

The Nottingham Mechanics Institute

est. 1837

Leisure Learning at the Institute

COURSES
TALKS
DAY TRIPS
& MORE

CAFE AND BAR
READING ROOM
LIBRARY

WINTER
2026

www.nottmleisurelearning.com

Based in the heart of Nottingham

The Nottingham Mechanics Institute has been educating and improving the social wellbeing of the people of Nottingham for 187 years.

Looking to the future

In 2024 The Institute decided to start a series of Leisure Learning courses,
run by professional tutors, with the aim of learning and enjoying the topics with old friends and new.
The courses were well received and using feedback from several areas we have added new tutors for the courses in 2025 and 2026.
The institute welcomes input from visitors on courses they would like to see in the future.

Please have a look around our site if you're stuck on anything

Give us a ring on 01159417353
or email us from our contact page

Better still pop in and have a chat in person we are here to help.



Enrolment information
Timetable and Prices
History
Languages and Culture
Economics
Film Studies
Literature
Music
Philosophy & Politics
Photography
Art & Crafts
Day Courses/Talks
Members Interest Groups
Still to Come
Outside Groups

ENROLMENT DATE
From Monday 1st December

Booking a course
Please fill in an enquiry form online, visit us, or phone us on 01159417353.

But you can start booking right away

To see all our courses and other information, please visit
www.nottmleisurelearning.com
If you wish to pay by cheque, please make cheques payable to New Mechanics Ltd
with your name and chosen course details included on the reverse.
In person: Nottingham Mechanics Institute
3 North Sherwood St NG1 4EZ
Bookings taken
Mon-Fri, 8.30 AM-2.30 PM

Terms & Conditions for course and event booking, which include our policy on cancellations and refunds are available on our website. Please ask at Reception if you require a paper copy.

	COURSE	TUTOR	TIME	WEEKS	DATES	HALF TERM/HOLIDAYS	COST
MONDAY							
	Concerts in Focus	Mike Wheeler	10.15-12.15	10	12th January - 23rd March	16th February	£90.00
	Philosophy and Politics : Politics without the shouting	Bettina Lange	2.30-4.30	1	12th January	N/A	£8.00
	Philosophy and Politics : Are Left wing & Right wing still relevant In politics now?	Bettina Lange	2.30-4.30	8	26th January -23rd March	16th February	£72.00
	1979 - Year Zero in the Middle East	David Halliwell	1.00-3.00	7	2nd March - 20th April	6th April	£63.00
TUESDAYS							
Day Course	Wind in the Willows	Dr John Florance	10.30-3.30	1	10th February	N/A	£20.00
	What The Dickens	Dr John Florance	10.30-12.30	3	24th February - 10th March	N/A	£27.00
	Bizets Carmen	David Price	10.15-12.15	2	27th January - 3rd February	N/A	£18.00
	Citizen Kane: The Film	David Price	10.15-12.15	2	24th February - 3rd March	N/A	£18.00
	Howard Carter & Tomb of Tutankhamun	David Price	10.15-12.15	2	17th March - 24th March	N/A	£18.00
Day Talk	Mary Rose - "One Moment in Time"	Kathy Powis	10.30-11.30	1	24th February	N/A	£5.00
Day Talk	Jesse Boots: The story of the Boots Company!	Chris Weir	10.30-11.30	1	17th March	N/A	£5.00
WEDNESDAY							
	The Women in White	Judith Hedley	10.30-12.30	7	28th January - 18th March	18th February	£63.00
	Poetry: Poetry for the New Year	Judith Hedley	1.30-3.00	7	28th January - 18th March	18th February	£63.00
	Musicals:The Weird and Wonderful	David Price	10.15-12.15	9	21st January - 25th March	18th February	£81.00
	Arts & Crafts - Drawing	Max Astill	10.30-12.30	3	21st January - 4th February	N/A	£27.00
	Photography DSLR for beginners	Max Astill	10.30-12.30	6	25th February - 1st April	N/A	£54.00
	Arts & Crafts	Max Astill	2.00-4.00pm	6	25th February -1st April	N/A	£70.00

	COURSE	TUTOR	TIME	WEEKS	DATES	HALF TERM/HOLIDAYS	COST
THURSDAY							
	The Normans - Impact and Legacy	Dr Mark Barnard	10.30-12.30	8	8th January - 26th February	N/A	£72.00
	Kill or Cure! Bygone Medicines	Chris Weir	10.30-12.30	5	12th February - 12th March	N/A	£45.00
DAY TALK	Lincoln - A history	Dr Mark Barnard	10.30-11.30	1	12th March	N/A`	£5.00
	Economics - Eighty Years of Ups and downs	Anita Fernandez	10.30-12.30	5	22nd January - 19th February	N/A	£45.00
	Economics -Making Sense of Insurance: In a risky world	Anita Fernandez	10.30-12.30	4	5th March - 26th March	N/A	£36.00
	Film Studies - Place as Character: Paris On Film	Anita Fernandez	1.00-4.00	5	22nd January - 19th February	N/A	£68.00
	Film Studies - Money Talks: The cinema of Cash	Anita Fernandez	1.00-4.00	5	5th March -2nd April	N/A	£68.00
	Auxilarly hospitals in World War one	Bob Massey	10.30-12.30	2	8th January - 15th January	N/A	£18.00
	British and US Dance Bands of the 20's, 30's & 40's	Bob Massey	2.00-4.00	2	8th January - 15th January	N/A	£18.00
	Small Allied Airforces of World War II	Bob Massey	10.30-12.30	2	22nd January - 29th January	N/A	£18.00
	18th century in Nottingham	Bob Massey	2.00-4.00	2	22nd January - 29th January	N/A	£18.00
FRIDAY							
	Japanese Writing & Conversation	Takae Gale	10.30-12.00	6	6th February - 13th March	N/A	£54.00
	The Last Tsars	David Price	10.15-12.15	5	27th February -27th March	N/A	£45.00

Leisure Learning at the Institute

History

Kill or Cure!

Bygone Medicine

Thursdays 10.30-12.30pm

Starts 12th February

(Chris Weir)

5-week course £45.00

Bygone Medicine will highlight many aspects of the history of Medicine. It will take a look at the Greek belief in the 4 'humours'. These were believed to determine both your personality and your health; and this belief lasted for many centuries. In later times there were individual physicians who pioneered the development of surgery, medical treatments and the value of herbs. These included Erasmus Darwin who was born in 1731 at Elston Hall in Nottinghamshire. In Holland pioneers like Herman Boerhaave led improvements to surgical techniques and they founded the influential medical school at Leiden University. The impact of the Plague, Cholera and other epidemics on villages and towns will also be considered as well as Medicine under the local poor law, in workhouses and early Hospitals. Please note that parts of the course look at surgical details and symptoms of mental and physical illnesses.

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History

The Normans - Impact & Legacy
Thursdays 10.30-12.30
Starts 8th January
(Dr Mark Barnard)
8-week course £72.00

From October 1066, Duke William of Normandy and his entourage changed England forever. But what was his background and how was England affected by the last successful invasion of the country? What for instance, is the symbolic link between England & Normandy? How does what is probably the most famous cartoon strip in history, the Bayeux Tapestry, describe the events prior to and during the Conquest? What was the local impact of the Normans in Nottingham and Lincoln? How did our Laws, Fashions and Language change? Does Henry I's daughter, Empress Maud AKA Matilda, deserve her awful reputation?

Beginning with the background to one of England's most controversial figures, William the Conqueror, Join Dr Barnard to explore three other intriguing Norman Rulers and how England was transformed Politically, architecturally, Militarily & Culturally

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History

The Last Tsars

Fridays 10.15-12.15
Starts 27th February
(David Price)

5 week course £45.00

A look at the history of Russia from the mid- 19th century. We'll concentrate on the lives and reigns of Alexander II, Alexander III and Nicholas II but also briefly cover the reigns of Cartherine II, Maria Feodorovna, Paul I and Alexander I at the turn of the 19th century, and see how their decisions affected the later history of the century. We will also look at how the reign of Nicholas I contrasted with that of his son Alexander II, particularly the decision to embark on the Crimean War, which Alexander brought to an end. We'll see how Russia developed from the end of that war until the more devastating First World War and the revolutions of 1917. Including the emancipation of the serfs; more freedom of Jews under Alexander II but backtracking on thus under Alexander III; the treatment of other minorities in the empire, particularly the Poles, the Finns and the Circassians; industrial modernisation, including the railways; the various advisors/ministers of the Tsars and their influence on developments; the conflict of tradition and reforms; the revolution of 1905; the failure of the Duma; and how Nicholas II's decisions, advised by his wife and Rasputin brought disaster and the end of the monarchy in Russia.

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History

Small Allied Air Forces of World War II

Thursdays 10.30-12.30pm
Starts 22nd January
(Bob Massey)
2-week course £18.00

During World War two the air forces of the Allied nations expanded at a huge rate but there were many countries that contributed to the war, many of which had air forces of their own. These small but significant airarms played a vital part in the war from Africa to Asia to the Far East as well as Europe. This is the story of some of the hundreds of air units personal, aircraft and formations that took part on the Allied side. Learn how these unsung and forgotten men, women and formations contributed to the eventual victory.

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History

Auxilarly Hospitals in World War 1

Thursdays 10.30-12.30pm
Starts 8th January
(Bob Massey)
2-week course £18.00

In the Great War, the British Army lost around 877,000 men killed and a further 1,675,000 wounded.
Despite elaborate preparations made to cope with this, the system was very often overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of men who needed treatment, particularly during the great battles such as the Somme in 1916 and Passchendaele in 1917. Then they would either go to a Dressing Station, where they would have their wounds cleaned and dressed, or to a Casualty Clearing Station if their wounds were more serious. Many men would then be transferred across the English Channel to an Auxillary Hospital like the many that were opened across the country. The first in Nottinghamshire was in Arnot Hill House in Arnold.
This is the story of these hospitals and their contributions to saving the wounded soldiers.

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History

18th Century in Nottingham

Thursdays 2.00-4.00 pm
Starts 22nd January
(Bob Massey)
2-week course £18.00

The 18th Century was a time of huge change from a purely agricultural economy to an industrial society. It was a time of extreme weather and war which in itself prompted these changes. Join Bob as he looks at what happened during these years with the main events in the local area as well as nationally and even world wide.

Why were there so many problems and how well were solutions found. How did they form the society and ways of working that is still common today?

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History

Howard Carter & The Tomb of Tutankhamun

Tuesdays 10.15-12.15pm

Starts 17th March

(David Price)

2 week course £18.00

This Course examines the history behind the most exciting discovery among the archaeological finds from Ancient Egypt. We'll look at the man who carried out the work Howard Carter, his somewhat difficult personality and the interactions he had with his sponsor Lord Carnarvon, with whom he had a suprisingly good relationship. We will also look at other aspects of his personal life that might have hindered his ability to carry out his work but it seems he managed to avoid any such issues. Carter had worked in Egypt for quite a while before he made his big discovery and had carried out some creditable work, so his career had been successful before he discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 almost by accident. Its fair to say that some of his actions in pursuing his aims would be looked down on today but he no doubt would defend them as essential in the early part of the 20th century. The treasures of Tutankhamun are certainly spectacular but most probably only because other tombs have been robbed in the past and their treasures taken. We'll see how the discovery captured peoples imaginations around the world but especially Britain and also examine the origins of, and supposed evidence of , the so-called Curse of Tutankhamun.

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History

1979 - Year Zero in the Middle East
Mondays 1-3pm
Starts 2nd March
6th April is a Holiday - Easter Monday
(David Halliwell)
7 week course £63.00

Come and Join David as he explores the toxic combination of events that were unleashed in 1979 which led to the unraveling of the Muslim World an triggered the Iran - Saudi rivalry for Islamic leadership. From the fall of the Shah to the siege of Mecca, we will investigate the ripples of events leading to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. A process that transformed societies and altered cultural and religious references.

This 7 week course is for anyone interested in understanding the key events, personalities and forces that have shaped the Middle East.

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Film Studies

Place as Character: Paris on Film

Thursdays 1.00 -4.00pm

Starts 22nd January

(Anita Fernandez)

5-week course £68.00

The City of Love, the City of Light - Paris has always had a special attraction for filmmakers. This course will explore the way that a director can use a location as an additional character, influencing the emotions and actions of the cast, providing opportunities for encounters and bringing out emotions, setting the tone for the film and enriching the experience. Paris is Spring is the ideal destination.

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Film Studies

Money Talks: The Cinema of Cash

Thursdays, 1:00 - 4:00 PM
Starts: 5th March
Instructor: Anita Fernandez
5-week course: £68.00

While money itself may not be inherently fascinating, it's the lengths people will go to acquire and preserve it that captivates us. From the *Wolves of Wall Street* to the con artists of Shepherd's Bush, the misfits and fraudsters offer writers and directors countless chances for moral reflection and unexpected twists of fate. The financial world is filled with cautionary tales that inspire truly remarkable films.

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History & Film

Citizen Kane: The Film

Tuesdays 10.15-12.15pm

Starts 24th February

(David Price)

2 week course £18.00

The Film Citzen Kane (1941) is a phenomenal achievement for a 25 year old actor, director and writer whose previous experience had been almost solely i radio and theatre. Orson Welles managed to create a cinematic masterpiece which is at the top of the list of many people's highest-rated films and he also took the leading role, among a group of actors many of whom had also appeared in a film before. But what exactly made Citizen Kane so ground-breaking and why and how has it stood the test of time? In this short course we'll look at the techniques Welles used and how he experimented almost constantly, inspired by some great directors who preceded him but also producing many new ideas in his direction, skillfully manipulating camera angles and using deep focus shots in a way that had been doen before but not as as extensively and as imaginatively. Citizen Kane continually fascinates for other reasons - particularly because of its clear satrical content and the folklore surrounding it. We will examine Welle's background and his early work, some of his inspirations for Kane, the tricks and techniques he used during the project and his career after his huge success with Kane.

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Leisure Learning at the Institute

History-Music

Dance Bands of the 20s, 30s & 40s

Thursdays 2.00 - 4.00pm

Starts 8th January

(Bob Massey)

2 week course £18.00

The big bands of the 20s to 40s were the main forms of entertainment in the dance halls and on the radio during the depression, and war years. They provided an escape from the riggers of war and the desperation of the depression. Many romance's and marriages were made on these dance floors. We will look at the style of music and how it changed over the period from formal regulated dance tunes to swing, Jazz and onwards through to what became Rock and Roll.
Dance Halls were packed and records sold in the millions, come along and see which were made famous along the way.

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History & Music

Bizets Carmen

Tuesdays 10.15-12.15pm

Starts 27th January

(David Price)

2 week course £18.00

Its hard to believe but Carmen's first performance in Paris in 1875 were poorly received by audiences and critics. Its Composer, George Bizet, was very upset and angry and lamented that Parisians had 'not understood a wretched word of the work I have written for them'. He died a few weeks later and so never saw Carmen receive the praise it deserved.

This Course looks at the historical background to this and how the opera seemed doomed from the start because of the nature of society in Paris at this time. Bizet struggled throughout his short life (he died aged 36) trying to please both the critics and the public, and rarely pleased either, whereas today a number of his works are highly regarded and Carmen is one of the most popular operas ever written. This situation arose in part because the music establishment in France largely dismissed new French composers, preferring old-established opera composers. But he did have a few supporters, including the respected composer Hector Berlioz, who had also experienced shabby treatment in the past, and Leon Carvalho, the opera manager who chose to take risks with new works by French composers. Without these two, and a few others, perhaps Carmen may never have been staged in the first place.

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History-Music

Musicals: The Weird and the Wonderful

Wednesdays 10.15-12.15

Starts 21st January

18th February is a Holiday

(David Price)

9 week course £81.00

A history course based on some well known musicals. Writers of these works often dealt with complex social, political and historical issues while providing an entertaining show with great songs, although in this particular course we'll also consider some ideas for musicals that didn't work. We will look at prominent figures from the realm of international politics in the musicals Evita, Call Me Madam and Chess and whether these musicals truly reflected the subjects they were dealing with; horror stories used as inspiration for musicals, partucularly those depicted in classic films from the 1930s to the 1950s, subverted in Rocky Horror Show and Little Shop of Horrors and treated more seriously in Sweeney Todd and Jekyll and Hyde; musicals based on fairy stories, some creatively adjusted to provide unexpected twists, as in Frozen, and intertwined and satirised in Into the Woods, which also features a disturbing invasion of the 'fourth Wall'; and the controversial side of Rodgers and Hammerstein's output, looking at some of their failures as well as their musicals that have a 'dark side'. Plus some other quirky musicals, like the producers, Hello Dolly!, and Paint Your Wagon, and musicals based on industrial disputes(yes really!)

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Music

Concerts in Focus
Mondays 10.15-12.15pm
Starts 12th January
16th February is a Holiday
(Mike Wheeler)

10 week course £90.00

Join us for a thorough journey into the realm of concerts. We will delve into everything from the history of live music performances to the newest trends in concert production. Prepare to uncover the enchantment of live music and the memorable experiences that can only be found at a concert.

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Economics

Eighty years of Ups and Downs: Economic Thought since 1946

Thursdays 10:30-12.30pm

Starts 22nd January

(Anita Fernandez)

5-week course £45.00

Economics played a pivotal role in the recovery of the world from the Second World War, and the dramatic changes to come in the 1960s. The birth of computing and then the Internet created the Age of Information. A new cohort of thinkers rose to meet new challenges and economics matured as a discipline. Making sense of the past eighty years, whether or not you have attended any previous courses, is a roller-coaster ride through economics, budgets, fast and slow thinking, triumphs and disasters and global warming. What has happened to the 'pound is your pocket' and why?

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Economics

Making sense of Insurance: Insurance in a Risky World

Thursdays 10:30-12.30pm
Starts 5th March
(Anita Fernandez)

4-week course £36.00

How was insurance invented? How does it work? Why does it cost so much? Do I need it?
This course is not funded by insurance companies, so it can give you an unbiased look at an important set of financial decisions and an industry with a long and interesting history and answer some important questions regarding this important topic.

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Literature

The Woman in White
Wednesdays 10.30-12.30 pm
Starts 28th January
18th February is a Holiday
(Judith Hedley)

7-week course £63.00

Wilkie Collins Novel of 1860 outsold Dickens and was the talk of every dinner table. It combines an exciting and unpredictable plot, a love story, a new kind of heroine, a detective yarn and an expose of Victorian social abuses. Add to this a memorable villain or two, dark humour and a plenty of gothic menace, and we have a wealth of strands to follow.

'The Woman in White' is a very long book even by the standards of Victorian three-decker, and we can't hope to cover everything - but our aim is enjoyment and the fellowship of others who enjoy delving a little more deeply into its mysteries. All you need is a copy of any edition of the novel.

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Literature

Poetry for the New Year
Wednesdays 1.30-3.00pm
Starts 28th January
18th February is a Holiday
(Judith Hedley)
7 week course £63.00

January is named after the Roman god Janus, who traditionally looks both to the past and the future. We Hope to do the same, with a choice of poets old and new, tough and tender, both bracingly wintry and full of the joys of approaching spring. Our choices can reflect the changing seasons and festivals and awareness days across the seven weeks when we meet, whether as traditional as Valentine's Day or more recently established, such as International Women's Day on March 8th.

Our friendly course allows and indeed encourages you to choose and recommend your own favourites, which will be printed out and distributed as a course booklet each week.

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Literature

WHAT THE DICKENS

Tuesdays 10.30-12.30pm

Starts 24th February

(Dr John Florance)

3-week course £27.00

Charles Dickens is one of the great English novelists. He wrote fifteen novels (one incomplete) and he also produced a huge quantity of journalism, short stories, essays, novellas and a vast number of letters. Even Folk who have hardly read a word of Dickens know of his vividly drawn characters including Mr. Pickwick, Scrooge, the Artful Dodger, Miss Havisham and many more.

During this course we shall certainly not ignore Dickens characters but we shall also be looking at some of the themes, ideas and areas of feeling which recur in his writings. Amongst other subjects we will be exploring how he presents the City (especially London); his political stance; education; crime; women in life and fiction; religion; his 'philosophy of life' and much more.

You do not have to read a word of Dickens to enjoy this course as i shall be supplying copies of the extracts we will be looking at in detail.

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Languages & Culture

Japanese Writing & Conversation

Fridays 10:30-12pm

Starts 6th February

(Takae Gale)

6-week course £54.00

Discover the beauty of the Japanese language in this friendly and welcoming course led by Takae.

Perfect for beginners and enthusiastic learners alike, this class introduces basic conversation, hiragana writing, everyday expressions, and cultural insights to help you build confidence in both spoken and written Japanese.

Across six enjoyable sessions you will learn how to:

Write and recognise key Japanese characters

Use practical phrases for real-life situations

Develop clear pronunciation and listening skills

Gain cultural understanding to enhance communication

Whether you're learning for travel, personal interest, or simply to try something new, this course offers a relaxed and supportive environment to enjoy the Japanese language and culture.

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Philosophy & Politics

Politics without the Shouting

Monday 2.30-4.30pm

12th January

(Bettina Lange)

1 session taster £8.00

Many people avoid politics because they believe it's about corrupt politicians and biased people shouting at each other. It does not have to be like this.

Disagreements are part of politics because politics deals with really important questions about what people value - the right opportunities for individuals, who gets what and how much, what kind of society we live in. But is it possible to disagree respectfully. Come along and get and idea how.

This is a taster session before a full course starts the following week delving further into the world of politics and philosophy. Come along and see if its for you.

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Philosophy & Politics

Political Philosophy: Are'left wing' and 'right wing' still relevant in politics now?

Mondays 2.30-4.30pm

Starts 26th January

16th February is a Holiday

(Bettina Lange)

8 week course £72.00

In modern democracies 'left wing' and 'right wing' have been used to characterise political orientations. The reality has probably always been more complex but has certainly become more complex since the early 1980's. Green parties for example have been in coalition governments with conservative as well as social democratic parties, and modern parties often categorised as 'far right' often do not endorse conservative social values e.g on sexual orientation but do endorse policies more usually associated with the political left e.g redistribution of wealth towards the less well off.

This course is an opportunity for you to consider the usefulness of 'left' and 'right' with the help of political theorists and to increase your confidence in debates about core values including democracy. We will consider the following: Political orientations usually classed as left wing (socialism, social democracy, anarchism) and those usually classed as right wing (conservatism, nationalism, fascism and libertarianism); the extent to which political populism means left and right wing are no longer useful; and the argument that the right wants power in the hands of a few and the left wants power dispersed across society.

NOTTINGHAM MECHANICS INSTITUTE
3 NORTH SHERWOOD STREET
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Leisure Learning at the Institute

Photography

DSLR Photography for Beginners

Wednesdays 10.30 -12.30pm
Starts 25th February
(Max Astill)

6 week course £54.00

Do you Your own a digital camera but rely on 'Auto' mode?
Ready to Understand what all those dials and buttons really do?

Join our hands on 6 week course designed for complete beginners who want to move beyond point and shoot, and start capturing photos with confidence.

Week 1 - Getting to know your camera - menus, modes and settings
Week 2 - Create Stunning background blur and sharp landscapes
Week 3 - Shutter Speed - Freeze motion or paint with light
Week 4 - ISO & Exposure - master light and avoid grainy shots
Week 5 -Program (P) & Manual (M) Modes
Week 6 - Review & Final Showcase

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Arts & Crafts- Drawing

Wednesdays 10.30-12.30pm
Starts 21st January
(Max Astill)

3 week course £27.00

Ever wished you could draw but don't know where to start?
Join our 3- week beginner's drawing course and discover the joy of puting pencil to paper:
Over three fun, relaxed sessions, you'll learn the fundamentals of drawing, including the following; 1 - Line shape and proportion, 2 Shading and Light, 3 Perspective and Composition, 4 SImple techniques to build your confidence and creativity.
No experience needed - just curiosity and enthusiasm!
You will leave the course with a solid foundation, a sketchbook full of progress, and the skills to keep developing your art.

Things to bring along

1. A small set of sketching pencils
2. Putty Rubber
3. A Sketchbook

If you would like to purchase any of these from Max please let us know when booking.

Sketching pencil set £3.50
Putty Rubber £2.00 each
A5 Sketchbook £5.00
Full set £10.00

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Arts & Crafts

Wednesdays 2.00-4.00pm
Starts 25th February
(Max Astill)

6 Week Course £70.00

Join Max for a brand NEW Block in Arts & Crafts this Winter!
Come along to our six week Arts & Crafts sessions, where you can unleash your inner creativity, try something new, and enjoy some well deserved 'me time'. Each week we will explore a different project or technique - from painting and collage to drawing, mixed media & more. Whether you a complete beginner or an experienced maker all are warmly welcome.
All materials are provided each week unless stated below so you only need to bring yourself!

A summary of the classes is below:
Painting flowers in acrylics
Glass Painting - Bring along a clear glass item (wine glass/vase) that you would like to paint.
Neurographic art using watercolours and coloured pencils
Drawing with oil pastels
Spring/Easter wreaths
Card making using mixed media (you will make 4 cards to take home with you)

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Please join us for our Seasonal Day Talks for Winter 2026

Leisure Learning at the Institute

DAY PROGRAMME

History

Lincoln - A History

10.30-11.30am

Thursday 12th March

(Dr Mark Barnard)

DAY TALK £5.00 Per Person

Lindum Colonia or Lincoln is arguably one of England's oldest and finest Medieval cities. Today it is perhaps more well known for its former popular Christmas Market but it has a suprisingly varied past.

Why were Romans interested in settling here and what is the Viking Link? Why were two medieval battles fought here (1141 and 1217) and how did the Jews fare in the City?

What are the stories behind the Lincoln Imp - still sitting within the Cathedral of Edward I's beloved queen, Eleanor of Castille?

Join Dr Barnard to also discover what happened here during the English Civil War and the 'Lincoln Blitz' of 1941

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DAY PROGRAMME

History

The Mary Rose - One Moment in Time
Tuesday 10.30-11.30am
24th February
(Kathy Powis)

DAY TALK £5.00

Come along and listen as Kathy tells you the story of Henry VIII's flagship, from her construction in 1510, actively service fighting the French, her sinking in 1545, the dramatic rising from the Solent in 1982 up to the present day.
Today in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard the Mary Rose is Housed in a state of the art museum surrounded by 19,000 artifacts - the worlds best depiction of Tudor life.

Kathy is a Gold Patron of the Mary Rose Trust so has lots of knowledge to share with you all, so come along and learn all about the Mary Rose.

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DAY PROGRAMME

History

Jesse Boot

The story of the Boots Company

10.30-11.30am

Tuesday 17th March

(Chris Weir)

DAY TALK £5.00 Per Person

The story of Boots is remarkable. It started when a John Boot moved to Nottingham and founded a tiny herbalist shop in Hockley. He married and the couple began a family. Sadly John died but the son Jesse took over the business at the age of 21 years and eventually Boots would become a company known all over the world. Local Historian Chris Weir recounts this story and reveals how Jesse and his wife Florance built up the business and supported all kinds of philanthropic causes, the creation of open spaces and the early years of the University of Nottingham.

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DAY PROGRAMME

Literature

The Wind in the Willows

Tuesday 10.30-3.30 pm

10th February

(Dr John Florance)

1 DAY COURSE £20.00

Kenneth Grahame's book has never been out of prints since it was published in 1908. It is generally considered to be a classic children's novel. It is that but Wind in the Willows is a much deeper and more substantial book than this designation suggests. Over the course of the day we will consider a number of topics including Kenneth Grahame's life and character; early 20th century fascination with paganism and nature; how the novel reflects (and reflects upon) the contemporary class structure of England; what the Wild Wood and the Riverbank represent and much more.

It would be helpful if you read or re-read the book before attending but don't worry if you can't because i'll be providing copies of the extracts we'll be looking at in more detail.

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SPRING 2026

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Nottingham Mechanics Institute
Members Interest Groups

- Small Informal Groups for you to come along and join in: (small charges applicable on some clubs)
- Film Afternoon: Mondays 1.30 pm
- Gardening Club: Tuesdays Fortnightly 10.00-12.00 (George Hallam)
- Stitch Club: Mondays Fortnightly 1.30-3.30 pm
- (Clare Orger)
- Games Afternoon: Tuesdays 1.00-3.30 pm
- Music Opera Events with Robert: Fortnightly 10.30 am
- Short Mat Bowls: Thursdays 1.30 pm
- Table Tennis: Fridays 1.30 pm
- Curtius Salon Talks: Fridays 11 am

These are members groups.
Please see Wes or Ruth
regarding this or membership to
Nottingham Mechanics Institute.

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