakened. Membership costs just £16 per year.

The easiest way is to download an application form from the website: [www.towcesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk)

We have a new members' coffee morning every few months. The date for the next one is to be held shortly and will be at the **Sawpits Centre 10.30am**. You can find out when the meeting date is set by checking on the website [www.towcesteru3a.co.uk](http://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk) or waiting for the invitation to drop on your doormat.

You can send submissions for the next issue of The Tuba [due out in June] to me, Carol Lucas at [lucasrcl@aol.com](mailto:lucasrcl@aol.com) at any time. Date for final submissions for this next issue is Friday 5th June

## THE FINAL WORD.....

There was once a nuclear power station that had developed a fault. None of the plant's engineers could solve the problem so they called in a specialist.

The specialist, a man in a white coat with a clipboard wandered around, taking notes. After a couple of hours the specialist took a piece of chalk and marked a large X on one of the readout displays.

"Replace the unit linked to that display" he declared "and it will fix the problem" then he left.

A few days later the manager of the plant received the bill from the specialist, who was asking for a fee of an eye-watering £10,000.

The manager thanked the specialist for his work but questioned the £10,000 saying he thought it seemed a very high amount for only a couple of hours work. He asked for an itemised bill.

A few days later a new bill arrived, this time it was broken into two parts: £100 for time spent on the premises and £9,900 for knowing where to put the X.



### BOOKING FORM FOR TALK BY GERVASE PHINN

Date: 23rd April 2020

Time: 1.30pm

Place: United Reformed Church, High St, Wellingborough NN8 4HW

Cost: £5 per person to include refreshments after the talk

**PLEASE NOTE:** As in all Network events, the Network will not be organising transport from your U3A to the Church and when booking, you will need to make sure you have this in place. Although there is parking opposite the church, it would be helpful if members could share cars or organise other methods of transport. Please make your cheque payable to:

### U3A Northants Network

And send it together with the completed form below and a stamped addressed envelope to:

The Treasurer,  
U3A Northants Network,  
c/o 7 Forrester Grove,  
Thrapston,  
Northants  
NN14 4UD

**Note:** If you don't send an SAE, we will assume you are happy for us to email your ticket to you. The Network does not have funds to cover the cost of stamps.

Please print clearly:

NAME: .....

EMAIL ADDRESS: .....

TELEPHONE NUMBER:.....

U3A: .....