

Speakers for Weston Turville u3a General Meetings January 2025 – November 2025

23 January 2025 – Rugby Club

The questionable history of the TV Quiz Show – Jeff Evans

One of television's most successful creations is the quiz show – the programme where everyone can show how clever they are and possibly earn a small fortune in the process. But where did it all begin? Which shows have been the most successful? And who, along the way, have been the winners, losers and – perhaps most intriguingly – the cheaters?

This fully illustrated, entertaining talk covers the whole colourful history of the TV quiz show from its earliest days in the 1930s to today, showing how the format developed, celebrating the good, the bad and the ugly, and unearthing some very dodgy dealing along the way. Expect lots of warm memories, plenty of surprises and lots of 'I didn't know that' moments in this 60-minute talk delivered by TV historian Jeff Evans, who also writes questions for several TV quiz shows, including Mastermind.

27 February 2025 – Rugby Club

Good News: Bad News – Bill Hamilton

We hear about Bill's Illustrated reflections on 50 years as a journalist, broadcaster and BBC tv correspondent. Born in Dundee, Bill began work as a trainee reporter on the Fife Herald before moving to the Hartlepool Mail and then to Tyne Tees Television.

His career with BBC television news began in Glasgow, before moving to London where he spent time as a Home Affairs correspondent and later as a Foreign Affairs correspondent, featuring regularly on national news bulletins.

27 March 2025 – Rugby Club

The Kennedy's – Saint or Sinners – Peter Hague

Much has been written about the Kennedy clan (especially JFK & Jackie). This talk aims to highlight the influence that their father (Joe Sr) and to a lesser extent, their mother Rose had on the Kennedy boys and girls. Was there a curse on them – you can decide!

24 April 2025 – Rugby Club

Fine Art Photographer – The History and Future of Piers – Janine Kilroe

Janine, a Fine Art Photographer, is passionate about capturing photographically and aerial filming “her” piers. The part they play in our history and what is to become of them. Illustrated throughout with historical as well as Janine’s own images and films.

22 May 2025 – Rugby Club

***AGM and “The Palace of Knightsbridge” – The History of Harrods
– Richard Furnival-Jones***

The story of how Harrods grew from a small family shop in the 1840s with a staff of two plus messenger boy to today’s huge Knightsbridge department empire with 330 departments and thousands of staff. Fascinating facts included Oscar Wilde and Lillie Langtry being among the first customers to be given credit and customers being offered smelling salts or brandy after surviving a trip on England’s first escalator in 1898.

Richard Furnival-Jones was a trainee in the food hall in 1963. He worked his way up to become food hall manager before retiring after more than 40 years. Sharing his entertaining memories and stating that “Harrods is a family. When I went to work there I became part of that family.”

26 June 2025 – Rugby Club

***The story of double agent Edward (Eddie) Chapman – Zigzag Spy
– Paul Barwick***

Edward Arnold Chapman (16 November 1914 – 11 December 1997) was an English criminal and wartime spy. During the Second World War he offered his services

to Nazi Germany as a spy and subsequently became a British double agent. His British Secret Service handlers codenamed him Agent Zigzag in acknowledgement of his erratic personal history and he was the only serving member of the British Army to be awarded the Iron Cross on the authority of Adolf Hitler!

27 July 2025 – Rugby Club

Summer lunch and entertainment

28 August 2025 – Rugby Club

Thames Valley Air Ambulance

Working as a team, together with the other emergency services, they aim to deliver the best possible care for their patients. They continue to be at the forefront of pre-hospital emergency medicine (PHEM) through their clinical governance framework, research and innovation in technology and clinical practices, and continue staff training and development.

25 September 2025 – Rugby Club

How Rainforests work – David Jones

David works at the Natural History Museum in London and also lectures at Imperial College. He is an entomologist, specialising in rainforest insects and soil ecology. He has done field work in 18 countries, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Gabon, Madagascar and French Guinea, and has also published more than 50 research articles in scientific books and journals.

David is a multi award-winning public speaker and frequent after dinner speaker and has won the annual Toastmasters UK and Ireland Impromptu Speech championship five times. He also did stand-up comedy for five years where he learnt to be a funny and engaging speaker.

23 October 2025 – Rugby Club

Tring Market Auctions – Stephen Hearn

Stephen Hearn was previously part of Brown and Merry, a company formed in Tring, in 1832, and he has been operating independently since 1992. When the original company started, it occupied part of the old cattle market, utilising the buildings when available, for auctions.

It now has an extensive purpose built auction house, forming probably one of the largest and best known auction venues of its type in the Home Counties. Their sales attract a wide range of buyers from across Great Briain and internationally, many representing the trade and other specialist collectors.

With the addition of online bidding, there are now regular buyers from the Continent and beyond.

The sales room permanent staff and consultants are able to deal with all periods of antique furniture, fine art, collectables and general effects, totalling over 2000 lots. They can also help with probate valuations, insurance, taxation and house clearances. Their experienced auctioneers help provide a friendly and entertaining atmosphere on sale day, making it an enjoyable venue for both business and pleasure.

27 November 2025 – Rugby Club

Oh No It Isn't: A History of Pantomime (Festive Talk) – by Pete Allen

What is it about Pantomime that attracts us to this strange concoction of fairy tales, dance, jokes, songs and cross-dressing? And what is it really like to play the back end of a Pantomime Cow? All this – and the answer to whether something really is behind you – will be answered in this festive Talk about what has become one of the great British Christmas tradition.

25 December 2025– NO MEETING