

CLEEVE CLARION

Bishop's Cleeve u3a

No. 99

15 November – 9 January 2024



**12 December Open
Meeting - Pershore
Ukulele Group**

**9 January - Annual Festive
Lunch, see booking details
on page 3**

Taking a break at Chedworth Roman Villa JOH

**Member-led learning groups and activities for those retired
from full-time work**

Chairman's Clarion Call

Val Hayward

As I write this, we have already held two Open Meetings in our new venue, the Tithe Barn in Bishop's Cleeve. Both have been very successful with high numbers attending, some for the first time and the feedback from members has been very encouraging. The car park was badly congested at the first meeting, as we were driving in just as the Tithe Barn Preschool children were being picked up. After speaking with the Preschool management, it was decided that by starting our meeting half an hour earlier, this bottleneck could be avoided. This has worked out well for us: starting our meetings at 2.30pm, we are only 15 minutes later than the time we used to start at our previous venue. So remember, **our Open Meetings from November will start at 2.30pm.**

I've been asked by a member if we can collect cards to be upcycled and sold by the Cobalt Unit. She'd like all types of cards - birthday, anniversary, get-well, - but not children's cards nor Christmas cards as they get plenty of those. Here's your chance to help the Cobalt Unit by dropping your cards into the bag which will be provided by the door at Open Meetings. Last year £33,000 was raised for this worthy cause.

**...Open Meetings
from November
will start at 2.30pm**

I hope you will be able to join us in December - wearing Christmas jumpers if you have them - to be entertained by Pershore's Ukulele Group, and to enjoy the traditional fare of shortbread and mince pies.

January, and we start 2024 with our festive lunch instead of the usual Open Meeting. In Alan's last Clarion Call as our chairman he said he was looking forward to being "an ordinary member of our u3a," but then he volunteered himself and Maureen to organise this event... no easy task as I know only too well. I trust you have booked your place and menu choice already with Alan and Maureen Hazel. It's not too late. Bookings can still be taken at the December meeting.

Finally, as my first year as Chair draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone to keep warm, as cold can creep up on you, and to wish you all **A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

U3a Festive Lunch 2024

It's been great to get such an encouraging response to our Festive Lunch this coming January once again. It will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Charlton Kings, on the afternoon of Tuesday, 9 January 2024 (drinks at 12.30pm). This will be in place of the regular Open Meeting which would otherwise be held on that day.

The number of members who can be catered for is not limitless, so you're urged not to delay too long if you think you might wish to attend - those of you who attended the Festive Lunch in 2021 will remember the very agreeable location that Doubletree affords. Over the past few years, wherever it has been held, our Festive Lunch has proved to be a great excuse to dress up for a slightly more formal gathering than usual, to converse with folk you might otherwise have merely nodded to and to celebrate a further year of our u3a's vibrant life!

Because of the steep rise in costs for the hospitality industry, your u3a Committee has decided to subsidise the price per person a little rather than subsidising the cost of a coach, as has been done in past years. This means that, unless members are keen to travel by local bus, we will be relying on a system of car sharing. Your lunch booking will allow us to see what capacity and need there is, and to begin to match up drivers and passengers as far as we are able. Responses so far indicate that **there are far more lifts being offered than there are members who would like one!**

The price - £34 - includes a drink on arrival, three-course meal* plus tea or coffee. You can see the [menu](#) and even [pay online](#) or you can check in with Alan or Maureen Hazell at the November or December Open Meetings, after which, the list will be closed, and who might give lifts and to whom matched. We look forward to sharing a very joyous time together!

Remember: Click on <https://bishops-cleeve-u3a.square.site/> or <https://checkout.square.site/buy/5WSWC44BO2LIDH5ODMM5VA7E>, then complete your application/menu choices by clicking on: <https://forms.gle/2BUpZqsquqBCTuAN6>

***Starters:** Cream of parsnip and rosemary soup / chicken liver parfait / salmon parcel

Main course: Cod & chorizo mash / roast turkey / butternut squash & chipotle risotto

Dessert: Christmas pudding / blood orange cheesecake / chocolate brownie and ice cream

Open Meetings

Producing the BBC Antiques Roadshow

Mike Jackson was our first speaker at our new venue and 114 members listened intently while he told us of the trials and tribulations in producing this very popular show. It seems reams of film footage end up on the cutting room floor before this well polished program hits our Sunday night viewing. Mike is well qualified for what he does, having produced and directed shows such as Bargain Hunt, Flog It and Top Gear and it showed in his relaxed talk and the way he interacted with his audience.



"a jug with provenance"

He took 'a little brown jug' from our kitchen and with the help of Wendy Stow, (who happens to have membership No 1 and represented the owner of the jug), and Val Hayward, our Chair, as a Sotheby's expert, showed how the history of the object was discussed by both until eventually everyone is waiting to hear its value.

There are hours of waiting for those who go along to see the experts with their chosen object, be that porcelain, jewelry, paintings or larger items such as furniture. All these contributions are gradually whittled away to produce an hour-long program which makes you want to go back the next week to see more.

Questions were invited at the end of the talk, and one member asked about breakages. They do happen it seems. We were told it cost £4000 in compensation when a large vase, one of a pair, despite transport being arranged, arrived home in pieces. BBC licence-payer's money!

Our 'little brown jug' had little value, unfortunately, but Val explained that this jug had been unclaimed after the King's Coronation Tea Party which was why it was now being used by our refreshments team.

At the end of the meeting, Sue Silverthorne said she was the one who had donated it. On hearing this, Mike Jackson proclaimed it "a jug with provenance".

Group News

Rose Hawkins - Groups' Coordinator (01684 301668)



Showcase Event by LS

We had a very successful Showcase Event at the Tithe Barn on 10 October, with around 30 groups represented, along with some 91 people in total attending. Everyone enjoyed a chat over a cup of tea and lovely homemade cakes. Many people found new interest groups to join. We welcomed nine new members who were able to see the diversity of groups that we offer. There were some wonderful displays of the work that some



groups produce, in particular displays of Patchwork and Quilting, Art, Painting and Drawing, Arts and Crafts and Yoga. It was a great team effort to bring this event together and make it a success. Thank you all.

Group Leader Badges

We will continue to bring group leader badges to Open Meetings so that members can identify with our group leaders when chatting over a cup of tea.

Are you a person who ‘does’?

Do you like being involved and have a positive mindset? Come and join our committee and help shape our u3a.

Like any organisation, there has to be a group who organise and get things done, from setting up events to making the teas. The committee meets monthly to discuss ideas and make sure things are running smoothly. Some committee members have specific roles like Groups’ Coordinator or Membership Secretary, but we also rely on the wider membership to help out on occasions such as making cakes or giving lifts where needed.

As you will know, the u3a is member-led, so if people do not come forward then we cannot exist. Being on the committee gives you a chance to be a part of the ‘workings’ and to get to have a say in what is important to our u3a. As a committee member myself, I really enjoy our lively discussions and the ideas we come up with, like the festive lunch and the holiday we are trying to organise for next year. It is great to be part of a team of people all wanting the same thing - for our u3a to thrive and be relevant to our membership.

Our AGM in November is a reminder that the committee members serve a set term, and when that term is up, new people need to step into these roles. We need a continuing number of people interested in our future to come on board in whatever capacity they can.

Please let us know if you are interested in finding out about how you could become more involved - you could come along to a committee meeting and see what we do.

Everybody will bring something new to the committee and that is how we will continue to be a successful, thriving u3a.

If you’re interested, speak to any of the committee listed on the back page, or use our [‘Contacts’](#) webpage to email the Chair.

I really enjoy our lively discussions and the ideas we come up with

Gillian Thompson

Lending a hand

I have recently taken over as the RUM's Group Leader from Rose Hawkins, and thought members may like to know a little more about what we do.

For anyone unfamiliar with the term 'RUM' it stands for 'Really Useful Members'. It's a group for those who would like to help out with a variety of tasks that assist event organisers and leaders in Bishop's Cleeve u3a to run our events smoothly.

These tasks can take the form of:

- Setting up or disassembling stalls or gazebos

- Setting out table and chairs for meetings or events

- Manning stalls or assisting in representing Bishop's Cleeve u3a

- Making or providing things - cakes, bunting etc - for events

- Driving members to and from regular meetings, luncheons or events

- Generally, pitch in when help is needed.

There are currently 19 RUM Group members. I have, or will shortly be, contacting each of them to personally introduce myself and find out if they are still willing to help and also discover if there is any particular way they would like to contribute to the smooth running of u3a events.

We have all experienced at some time how the contribution of others makes light work of any task. Therefore if there is any way you feel you would like to make a contribution to Bishop's Cleeve u3a events, please feel free to contact me.

Chris Larkin, RUM Group Leader, 07736807511

Open Meetings

Remember, from November we change our meeting time to 2.30pm. We meet at the Tithe Barn, Bishop's Cleeve on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Free refreshments after the talk.

If you're thinking of becoming a member of our u3a, you're welcome to visit us once before joining.

14 November - AGM - followed by our own Technology Discussion group answering your questions on **how to avoid scams and similar topics.**

12 December - Pershore Ukulele Group

9 January - No Open Meeting - Annual Festive Lunch

13 February - Sally, Village Clinic - Best Foot Forward

Groups with spaces

Note - not listed alphabetically. Dialling code is 01242 if not stated.

Rural Visits Group

John Walker (321728)

Rural Visits Group Open Meeting

We are holding an illustrated talk on **Birds of Gloucestershire** in the small hall, Woodmancote Village Hall, on Thursday, 16 November at 2.15pm.

The RSPB speaker is David Cramp. The proceeds from the entrance charge of £3 - pay at the door - will cover our expenses and the speaker's fee.

Tea and biscuits provided. All u3a members welcome, maximum 50 seats.

Cinema Group

Ann King (698497)

We are a small group who meet on an ad hoc basis to see films at local cinemas. We have recently welcomed several new members but vacancies are almost unlimited, the only restriction being the size of the cinema! We share transport, and numbers vary depending on the film.

Between us we have recently seen: **Paris Memories** – the moving story of a survivor of the Paris terror attack; **The Damned Don't Cry** – another 'survival' film about a single mother and her son living on their wits in modern day Morocco; **Brassed Off** – a remake of the 1996 British film about a colliery brass band and **Past Lives** – a thoughtful account of a couple of South Korean childhood friends who meet up again after being apart for over twenty years.

Some of us also enjoy live screenings of opera, ballet and plays. A recent treat was **L'Elisir d'Amore** from the Royal Opera House.

Inevitably there are a number of differing opinions about films we have seen – comments after the last film ranging from “excruciating” to “exquisite” and there are lively discussions in the car on the way home and on our WhatsApp group.

Next up are **The Great Escaper** and **The Miracle Club**.

Pétanque

John Walker (321728)

On 15 September, thirteen members of the u3a Pétanque group met up at the piste in Woodmancote to play their monthly game of Pétanque in exceptionally good weather. The first match was over very quickly but the second was a hard-fought match, with both teams on 12 before Trish Atkinson played the winning shot for her side. It was agreed by all that this was a fitting end. Trish's husband David, who was the leader of this group, will be sadly missed.



Pétanque Wash Out

With heavy overnight rain, the Pétanque Group's hopes of a meeting in October were a wash out!

As members who play regularly know only too well, the terrain is far from level. Consequently rain had flooded the lower end making play impossible. Hopefully November will bring us better luck.

3rd Fridays at the Bouledrome beside the Woodmancote Village Hall at 10.30 am.



Pétanque Wash Out

Country Dancing

Sue Weir (673544)

Come and join us on the 2nd Monday of the month, 2 - 4 pm at Woodmancote Village Hall. We have spaces and you don't have to bring a partner.

French Conversation 1

David Cook (675027)

We have vacancies, and would warmly welcome new members, please get in touch. We meet on alternate Mondays from 2.30 - 4pm.

French Conversation 2

Gill Calderwood (701938)

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays from 3 - 4.30pm and have vacancies.

Local Walks

Ros Flaxman (674284)

Quite a lot of interest was shown in the group at the recent Showcase, with half a dozen people saying they'd try us out - and many more saying they'd love to, if only their hips or knees would allow it!

We are a group of walkers who meet at 2pm on alternate Fridays - weather permitting - for 3-4 mile walks sometimes involving stiles. Routes are weather dependant, last 2-3 hours and decided on the day. Waterproof walking boots essential. Meet on the corner of Millham Road and Station Road. Sorry, no dogs.

Dates: November 10th and 24th; December 8th and 22nd.

Local History

Joan Hall (680575) **Barbara Jordan** (07833 781832)

We welcome new members and meet on the first Monday of the month at 2pm in Woodmancote Village Hall for talks. In the summer months, we have a programme of visits.

4 December - Phil & Mike - Advent Calendar Part 2, plus nibbles and Quiz 2024:

1 January - No Meeting - Bank Holiday

5 February - Malcolm Watkins - The Birdlip Grave Group – 2000 years of Mystery



History Visit

There was no better way to have ended our summer historical outings than a visit to Chastleton House near Moreton-in-the-Marsh.

The house went on the open market for the first time in 1991 when the National Heritage Memorial Fund purchased it with

contents, despite its fragile condition, before handing it over to the National Trust which chose the act of preservation over restoration. It took six years to make the house structurally sound and to stabilise its vulnerable interiors.

Chastleton, built for Walter Jones in 1607-1612, passed through his increasingly impoverished descendants for almost four centuries. The building reflected Walter's desire to move from the cloth trade to law and then to Parliament. His eldest son, Arthur, inherited it in 1656. Fines levied against Arthur - a Royalist (the wrong side) during the Civil War - may explain his descendants' financial difficulties.

The immediate family line ended in 1828 and so Chastleton passed to a cousin, John Whitmore, a successful businessman and keen farmer, who proved no more able to live within his means than his ancestors.

Following his death in 1853, his wife took on the role of manager. Her unmarried daughter, Mary, inherited the house, but long before her death in 1915, Mary handed it to her cousin Thomas Whitmore Harris who let out the property. Both he and his wife had died by 1955 and Alan Clutton-Brock and wife Barbara took over the house. Alan died in 1976 and in 1991 major repairs and Barbara's ailing health forced the sale of the house.

The house itself looks very plain from the outside but its gardens, interior and contents are anything but: 14th and 17th century tapestries and a rare and priceless Jacobite decanter and glasses, which had they been on display when first made would have been seen as an act of treason!

Chastleton House is not open on a Monday but an exception was made for us. We could not have been made more welcome by Steve and his staff from the moment we arrived. We would highly recommend a visit ! J

Local History meeting

In October, Dr Timothy Brain gave us **‘The History of Policing in Gloucestershire’**, with accompanying slides.

Crimes and misdemeanours have always existed in villages and towns alike, and were dealt with locally. But throughout the 1700s, crime began to rise, with so many people crowding into the cities for work. More wrongdoing happened despite a harsh criminal justice system, with death sentences for minor crimes. Many towns hired private police, and the king instigated a private watch system for larger cities, including Gloucester. In 1737, a formal tax for law enforcement began, and city councils levied taxes to pay for a night watch system. But even so, there were years of unrest during the French Revolution 1789-1799, and there was a need for a radical new system of policing.

The Gloucester County Constabulary was established in 1839 to keep the peace - it was the first county force in the UK. A chief constable and up to 250 officers were appointed, but the coverage excluded Gloucester city and Tewkesbury at first, as they had a private police force and a night watch, recruited from local citizens over the years. In 1918, the first women police constables were appointed, all two of them - paving the way for more later.

By 1947, there were 653 officers, with all the private forces gradually absorbed therein. These numbers increased to match a growing population, 1,185 in 1970 but later down to 1,000 when the Avon and Somerset force claimed some of the south county section.

In 1976, women constables became ‘equal’ with male officers

In 1976, women constables became ‘equal’ with male officers and did the same duties and shifts on equal pay.

In 2020, the numbers revealed 1,176 police, 113 special constables and 100 community support officers. The wider area that’s covered is over 1,000 square miles, including Dean Forest, the Cotswolds and the Severn Vale, and of course the urban centres of Cheltenham and Gloucester.

There have been recent difficulties in ongoing recruitment, with current numbers of officers lower than before the Covid lock-down. Hopefully this will improve.

Many thanks to Dr Brain for his talk telling us more about our local police past and present.

KD

Ramblers

Liz Neeves (678599)

In September, Rose Hawkins took us around Dumbleton Hill through the woods and past the picturesque cricket pitch. From the top of the hill, we were rewarded with beautiful views towards Bredon Hill, and later towards Prescott Hill. Thank you Rose.



Maureen and Alan Hazell had meticulously planned our October ramble from the Seven Tuns Inn in Chedworth – a 17th

century village pub full of character and delicious food! Their route took us past Chedworth Roman Villa, along the River Coln, through a wooded valley and finally a water meadow - with seven stiles! - and back to the Seven Tuns. Thank you Maureen and Alan.



Science & Technology

Alan Green (672964)

We meet on the first Thursday of each month in the large hall at Stoke Orchard Community Centre. We continue to range across the full spectrum of science, technology, and engineering, including the economic and social impact.

In November, Malcolm Jukes shared a personal history of Vertical and Short Take-off and Landing (VSTOL) aircraft, from the Harrier to the F35.

In December, Prof Jeremy Miller will tell us about a new approach to moderate-scale, high-volume long-duration energy storage with an extremely low environmental impact. This is one of a number of innovative responses to the net-zero challenge, and certainly reaches across our spectrum from science to social impact. It complements the story we heard from Spirax Sarco a year ago.

We don't meet in January, but have a very different story lined up for February!

We signed up seven new members at the Showcase, but still have scope for a few more: please get in touch if you like the sound of what we do.

Technology Discussion

Brian Frodsham (676260) **Dave Owen** (699797)

We still have a couple of vacancies in our group, meeting on the 4th Thursday from 2 - 4 pm. We are all interested in technological things and information technology and share expertise and experiences.

Meditation

Marie Brain (674121 or 07711530131)

All active members report the benefits that regular meditation brings and have become aware of the cumulative effects.

We meet on the first Thursday of each month at 2.30pm at my house for group meditation and reviews.

We welcome new members, either active meditators or anyone interested who would like to do the six-week individual training course with me.

Please call for more information or to book training sessions.

Singing for Fun

Frances Yiend (522241)

We always have vacancies and are happy to welcome more members. We meet on the 2nd Friday of the month at 10.30 at the Methodist Church Hall.

Golf Buddies

Melvyn Harris (672449)

The group is open to all, and has spaces, so please [contact me via the website](#).

General History

Keith Woodman (679301) and **Madeline Murkett** (696531)

We meet in the small hall at Woodmancote Village Hall at 2pm on the 4th Wednesday of the month - new members are very welcome.

22 November - Venice, its Decline and Emergence, Neville Jackson

December - No meeting

24 January - Joseph Grimaldi: the Greatest of all English Clowns, Keith Woodman

September's meeting

The King who had to go; Edward VIII and the Abdication Crisis of 1936 - Clive Boyd

On 10 December 1936, Edward VIII abdicated having reigned for only 11 months. Clive attributed this truly extraordinary event to the King's character flaws. Edward appeared intrinsically self-absorbed and after his accession displayed an arrogant indifference to how his actions might be perceived. This is nowhere better seen than in his relations with Wallis Simpson, an American divorcee who had married for the second time. He was determined to marry her and gave up his own promiscuous life style. Despite the stigma attached to divorce at the time, he was blind to the fact that Wallis, in the eyes of many, was unsuitable as the King's wife, and hence Queen. Matters came to a head when Wallis was granted a decree nisi, potentially freeing them to marry. Efforts were made by Prime Minister Baldwin and others to resolve the situation, but to no avail. Hitherto a total press blackout had kept the British public ignorant of the couple's association but once the story broke, Edward was left with a stark choice. He chose marriage over the throne and left for the Continent. In the ensuing discussion it was felt that his decision perhaps turned out to the advantage of Britain in the War years that followed.

October's meeting

The Life and Work of Inigo Jones (1573- 1652) and of Sir Anthony van Dyke (1599-1641) - Sally Ferrers

Inigo Jones is the architect who introduced to England the Renaissance ideas which he had encountered in Italy, in the work of Andrea Palladio. He was appointed Surveyor General to King James I, and his notable achievements included the Queen's House, the Banqueting Hall, Haymarket Theatre and the church and piazza at Covent Garden. Despite his legacy of buildings and interiors, he remains an enigma since we know nothing of his personal life.

Anthony van Dyke was a pupil of Rubens and a talented and successful artist in his native Antwerp from his teenage years. He had a wide repertoire but once he settled in London as court painter to Charles I he concentrated on portraiture. His many portraits of the King, Queen and royal children, and the aristocracy served to enhance the grandeur and prestige of the monarchy for which he was knighted. He succumbed to a long illness just before the start of the Civil War.

The Fishing Fleet - Keith Woodman

This term refers to the phenomenon of young English girls of good family being sent to India, throughout the 19th century, to find husbands and this involved a 6-month sea voyage. With the establishment of the Raj, there was even more demand for English brides for the military and civil servants. It was probably the last resort of the young women for whom marriage was the route to future social status. They were feted with entertainments and marriages took place quickly. Those who remained single had to return to England, labelled 'Returned Empty'! Despite the shock of India's climate and the dangers, many took to life there and regretted having to leave it for retirement in England.

MM

Family History

Wendy Stow (01242 701303)

We meet on the 4th Friday of the month and could take one or two more.

Sharing Poetry

Marguerite Habgood (678973)

What would you put into your box? A question sparked by Kit Wright's **The Magic Box**. "I will put in the box, The swish of a silk sari on a summer night, Fire from the nostrils of a Chinese dragon, The tip of a tongue touching a tooth." We meet on 2nd Thursdays at 10.30am and could take one more.

Table Tennis

June Hall (675711) Philip Watson (673267)

We meet every Friday afternoon at 2pm at Southam Village Hall, with coaching given at alternate sessions.



Luncheons

Mary Moore (693793 and 07970 685655) Monica Wragg (676647 and 07777612613)

Thursday, **30 November** - Bosco, The Quadrangle, Imperial Square, Cheltenham, GL50 1PZ, phone 01242 430022.

Thursday **21 December** - The Yew Tree, Main Road, Conderton, Tewkesbury, GL20 7PP, phone 01386 725364.

Thursday **25 January** - Simpsons Fish and Chips, 75 Priors Road, Cheltenham, GL52 5AL, phone 01242 521964.

As our group is very fluid there are spaces although at times it may be necessary to operate a 'first come first served' basis.

Economics

Timothy Powell (676919)

We meet every 3 weeks on Wednesdays at 10.30am and still have spaces.

Patchwork and Quilting

Jenny Waller (07743 754264)

We are a small, friendly group with room for a couple more members. At the moment we are working on our own individual projects. These include weather quilts, an applique quilt and charity quilts.

Book Group 4 - 'The Borrowers'

Marguerite Habgood (678973)

We meet at St Michael's Hall on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 2pm and have a space.

We recently read **The Cleaner of Chartres** by Salley Vickers; a timeless story about a remarkable person, who on the face of it, is very ordinary. We thoroughly enjoyed discussing the characters and picking up on things that had passed us by when engrossed in the story.

We had a change of pace with **Hostage** by Clare Mackintosh, a thriller set on board a plane. Those who liked short chapters and plenty of action couldn't put it down. Fortunately, that included the member who read it whilst flying to the USA! For those who preferred a calmer atmosphere, the two tense storylines taking place at the same time proved too much.

Groups news

Book Group 1

Lyn McCaffrey (07464 405595)

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm in St Michael's Centre and at the moment appear to have no vacancies!

We have just looked at **The Motion of the Body through Space** by Lionel Shriver, a satirical look at the fitness industry amongst other controversial topics.

Next month we'll be discussing **Still Life** by Sarah Winman, Florence taking centre stage although the East End of London gets a look in. As it says on the back cover "A gorgeous, generous story of kind hearts and kindred spirits"

In December we hope to enjoy our Christmas Jollity!

Poetry 1

Kay Duck (672474)

We began our Autumn season in September with D.H. Lawrence, and fully enjoyed delving into his poetry and his life.

In October, by contrast, we looked at Lemn Sissay - what a poet for modern times!

The poems included **Anthem of the North, Let there be peace, Invisible kisses, Colour blind, Flags** and **The day will come**. His life is well worth learning about, in particular his book entitled **My name is why**.

We look forward to diving in to the Liverpool and Beat poets in November, and a frosty extravaganza in December.

But, whilst still in October, Poetry 1 celebrates its 16th anniversary on 31 October!

2nd Tuesday morning in the month but no vacancies at the moment.

Book Group 5

Mel Harris (672449)

In September, the group met to discuss **My Brilliant Friend** by Elena Ferrante. I was away on holiday and wasn't able to attend so circulated my thoughts beforehand. Despite the 'blurb' on the back cover and from what I had heard about it, I was expecting a much 'richer' and more interesting book than I found myself with. Suffice to say, I didn't enjoy the novel at all. I found the book banal and tedious and didn't care for any of the characters and could have easily given up. In the event, I 'skim read' the second half of the book and was relieved to finish it. I thought I might be in a minority of one but it turned out the rest of the group felt the same way. It just goes to show that however much a book may be recommended beforehand, it doesn't necessarily follow that you will feel the same way about it yourself!

In October, we met to discuss **Still Life** by Sarah Winman. The narrative covers four decades and I thoroughly enjoyed the way the stories of the various characters were woven around and between each other. I also enjoyed the slightly surreal elements of the novel. A quote I read summed up the book for me - "A celebration of the generosity of the human spirit and love in all its many forms". In contrast to the previous month's book, despite some quibbles, everyone in the group enjoyed the book to a greater or lesser degree.

Our next book is **The Salt Path** by Raynor Winn which we'll discuss in

November and then, by way of contrast, we'll be reading **The Man Who Died Twice** by Richard Osman, which we'll discuss in December.

No vacancies at present.

Gardening

Janet Davis (674068)

Autumn has certainly been different this year. A warm, sunny and dry September and now a very wet October. I hope not too many have suffered with excessive rain. Last Friday, Stockwell Lane was a raging river!

However the gardens have fared well, with repeated flowering and crops aplenty. The leaves are mostly still on and green. Having moved my succulents indoors at the threat of frost it has still to appear!

Our planter outside the chippy in the village, has remained in good colour so we have not replanted yet. We shall have to get busy once the frosts arrive - we look forward to an interesting winter.

Book Group 2

Stella Caney (676143)

September's book was **The Herd** by Emily Edwards. This is about the wisdom (or otherwise) of having children vaccinated, and the repercussions of the decisions taken. It was quite a good read – although a good thing, perhaps, that there were no anti-vaxxers in our group!

In October, we read **The Dutch House** by Ann Patchett. This was an unusual book, as in a way, the main character was the actual house. But there was also a lot to discuss concerning the family relationships over the years.

We meet on the 3rd Thursday at 10am - and are full at the moment.

Short Story Reading Group

Alan Bulley (677824)

We have now decided to base our readings on an anthology rather than collections from individual authors. This enables us to deal with a wide variety of authors, styles and subject matter. Accordingly, we have chosen the Oxford Book of English Short Stories. So far we have read stories by Anthony Trollope, Thomas Hardy, P G Wodehouse, D H Lawrence and Ian McEwan, giving rise to a fair range of opinions among group members. We have no vacancies at present.

Arts and Crafts 1

Pam Levermore (678276)

At recent meetings, we re-visited Iris Folding again and then we made 'fridge magnets



using plastic canvas that I had been given.

Cynthia then introduced us to Redwork embroidery and brought everything we needed to make a

stitched card. We hope to try needle felting in November ready to make something for Christmas.



We have a full group at the moment.

Playreading Group

Vivien Paxford (07517680909)

We meet on the last Thursday of the month in the afternoon at Saint Michael's Centre.

We read a wide genre of plays ranging from light-hearted comedies, traditional classics and those which encourage discussion about the morals and ethics highlighted by the script.

Examples include: The Birthday Party by Harold Pinter, Hobson's Choice by Harold Brighouse and The Winslow Boy by Terence Rattigan.

Currently we have a waiting list of members wishing to join the group.

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact me.

Art Appreciation

Brenda Bentley (676632)

We have welcomed a few new members to our meetings in the last couple of months.

We have enjoyed looking at Turner, Rousseau and John Singer Sargent recently. We are lucky to have some members who are able to share their art knowledge with us. In October, Suzanne tells us about Watteau, Boucher and Fragonard.

We try to look at different periods of art and vary our meetings each month. We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Stoke Orchard Community Hall, but we're full at present.

Music Appreciation

Stella Caney (676143)

In September, we listened to music by Felix Mendelssohn (having concentrated on his sister, Fanny, the previous month).

In October, we listened to a more modern American composer – Samuel Barber, who wrote a variety of types of music.

We meet in the afternoon on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and are full at present.

Yoga Group

Audrey Cooper (07949941608)

The yoga groups continue to attract new members and there is now a waiting list for both groups. In January, we will changing venue, day and time. Details below:

A reminder for all members of the yoga groups and for anyone waiting to join - As from January, the yoga groups will meet in the hall at St Michael's centre on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the afternoon.

Chair-based yoga from 2- 3pm followed by floor/mat based yoga from 3.15 - 4.15pm. First group meeting will be on 10 January 2024.

Arts and Crafts 2

Sue Brisk (674006)

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 10 - 12 and have a waiting list.

Photographs are taken at Bishop's Cleeve u3a activities for use on our website and other publicity.

At general u3a events such as Open Days, Open Meetings, visits, celebrations etc, you should tell the photographer or organiser if you do not wish to be included and move away whilst photographs are being taken.

Please tell the Beacon Administrator and group leader if you do not wish to be included in your group's photographs.

Get your dancing shoes on!

Mike Reynolds tells us that:

The u3a Rock and Blues Band Mu3aC will be performing at the YMCA in Tewkesbury on Saturday, 18 November from 7.30pm onwards.

Tickets cost just £2, on the door only, and proceeds go to charity. Get your dancing shoes on! Let's make it a date.

Also for your diary, our next gig at the Gupshill Manor will be on 27 April 2024. More information nearer the date.

Welcome to our new members...

Richard Robey, Jacoba Goodman, Rachel Chetwood, Maureen Carnan, Peter Kirvan, Andrew Meller, James and Margaret Templeton, Robert and Brenda Thomas, Donna Cresswell, Linda Rose Gray, Jane and Chris Brettingham, Graham and Elisabeth-Ann Topping, Paul and Margaret Workman, Gillian Hill and Barbara Bradley.

Badges at Open Meetings

The 'New Member' badges available when you enter our Open Meetings are not only for those attending for the first time, but also for anyone fairly new who doesn't yet know many people or much about us and would be happy for people to talk to them.

Groups full?

We have nearly sixty groups - but there's always room for more. Waiting lists are a way of seeing if there is interest in a new subject or if there are sufficient people to form another group in a popular subject.

If the group is full for a subject you're interested in, why not ask the leader to start a waiting list? Or ask for sign-up sheets to be started at an Open Meeting. If enough people want a particular subject, Rose, our Groups' Coordinator can help. She'll assist new groups to get going, calling an inaugural meeting of interested members, suggesting venues and providing advice on how to do things. As a member-led organisation, we depend on members being willing to lead groups - you don't need to be an expert!

A member-led organisation needs...

...volunteers to lead - as Group Leaders or on the Committee. Most of our great top-team are standing for re-election, and about 50 of us lead groups.

Why? Enjoying ourselves? Making friends? Sharing our creativity? Doing our bit? Sense of purpose? Zest for learning and life? Us - old? No way! - No time!

Do email me your news and photos **by 24 December** for the next Clarion:

clarion@cleeve-u3a.org.uk, or use the website: www.cleeve-u3a.org.uk

Committee 2022/2023

Chair	Valerie Hayward	07850 375641
Vice-Chair	Gillian Thompson	690186
Secretary	Margaret Cleverley	672449
Treasurer	Simon Waller	07849 757167
Groups' Co-ordinator	Rose Hawkins	01684 301668
Membership Secretary	Sheelagh Autef	07908 490571
Clarion Editor	Marguerite Habgood	678973
Member	David Trengrove	677397
RUM Group Leader	Chris Larkin	895018

Other contacts

Minute Secretary	Stella Caney	676143
Speakers' Secretary	Joan Hall	07740 902231
Webmaster	Jenny Waller	07743 754264
Welcomer	Monica Wragg	07777 612613
Beacon Administrator	Philip Watson	673267
Refreshments' Organiser	Kath Mason	07867 532552
PA System Holder	Mike Reynolds	675748
Photo Editor		

© Copyright – No items printed in this newsletter to be copied or printed in any other publication without reference to the Editor and/or originator.