



New Member Meeting date

Date for your diary: our next meeting for new (and old members) is on **Friday 27 November** between **10am – 12 noon at Towcester Town Hall**. If you're new to u3a, this is an ideal opportunity to find out how you can make the most of your u3a membership, as well as introducing friends, neighbours or family members to what we offer. There will be representatives from a range of interest groups to chat to over a cup of coffee. So do keep a note of the date, feel free to invite anyone who is no longer in full time work, or even just contemplating what to do after finishing work, and drop in for a chat. **Group leaders** – if you would like to take a table to represent your interest group, please contact Jill Stewart - jillastewart49@gmail.com

Monthly meetings



30 September

Lynette Hill

Lobo the Grey Wolf

A ruthless hunter is transformed by his encounter with a particularly clever wolf.



28 October

The Work and Training of Guide Dogs

The amazing relationship of assistance dogs



25 November

Seasonal celebration

Mike and Rachel Fenton

Autoharp and Dulcimer Delight

Traditional Anglo-American folk, country, blues, '50s pop, with audience participation, featuring these unusual ancient instruments. There will be seasonal refreshments after the talk.

You are all warmly welcome to come along, and we are happy to accommodate guests who would like a taster of what the u3a is about. Our meetings all start at **2pm** and are followed by refreshments, and we welcome you to stay for a chat with other members over tea and biscuits. The venue is Towcesterians Sports Club, where there is plenty of free parking.

Book all meetings at: <https://u3a.simplmembership.co.uk/Towcester/Administration/Events>

Monthly Coffee & Chat

Our informal coffee get-togethers are held each month between 10am – 12noon at Watling Street Village on the High Street. We are considering varying the venue in future – trying Gallone's sometime in the new year – but for now the usual venue stands. These coffee events provide the opportunity to meet other members for a chat over a hot drink. Meet in the front room – purchase your own drinks. All very warmly welcome.



The next meetings are:

Wednesday 16 September

Thursday 15 October

Thursday 10 November

Group news

London Explorers 2 – visit to the National Army Museum

August saw members of London Explorers 2 marching along Royal Hospital Road – well straggling along really to the National Army Museum in Chelsea. Whilst we hadn't booked a guided tour, we were greeted by a very knowledgeable volunteer who gave us a comprehensive welcome talk about the museum and its various galleries and exhibitions.



The National Army Museum was originally opened in 1960 and was based in Sandhurst's old riding school but moved to the current modern premises in 2017 when it was opened by Queen Elizabeth II, its then patron.

The National Army Museum is the national home of the history and heritage of the Army. Its role is to collect, preserve and exhibit items related to the British Army and Commonwealth Forces. Through permanent galleries, special

exhibitions, collections and programmes, the museum explores how soldiers have shaped our world and lives, from the foundation of the New Model Army by Oliver Cromwell in 1645 to the Army's role today.



Some notable exhibits included a large, scale model of the battlefield at Waterloo created in the 1830s; a skeleton of Napoleon's horse captured from the battle; the misunderstood order from the commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan, at the Charge of the Light Brigade and a collection of 50 original drawings by the French artist Paul Sarrut of members of the Indian Army who served in the First World War. The video showing how today's Army steps in the help in times of disaster and National emergencies was very poignant as we knew that they were currently helping to extinguish some of the wildfires in North Wales.

There was so much to see and take in that many of us felt that we might return sometime in the future to see some of the new exhibitions planned.

Amar Singh 1914

Spotlight on Boys Toys



“Boy’s Toys” is one of Towcester u3a’s longest running groups having been set up by Mike Dunn probably around 12 years ago. Then it was a car enthusiasts’ group, but as the interest spread into other transport related areas a new name was sought. One of our members jokingly said “boy’s toys” referring to the joke name often used for the things we are interested in. Over the years the name hasn’t dissuaded ladies from joining the group and long may that continue.

Such was the popularity of the group it soon became oversubscribed and two other groups have been started (BT2 & 3). Currently BT2 is still full but there are vacancies in the other 2 groups.



Our format is to meet for lunch once a month to discuss future outings and later in the month visit our planned program. Trips by the original group have been almost exclusively to motor museums, factories relating typically to transport of all kinds, bikes, boats, planes and their military counterparts. BT2 and BT3 have adopted a slightly wider brief including factories and such things as recycling centres.

Our visits have expanded out to trips of up to 1½ hours travelling and we try to include a lunch at some point during the day. We take it in turns to drive and share our petrol costs with all parties in the car.

Over the twelve years we still find new opportunities for visits or revisit places we have enjoyed before. These venues often change over the years and it has to say retired people are not always known for sharp and detailed memory so it is always a delight to arrive and find new things to see or experience.



On the programme for Boys Toys this month (September 26) is a visit to and a talk by Northampton Society of Model Engineers with a promise of a ride behind some model steam engines. Unusually we have a second trip planned by one of our members to a model aero club for a talk, flying exhibition including “turbines” and even a go at flying ourselves, connected of course to a buddy box for when inevitably we lose control.

Boys Toys 2

For their August day out Boys Toys 2 visited the Battle of Britain bunker in Uxbridge. You've watched the BoB urgent strategic planning in many old war films. WAAFs around the big table, placing the tokens indicating the hostile incoming aircraft and our fighter squadrons scrambled to intercept them, 'Angels at 2-5'.

This is the original bunker where it all happened for real, 18m (60ft) below ground in west London.



Lunch was taken at the Malt Shovel, next to the Grand Union canal, Uxbridge.



Boys Toys 3

Boys Toys 3 had a very interesting visit to the Ardley Energy Recovery Facility this morning, followed by lunch at a nearby pub.

Fittingly, the 15-foot model of the dinosaur in the photo was built entirely out of re-used materials and waste items recovered from the local household recycling centre.

Painting for Pleasure

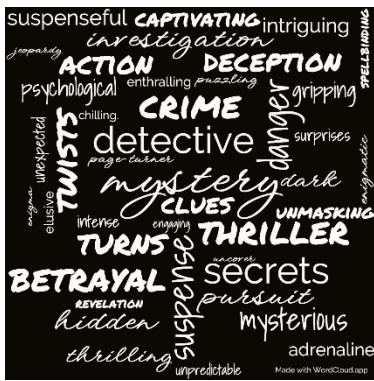
Here's looking at you! The group explored the subject of eyes.



The first challenge of the month was to paint something beginning with 'S':



Reading between the Crimes



Are you a reader? Are you obsessed with crime novels? If so then we would love to welcome you to our Reading Between the Crimes 2 group. We are an extension of the original group which proved so popular we have started a second group.

We are currently reading *Absolution* by Murder Peter Tremayne and *Baking Bad* Kim M Watt and have read a huge variety of genres over our time covering authors such as Peter May, Claire McGowan, Satu Ramo, Harlen Coben and many more. We meet at 1.30 pm on the third Thursday at Watling Street Village – contact Lesley Anderson.

Walking Groups

From Strolls to Strides, our walking groups accommodate all levels of walking, and all finish with social time in a local hostelry or coffee shop. Without exception it's no surprise to see that all of these groups stayed dry and in most cases a little too warm. But we're not complaining; over the course of the year the walks go ahead in fine weather and foul, including rain, sleet, high winds and the cold!

Strollers



Strollers had a super walk in August, led by Bron. We met at Foxfield Sports Centre, Grange Park . The centre served refreshments, which were very welcome after the walk. The weather was good, not too hot and the walk was flat but interesting with a mixture of open country park and wooded areas which included the wishing mushroom. Another gem for those of us that had not visited the area before.

Striders

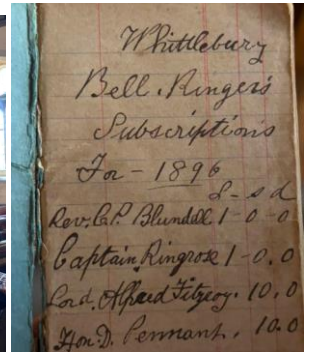


Only mad dogs and English men...and apparently Striders...go walking at the onset of another heatwave! On another very hot day the walk started from Weston, taking in Helmdon and Weedon Lois during a 7 mile circular. The prospect of drinks and lunch at the New Inn at Abthorpe afterwards proved to be very alluring.



*A cooling scene at a
fishing lake near
Astwell*

Church Visits



Thanks to Sue and Gill for organising the Church Visit Group to St Mary's of Whittlebury where we were given an informative talk by Peter Nicholson. The first reference to the Church is in 1322 in the Bishop of Lincoln's register. However, the lower part of the tower is thought to be built around 1200. Both aisles were added on later. The Victorians saved the church from ruin. Thanks to Lord Southampton's work in 1832 and 1850 (new vestry) and a complete overhaul in 1877/8 by JP St Aubyn paid for by Sir Robert Loder of Whittlebury Lodge.

The font (1853) was financed by subscription, although it looks a lot older. The first rector is listed as 1232.

There's a large medieval oak chest which would have contained the parish records. One entry from the 18th century records the shooting in 1788 of George Linnel, aged 34 while collecting taxes. His murderer was hanged in Northampton. Behind the organ are various pencilled signatures of past 'organ blowers'. There's also a small notebook going back to 1896 of the bell ringers subscriptions.

Theatre Group



NEW OFFERINGS COMING THROUGHOUT 2027

There are lots of varied shows on offer for you to see over the coming year:

Agatha Christie's 'The Hollow'
Matthew Bourne's 'Cinderella'

Back to the Future
Dinner Ladies (Victoria Wood vibes)
Hades town
Mousetrap
Midsomer Murders
Cats
Mrs. Doubtfire
Jersey Boys
Jesus Christ Superstar
Just for One Day (Live Aid)

If you would like advance notification of when tickets for these shows will be available and are not already a member of the THEATRE VISITS GROUP, please email Judith Baines or Lesley Bradshaw and we will add you to the group. Alternatively come and say hello to us at the monthly meetings at Towcestrians.

Contact: Finance/payment – Lesley - lesleyj22@hotmail.com / Bookings – Judith - judeat11@hotmail.com

Garden Visits



25 members enjoyed a trip to the North East for a 4 day holiday in August with a packed schedule visiting a number of gardens including Alnwick Castle, Bamburgh, Durham, Beamish and more. They also attended an outdoor performance of the epic 'Kynren', featuring a cast of 1000 telling the story of 2000 years of English history in a spectacular show.

September Garden Visit - Wednesday 9th - Grantham House

This is a National Trust property in Lincolnshire. Following this, you can stroll across the road to **St Wulfram's Church**, a surprisingly large building for a Parish Church, with a history going back 1000 years.

October – Wednesday 14th – RHS Wisley



Another chance to visit these extensive showcase gardens in a different season.

Cost is £13 entry for non-RHS members plus £16 for the bus. RHS members have free entry and can take a guest. Payment is due **by Wednesday 30 September** – note payment details below, but please let Carole know whether or not you are a RHS member and will only be paying for transport, or also for entry.

Contact Carole Hunt on **01327 352564** or email **hunt_c6@sky.com**

Payment for visits – Carole is no longer able to accept cheques; all trips will need to be paid via bank transfer or cash only. Payments by BACs should be to the following account: *Sort code: 77-21-03. Account number: 17224068*

IT Helpers Group – next meeting Monday 21 September, 2-4pm, Sawpits Centre



At our meeting in August topics discussed included email accounts and their settings, dealing with security issues, as well as our usual help with using smartphones and tablets.

Do you need help in understanding how to use your PC, laptop, smartphone (Android or iPhone) or tablet (iPads etc.)? Do you want to learn how to do emails, documents, spreadsheets, or how to use social media, etc. Then the Towcester U3A IT Helpers group is here to help you get more from your IT.

If you would like some IT help then just come along to our next meeting on Monday 21st September at the Sawpits Centre between 2:00-4:00 and we will have a one to one conversation with you. You do not need to bring any IT equipment with you to the meeting as we bring our own, although if it is to do with a piece of your own IT equipment, then it would be helpful if you could bring the item with you.

If you are not sure what you want to know, then come along to a meeting for a conversation with one of us and that should get you started. We cannot guarantee to be able to solve every problem, but between us we will give it a try.

We are a group of amateurs who are interested in IT with a wide range of experience between us and are willing to offer support to people of the U3A who have queries on using IT.

Contact: ithelp@towcesteru3a.co.uk

Music Appreciation



Do join us on the first Monday of the month 2-4 pm at home in Towcester for an enchanting introduction to all genres of music and to the fantastic composers who have given so much pleasure over the centuries and today. Projected onto a large screen, immerse yourself in the visual and sound experience and enjoy coffee/tea and friendly chat at the interval.

We've had music from costume dramas, ballets, focus on specific instruments (the harp was featured last month), Philip Glass for modernists among us, folk, film scores, and so much more. It's up to you too to share your favourites with the group when you are ready.

Group leader is Valerie Hall valhall321@gmail.com - Hope to see you there!



Ukelele players

Are there any former members of the ukelele group interested in reviving the group? Or members who would like to give it a go? We've had a number of positive expressions of interest, with the proposal to meet at the Old Oak in Towcester. So if this appeals to you please do get in touch with our Groups Co-ordinator, Jill Stewart - jillastewart49@gmail.com

List of interest groups available at Towcester u3a

Towcester u3a offers a wide variety of interest groups. See: <https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/groups/interest-groups> If you have ideas for other groups which you think may appeal to members, do consider setting one up. Guidance and support will be provided. Don't forget – the ethos of the u3a is that is run 'by members, for members'. Contact: Jill Stewart - jillastewart49@gmail.com

Online learning from the u3a for the Autumn

In addition to what is offered in Towcester to members, don't forget that the u3a nationally offers many interesting courses and talks available to all members online, to enjoy from the comfort of our own home. Just to give you a taste of what is coming up in the next couple of months, topics include:

- Secrets of the human brain; sleep and dreams
- A journey through the Galapagos
- Promoting brain health
- Live cookery demonstration
- Mods vs the Rockers
- The history of personal hygiene
- And much more.

Find something that interests you at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>
