

March Newsletter

Notes from the Chair

The Celebration Lunch was once again held at Badgemore golf club and all those attending had a most enjoyable time - many thanks to Jane for once again organising the day. However, only 40 plus members were able to come, far fewer than last year. The committee has discussed this and decided that distance and cost may have affected the attendance, so for next year we have chosen to move to Goring Golf Club which is more cost effective. More details when final arrangements have been made.

As has already been mentioned, we now have a new system to manage members' details. One of the benefits of this is that we can semi-automate the renewals system, Essentially, you will get an email inviting you to renew about three weeks before your renewal date, with details of how to pay. There will then be a reminder about two weeks after your renewal date if you haven't renewed, then a further four weeks later we will have to remove your details from our membership. An email will be sent at this point telling you of this. Note that your annual renewal date will remain the same.

With the sad death of Peter Wood, the outings committee has lost one of its members and Ken has asked me to once again ask for volunteers to join and organise outings. The outings are an important part of our organisation, and it would be regrettable if we had to reduce the number we offer throughout the year but this is a real possibility if members do not offer help. We have over 500 members so please get in touch if you have the time or any questions.

The February speaker meeting about John Piper was a great success with 168 attendees, the most we have ever had. It was so popular that we ran out of chairs. Next month Dr Paul Roberts returns for a talk on 'The Wonders of Sicily'. Details are in the speaker section of the newsletter.

Good news regarding the coffee morning and a big thank you to all who managed to be there. Your donations for the tea and coffee were greatly increased and covered the cost of hall hire, tea and coffee. March meeting is Friday 6<sup>th</sup> - Hope to see you there.

That's all, keep safe and dry.

Ian Shipton

Chair

## **Upcoming Events**

Next Coffee Morning will be 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 10:30 till midday.

Next Speaker Meeting – 18th March - Dr Paul Roberts - Sicilian Splendours

Following Speaker Meeting – 15th April: Eleanor Janega - Women in the Middle Ages

Check Website for Updates

Next Outing – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March : South Kensington Museums

## **New Members**

We welcome eight new members this month.

From Wallingford, Nora Haycock and Penny Forsyth; from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Helen Connor; from Didcot, Valerie Krueger; from Warborough, Janet and Richard Thompson; and from Aston Tirrold, Jenny Jones and Nick Freund.

## **Coffee Morning**

First Friday every month – Wallingford Methodist Church St Leonard's Square OX10 0AS

This month will be 6th of March, 10:30am until midday  
Pam Johnstone & Marilyn Emms

Next month will be 10th of April, 10:30am until midday  
Brenda Taylor & Graham Carpenter

If you want to join the serving rota then please contact Pam Johnston via the [contact page](#).

## **Groups**

A new Italian Conversation group has now been set up. Details can be found on the [Calendar](#) on the website.

If you want to join or form a group, then please contact Yvonne via [contact page](#) on the website.

## Speaker Meetings

Third Wednesday 2:00 pm every month at St Mary's Church Wallingford.

Paul Roberts, recently retired from the Ashmolean Museum, returns to dazzle us with his expertise in all things classical.

This time he will direct his enthusiasm and knowledge to the wonders of Sicily with all the riches of its varied classical heritage.

Expect wonderful photographs of sites which Paul has just visited and all his usual erudition and archaeological experience.

Following Speaker Meeting – 15th April: Eleanor Janega - Women in the Middle Ages

More on speaker meetings can be found on our [speakers' webpage](#).

## Outings

### South Kensington Museums – 25th March

This outing follows two suggestions from the Outings Survey (Victoria & Albert Museum; plus Science and Natural History Museums). It also addresses two reasons given for members not going on trips: it is not on a Thursday, and the cost of outings.

The three principal museums in South Kensington have wide ranging collections

- The Victoria and Albert Museum has the Cast Courts with a vast gallery of monumental plaster casts ranging in size from Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine's effigy through Michelangelo's David (above) to Trajan's Column from Rome (in two parts).
- The Natural History Museum isn't just species that were once alive; it also has minerals and geological specimens.
- There is a new Space Gallery in the Science Museum. There are other attractions within a mile of the Science Museum e.g. Albert Memorial, Kensington Palace (charge applies), the nearer parts of Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park plus shops (e.g. Harrods). The three museums have cafes with others nearby around South Kensington tube station, about 300 yards away.

The 49-seat coach (with WC) will cost £24 per person. Entry to all three museums is free. Timed tickets (which is recommended!) for the Natural History Museum and the Science Museum can be booked through their respective websites. We will leave Wallingford and Crowmarsh at 09:15 and leave the museums for home at 17:00. There is one space left, so to book please email the following FIVE points of Booking information to Ken

Johnstone on [Outings1@thamesidewallingfordu3a.org](mailto:Outings1@thamesidewallingfordu3a.org) with "SouthKenSurname" in the Subject. There will be a waiting list.

1. My/our Name(s)
2. My phone number(s) & email address
3. Reserve for me .... place(s) @ £24.00 per person
4. Pick me up from ... Wallingford Museum or ... Crowmarsh Church
5. Name, relationship and phone number of an emergency contact on that day.

DO NOT PAY YET. You will be asked to pay using online bank transfer or cheque when you are offered a place.

More information about our outings can be found on the [outings webpage](#).

Visit to Dorney Court and Thame - Friday 17 April 2026

This outing is fully booked and there is a waiting list.

We will visit (guided tour) Dorney Court, an estate and private home, owned by the Palmer family, that has passed through the generations for nearly half a millennium. It's considered to be one of the finest Tudor Manor House's in the country.

## **Thame**

A market town, many of us will be familiar with. This is an opportunity to stop for lunch (on our return leg), there are plenty of pubs and cafes dotted around the marketplace.

Included in the visit:

Coach travel including driver's tip

Refreshments on arrival- we have refreshments at the garden centre set in the walled garden of Dorney Court.

Guided tour of Dorney Court (90 minutes)

Not included:

Lunch - At Thame

Price £39 per person

Leave: Wallingford Museum 0900

Crowmarsh Church 0905

Arrive: Dorney 1015 (1100 guided tour)

Depart: Dorney 1230

Arrive: Thame 1330

Depart: Thame 1530

Wallingford: 1630 approximately

To be put on the waiting list please email or post with the following FIVE points of Booking information to Sue Wright

1. My/our Name(s)
2. My phone number(s) & email address
3. Reserve for me .... place(s) @ £39.00 per person
4. Pick me up from ... Wallingford Museum or ... Crowmarsh Church
5. Name, relationship and phone number of an emergency contact on that day.

DO NOT PAY YET. You will be asked to pay if a vacancy occurs.

Sue Wright

10 Buckners Close Benson OX10 6LR

email: [sue.m.wright57@gmail.com](mailto:sue.m.wright57@gmail.com)

phone: 07507340562

## **The Third Age Trust**

is the national representative body for the u3a in the UK. Here is their [website](#).

## **Online Learning Events**

Sign up for the [u3a National Newsletter](#) for news and stories from across the u3a movement.

u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership

## **U3A Radio Podcast**

## **Thames Valley Network**

We are one of 38 branches within the [Thames Valley Network](#)(TVN).

If you would like to receive information directly from TVN with details of Study Days & Workshops, please email [events\\_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk](mailto:events_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk)

TVN Study Days:

The Treasures and Mysteries of Sutton Hoo – Tuesday 10th March at 10.30

Dr Jennifer Foster, is an Archaeologist at the University of Reading specialising in artifact identification. Jennifer leads popular courses both in class and around the countryside for Oxford University Continuing Education Department. The fee for this event is £2.00 per device.

To download or view the flyer click on the link [Flyer Sutton Hoo](#)

To book for this event click go to [Ticketsource](#).

Applications will not be accepted after 6th March 2026.

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Contact any of the below via our [contact page](#)

### **Committee 2025/26**

Chairman – Ian Shipton

Deputy Chairman – Ken Johnstone

Treasurer – Tony Fenner

Secretary – Hilly Bailey

Meeting Minutes – Jane Milne

Membership Secretary – Charmaine Anderson

Database Administrator – Malcolm Brooks

Thames Valley Network Rep – Neil Kelly

Newsletter Collator – Bob Ferguson

Communications including Newsletter - Ian Shipton & Malcolm Brooks

Calendar & Website – Sarah Robinson

Co-opted member – Anna Gordon

### **Coordinators:**

Groups Co-ordinator – Yvonne Griffiths

Speakers Co-ordinator – Jane Tuckett

Outings Co-ordinator – Ken Johnstone

Coffee Mornings Rota – Pam Johnstone

Speaker Refreshments – Richard & Ros Steptoe

Accessibility & Inclusivity – Jane Milne

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