

All phone numbers are local, prefixed 01454, unless specified otherwise

---

### **From the Chairman:**

---

Happy New Year, everyone!

Congratulations to the National U3A as there are now over 1000 groups around the country, with Churchdown, outside Gloucester, being the 1000th one to join.

Following the AGM, it was good to see so many groups represented in the Groups' Fair and to talk to many of the leaders, helpers and members. It offers the perfect opportunity to advertise your groups, allow your enthusiasm to shine through and persuade others to join you. So thank you to all who made the day so memorable and to those of you who couldn't "run a stall" last year, perhaps you can this year? Those of you who attended the AGM will also realise that we would like to see an increase in the number of groups overall so that everyone who wishes to, can participate. Please let us know if you have any ideas for new groups. Perhaps if you know some retirees, who are on their own or new to Thornbury, you could encourage them to come to a group meeting or to an Open Talk. Check this newsletter for news of new groups and support them if you can.

The Communications Group have been working very hard on a new website that has recently become available for all of you to use for checking group details, finding new groups or reading the latest updates and news. Certain pages are essential in the new website but we hope group leaders and individual members will use the site to facilitate passing on information and news about their groups. Please log on to [www.thornburyU3A.org.uk](http://www.thornburyU3A.org.uk) and let us know what you think.

We also welcome our new committee members and hope they will enjoy working together on your behalf. If you have any queries or suggestions, please let us know.

**Contact:** Alison Makepeace 415019 [chairman@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

### **Dates for your Diary**

---

#### **Handbook Collection Dates**

**Monday 30 January 2017** at Thornbury Methodist Hall 10.00 am-12.30 pm first floor, a lift is available.

**Tuesday 31 January 2017** at Olveston Village Hall 10.00 am-12.00 noon

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available at both venues.

#### **Future Newsletter Publication Deadlines**

17 March 2017

16 June 2017

15 September 2017

Spring Newsletter

Summer Newsletter

Autumn Newsletter

Please send your contributions to:

[newsletter@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

by the dates shown opposite

## Open Visits

Tuesday 11 April 2017      Visit to The Royal Mint, Llantrisant and a tour of Penderyn Whisky Distillery

Wednesday, 7 June 2017      A Visit to Avebury, Wiltshire

Details and application forms for both visits are at the end of the Newsletter.

## Open Meetings

We are pleased to announce that the following Open Meetings, open to all members of Thornbury U3A, are planned for 2017 and will be held in the Armstrong or Cossham Halls Thornbury. We look forward to seeing you there.

An application for the first open meeting is towards the end of this Newsletter. Doors will open at 2pm to enable you to have a cup of tea or coffee before the talk.

Tickets, priced at £2, are available from Lesley Hellen at 32 Durham Road, Charfield, Glos. GL12 8TH. Please send a stamped addressed envelope to Lesley approximately 4 weeks before the event or obtain tickets on the door.

23 February                      2.30pm      Medieval Instruments (2) with Jonathan Weeks

*(Tickets for this first event will be available on Handbook Collection Days)*

27 April                              2.30pm      Walking Wales with Rob Carruthers

12 July                                2.30pm      Magic with Barry Smith

17 November                      2.30pm      Women's Role & The Homefront in WWI with Mark Walker

## Membership

---

Firstly a **BIG** thank you to all those of you who have renewed your membership so promptly; by the weekend prior to Christmas (a month since first sending out renewal invitations). I have issued 1180 membership cards to 796 addresses, we already have over 1,250 members for 2017. As you know this is the first time we have sent out renewals by e-mail and of course there have been "glitches". Problems encountered mainly relate to the fact that members have not notified the Membership Secretary of a change in email address. Please notify me at [membership@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@thornburyu3a.org.uk) (Please also include your name and membership number or home address as some e-mail addresses are obscure and we do have duplicate names amongst the membership). In addition please also notify your relevant Group Leaders.

Of the total number of email returns only about 40 have not been able to print out their form to send back with the payment and only a handful have not included the MemID which has made it so much easier for me as I have been able to find and print out copies of the forms for my "paper records" quickly. I have only had to reject and request replacements of 2 cheques.... well done.

The post box for renewals will remain in the Town Hall reception area until around midday on **Friday 27 January 2017** so if you have yet to renew you can take advantage of this virtually until Handbook collection days. (The last week cards will be available on the Membership desk on these days and if not collected will be sent with the Handbooks.)

## Third Age Matters Magazine

As we have very few "personal" subscriptions to this magazine, we will not be including a form for new and renewal of subscriptions in this Newsletter. All Group Leaders will continue to receive a

copy, as will Committee members. For anyone else interested in receiving it please contact me. I will have some magazines on show at the Handbook Collection Days. The date by which I need to receive subscription applications for 2017 is mid-March.

Rosie Bailey

419977

[membership@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Communications**

---

### **Emails**

We currently use MailChimp for sending out emails. Most of the emails sent to U3A members are delivered satisfactorily however in a few cases there have been problems. For example, if you have given us your email address you should have received your membership renewal form via email. If you have not, it may be hidden in your Junk/Spam folder. Do we have your up-to-date email address? If you think that you are not receiving emails please contact the webmaster, Don Grundell, at [webmaster@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

### **Website**

As previously reported we have developed a new website, using the national U3A website builder. It is now up and running and all the information from the previous Thornbury U3A website has been copied over. Some of this information has already been updated by Group Leaders. It has been suggested to all Group Leaders that they could take 'ownership' of their group's page so that they can keep any information up to date. It is hoped that eventually that most groups will do this. If the Group Leader does not want to do this they can always nominate one or more of their members to act on their behalf. The process of updating is very easy. Events can also be entered into the diary. Take a look and see what is there, and maybe make suggestions to your Group Leader. [www.thornburyu3a.org.uk](http://www.thornburyu3a.org.uk) Please contact Don Grundell our webmaster if you would like to know more. [webmaster@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

### **New Membership System**

The knowledge of, and maintenance of, our present system is currently in the hands of one person, Phil Holland. He has done a tremendous job over the years for Thornbury U3A, in various capacities, but in his own words "no-one is immortal". It is also a very vulnerable position for our U3A to be in. For this reason it was decided we should explore various options for the future.

A group was set up to carry out research for a new system that would provide the functionality needed and enable us to be in a more sustainable position. The result was that the Beacon system was recommended. This system is already used by over 100 U3As and many more are in the process of moving to it. Beacon is a system developed by U3A nationally and maintained nationally by U3A.

This recommendation received Committee approval on 3 January 2017. It is anticipated that the transition process will commence shortly. Considerable work has to be undertaken in the next few months before we can move to the new system; however it is intended that the transfer will be completed later this year. Progress reports will be issued during the transition period.

### **Editorial Help**

Can you help? We would welcome further expertise to assist with the production of Newsletters and Handbooks, and also to make information on our website more interesting. The task is not too onerous and it is a way to get involved. If you would like to know more please contact Barbara Jones by either telephoning 414547 or emailing communications as below.

Barbara Jones & Don Grundell

[communications@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## Update on New Groups

---

### Aspects of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Pam Dawe has, after many years, decided to stand down as the leader of this very popular group and we would all like to thank her for hard work in making this group such a success.

### Aspects of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

As from 2017 this group will be led by John Smith under the new title. This will allow a different emphasis and will open up a new range of subject matters. John is currently in the process of trying to arrange a programme for 2017. Could any member who is able to give a talk, on any subject relevant to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, in which they have an interest, please contact John as shown below. Updates will be posted on the U3A website and be included in relevant Newsletters.

The dates and times will remain the same, i.e. the first Monday of the month (except where it clashes with a Bank Holiday) at 2pm in the Methodist Church, Alveston. This is an open group for all U3A members. The first session of the group will be:

6 February                                      The London Underground      Alan Heath

Contact:      John Smith      415667                                      [aspectsof19c@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:aspectsof19c@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## News from Group Leaders

---

### Garden Visits Group

This is my first newsletter as Group Leader and I would like to start by thanking Sue James for all the time and effort she put into the role. Happily, she is staying on the GVG committee so will still be organising visits in addition to joining the main U3A committee. Unfortunately, we have lost three other committee members and will have to run a reduced programme unless we can recruit some replacements.

**Volunteers are needed urgently.** You only need to run one trip in the first year and we have experienced mentors to guide you through the process, which is not difficult. In return for your efforts, you will have priority booking on the other trips. This could be your opportunity to share a favourite garden or visit one which has been on your bucket list. We will be meeting in January to arrange next year's programme so please do give this idea serious consideration and contact Lyn to discuss what is required – details below.

The 2017 Programme should be ready for distribution at the beginning of March and will be sent to members who have paid £1 to join or re-enrol by the end of February. Once again, we will be drawing applications for places at random a fortnight after the mailing to ensure everyone has a fair chance.

**Joining.** If you are a new U3A member and are interested in joining the Garden Visits Group or are an existing member who has still to renew his membership, please send your contact details (name, address, phone numbers and email) plus two second class stamps to cover the £1 per person annual subscription to Mary Ackland, 31 Woodleigh, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2JT.

Group Leader      Lyn Haigh                                      228637                                      [gardenvisits@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:gardenvisits@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## Archaeology

2016 has proved to be an interesting year as we have looked at the period from 415 - 1050 and the sites of that period within our region - more than you may think. We have also dismissed the title of the "Dark Ages"! There was a plethora of evidence of illumination. We had a day trip to Taunton to visit the Museum of Somerset, which was fascinating and well presented.

For this year we will continue with the Anglo-Saxons in January/February and then study the evidence for the Knights Templar in Gloucestershire and Somerset. Should we have any time left we will look at the archaeology of very local churches - each individually unique. Remember you do not need to do trowel and toothbrush work but join us to learn something new and enjoy the group's company. Our next meeting as usual at Porch House, Thornbury at 2 pm.

24 January                      Settlements & Prosperity -Evidence - Ladies, Queens & Dresses

**Group Leader:**        **Cynthia Black**                      **412641**                      [archaeology@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:archaeology@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## Art Appreciation

Welcome to the Art Appreciation Group. You don't have to be an artist yourself to join our group of loyal members, who enjoy a wonderfully varied programme throughout the year, but possibly you might want to extend your knowledge of artists and their work. In 2016 we had presentations on Hogarth, Graham Clarke, Van Gogh, William Morris, Stanley Spencer and artists from WW1.

Meetings take place in the Buckingham room at The Chantry on the third Thursday afternoon of the month unless otherwise indicated on the programme. The presentations begin at 2 p.m., although the room is open from 1.30 p.m. for those who would like to arrive early and meet up with friends in the group. We have an hour's presentation followed by questions and answers.

We hope that you will be curious enough to want to know more. We are still able to accept a few additional members! The first meeting of our 2017 programme is shown below and the full programme will be in the Handbook and on the U3A website.

19 January                      Judy Preston                      And every Dog his Day

**Group Leader:**        **Pauline Rummens**                      **413591**                      [artappreciation@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:artappreciation@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## Ballroom Dancing

Following a successful 'Taster Session' on November 24 with Belinda Orford, an experienced dance teacher, it was agreed to hold regular weekly dance sessions with instruction. These will be held in the upper hall at Methodist Halls, Thornbury on Thursday afternoons at 2.30 for a 3.00 start, beginning on Thursday 12 January. Sessions will be 45 minutes and cost £3. Initially the class will be mixed ability but with the continued support of the 60+ members showing interest it might be possible, in the near future, to have two sessions, one for beginners and one for more advanced dancers. If you would like more information please contact:

**Group Leaders:**        **Chris Eatock**                      **884467**                      [ballroomdancing@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:ballroomdancing@thornburyu3a.org.uk)  
                                 **Mair Turner**                      **417487**

## Cinema – open to all members

We meet on the first and third Friday afternoons of each month at Tockington Parish Hall (between Tockington and Olveston), 1.30pm for a 2pm start. Film notes are available at our meetings

A full list of film showing is in the 2017 Handbook. The next showing will be

20 January - A British spy thriller

If you wish to be on our email register for reminders of forthcoming films, please let Penny Withers have your email address.

If you have any other queries, please contact the Group Leader by telephone.

**Email List:** Penny Withers [cinemalist@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:cinemalist@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

**Group Leader** Pam Dawe 614843 [cinema@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:cinema@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Geology**

A planning meeting was held on 23 November 2016 to set up this new group. It was agreed to launch the group in the new year and a first meeting will be held on Wednesday 25 January 2017 in the Lounge at The Chantry at 10.00am for a 10.15am start.

To set the ball rolling Hilary Giddings has agreed to be the contact person and suggests that, at the first meeting, members decide on who will lead the group, allocate other responsibilities and agree days and dates for future meetings. It was also agreed to discuss what areas of geology people are interested in, and from there form a plan for the way forward. As there is a range of knowledge and experience within the group it was felt that some geology basics might be a good place to start.

For further information, or if you would like to attend the first meeting, please contact:

**Group Leader:** Hilary Giddings 419980 [geology@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:geology@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Opera Study Group**

The first opera to be shown is at the beginning of 2017 is:

24 January Girl of the Golden West Puccini

Meetings begin at 6.45pm and end between 9.30pm and 10pm, with an interval for free refreshments. Membership of the group for the year is £7 but any Thornbury U3A member is welcome to attend an occasional opera as a visitor for £2. Full details of the rest of the year's programme will be published in the January Handbook.

In addition, when there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in the month, a longer opera is shown. The first one in 2017

31 January 'Queen of Spades' Tchaikovsky.

These meetings begin at 4.30pm and have two intervals for food – either bring your own or order a delicious buffet (£4) in advance by telephoning 260542. The cost of these operas is £3 payable by all to cover the cost of the extended hall hire. All group meetings are held downstairs in the Thornbury Methodist Church Hall

All operas are shown on a big screen with English sub-titles and an introduction to the plot is given by one of the members. Why not come along and join us?

**Group Leader:** Michael Vooght 414915 [opera@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:opera@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

**Secretary** Joan Flower

## **Science and Technology Group**

Interested in Science and Technology pitched at a level for the man or woman in the street? If so, then the Science and Technology Group will be of interest to you. The group holds six meetings a year on the **last Friday** of alternate months starting in January. The venue is the Coach Hall at the Chantry, in Thornbury. Meetings start with refreshments at 10 for 10.30 am. A contribution of £1 is

usually requested to help defray the expenses. The first meeting is as follows:

27 January Bruneschi's Dome Peter Petrie

Contact: Alan Heath 419053 [scienceandtech@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:scienceandtech@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Theatre Group**

We will have a table at the two Publicity days in January when you can pick up your 2017 Handbook. We aim to offer a varied programme of plays, opera and ballet using different theatres, throughout the year. To do this we send out information as theatre programmes become available –usually 5 - 6 lists each year. Most of our visits are to matinee performances where we try to get the best seating at reduced prices. We run coaches for those members who would rather not drive, and once again keep the prices as low as possible.

Because of rising costs of running the group, we will need to keep the membership fee at £3.50.

If you wish to join or renew your membership for 2017 and go onto the mailing list, please fill in the appropriate form (below), clearly, particularly email addresses, and return as indicated ASAP. We will then provide newcomers with further information about how we operate

### **Tickets for sale:**

**Thursday 16 March 2017** Millennium Theatre, Cardiff The Red Shoes – ballet

4 Upper Circle seats @ £22.50 each

Coach £8.00

**Saturday 8 April 2017** Malvern Ghost, the Musical

Contact: Pam Dawe [theatreandoperavisits@thornburyu3a.org.uk](mailto:theatreandoperavisits@thornburyu3a.org.uk)

## **Theatre Mailing List *NOTE THAT YOU NEED TO REJOIN FOR 2017***

**Please note that we only book seats for members on our mailing list.**



---

### **THEATRE MAILING LIST 2017**

I / We wish to register for this group and receive information

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ POST CODE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

(Willing to receive information electronically)


PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY **Registration fee: £3.50 per household**

Cheques payable to **Thornbury U3A Theatre Group** should be returned with this form to:  
**Heather Jones 6 Glebe Field Lower Almondsbury Bristol BS32 4DL**



**FIRST OPEN MEETING OF 2017**

**Thursday 23 February    Armstrong Hall, Thornbury at 2.30pm**

<p><b>“A Blast from the Past” by Jonathan Weeks</b></p>	
<p>Following on from his successful visit last February, Jonathan has agreed to perform and talk about his deep and extensive knowledge of mediaeval instruments. He is a collector and player and this amusing, anecdotal talk will be interspersed with tunes on a wide range of medieval instruments.</p> <p>Come and be both entertained and amazed by this light-hearted, but talented, troubadour.</p> <p>Tickets are available from Lesley Hellen, 32, Durham Rd., Charfield, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 8TH or on the door.</p>	



.....

Please reserve .....tickets for the Medieval Instruments talk.

I enclose a cheque for £ .....(£2 each)

Names (block capitals) .....

.....

Phone number .....

Email address .....

Cheques should be payable to **Thornbury U3A** **Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope**



## Visits and Tours to The Royal Mint, Llantrisant and Penderyn Whisky Distillery on Tuesday 11 April 2017

---

### Royal Mint

Before our tour we shall be split into two groups and then met by a guide. Entering one of the manufacturing areas, we will discover how blank pieces of metal are made before they are struck into coins. The guide will take us into a viewing area of the striking hall where thousands of coins are produced 24 hours a day. After this we will be given the option of striking our own coins to take home as a memento.

There are also further exhibitions to see that include 1) looking at fascinating military, sporting and commemorative medals, 2) the different roles coins play, and 3) coin collecting, amongst others.

### Penderyn Whisky Distillery

Penderyn Single Malt Welsh Whisky was first launched on St. David's Day, 1 March 2004, in the presence of H.R.H. Prince Charles. The distillery is situated in the old village of Penderyn nestled beneath the Brecon Beacons. We shall be split into groups for our tour of the distillery to see the production process. Two tastings are included.

Please note that all visitors must wear suitable, flat footwear. There is no provision for wheelchairs.

Please also note that lunch can be obtained at the Royal Mint but if a suitable Public House/Inn can be found, I will report the details accordingly.

If you are interested, please complete and return the booking form and send it with a cheque and stamped, addressed envelope as instructed below.

Applications, which can only be made in writing, will be put into a "hat" and drawn from the "hat" on **Monday 6 March 2017**. Anyone who is given a firm booking and subsequently wishes to cancel cannot be guaranteed to receive a refund. However, I will do my best to transfer the place(s) if I am informed in time.

**This trip is being organised by David Austin and John Ackland.**



-----  
 Cheque(s) should be made payable to **Thornbury U3A** at **£26.00 per person** and sent with a **stamped addressed envelope** to DAVID AUSTIN, 13 DAVIDS CLOSE, ALVESTON, BRISTOL BS35 3LR. The price includes entry to both places, plus the cost of the coach, a tip for the coach driver, and incidental expenses.

Name & Tel. Number, please	Anchor, Morton 8.50am	Aldi 8.55am	Leisure Centre bus stop 9.05am	Alveston, Down Road 9.10am	Do you require lunch Y/N

## A Visit to Avebury, Wiltshire on Wednesday, 7 June 2017

Avebury is a unique site and has something for everyone. **Avebury Manor** is a 16<sup>th</sup> century Wiltshire manor house, set amongst beautiful, tranquil gardens. In 2011 the manor was the subject of a special collaboration with the BBC. The lives and stories of the house's many owners were brought to life by the use of interior design, including the creation of many new pieces reflecting the skills of local craftsmen. The aim of the project was to create a unique experience - visitors are encouraged to relax with a book in the armchairs, listen to the gramophone or even try out the beds.

**Avebury Manor garden** is a place of hidden treasures, with a series of garden "rooms" to explore, including topiary, orchards and a kitchen garden, transformed by the BBC project.

**Avebury Neolithic Stone Circle** is the largest in the world. The henge dates back to around 2600 BC and the huge stones were probably placed about 100 years later. Avebury is the most important prehistoric landscape in England with various Neolithic monuments to explore.

**Alexander Keiller Museum** containing The Stables displaying the archaeological treasures from the area and The Barn, a 17<sup>th</sup> century threshing barn housing interactive displays that reveal the story of this ancient landscape.

**N.B.** There is a 500 yard walk from the Coach Park to the Manor

Lunch may be had either at the restaurant on site or the Red Lion public house in the village.

Please complete and return the booking form and send, with a cheque and stamped addressed envelope, to John Ackland at **31 WOODLEIGH, THORNBURY, BRISTOL, BS35 2JT.**

Applications, which can only be made in writing, will be put into a "hat" and drawn on **Saturday 6 May 2017.** Anyone who is given a firm booking and subsequently wishes to cancel cannot be guaranteed a refund. However, I will do my best to transfer the place(s) if I am informed in time.

**PLEASE BRING NATIONAL TRUST AND ENGLISH HERITAGE MEMBERSHIP CARD(S)**

**This trip is being organised by John Ackland and David Austin**



I/we wish to join the tour to AVEBURY. Cost per person is as follows:

NT members £11.00.....No. of people .....

Members of both the NT and English Heritage combined £11.00.....No. of people .....

English Heritage members only £20.50.....No. of people .....

Non-members of either £24.65.....No of people .....

Please make your cheque payable to **Thornbury U3A** and send it with this form and a **stamped addressed envelope** to **JOHN ACKLAND, 31 WOODLEIGH, THORNBURY, BRISTOL, BS35 2JT.** These prices include all entries, including a Tour of the Stones, plus the cost of the coach, tip for the coach driver, and incidental expenses.

Name & phone number, please	Anchor Morton 8.15am.	Aldi 8.20am	Leisure Centre bus stop 8.30am	Alveston, The Ship 8.35am	Almondsbury, The Tump 8.45am