

Borderlines

September 2014



The magazine of Llandrindod Wells and District U3A

Introduction from the editor

Hello and welcome to the September edition of Borderlines. I'm still looking for some help so if anyone fancies a challenge....

I think it is important to remember that U3A is part of the wider community of Llandrindod, and this summer has seen a lot of involvement. You will find in this issue of Borderlines details of the fete for the Hospital League of Friends and also those for the Repair Café, both of which have U3A members involved. In addition, the Singing for Fun Group entertained at the Victorian Festival (loyally supported by a small U3A contingent) and the Recorder Group will be playing at the Rock Park on Saturday Oct 12th.

Lots of Interest Group trips in this issue to whet your appetite – why not celebrate autumn by joining one?

With best wishes, Margaret

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Front cover: the monument above the lake at Stourhead by Tony Hodges. Taken on the Probus/U3A holiday.

The Silver Birch: text by Clive Griffiths, photo Barbara Warner

The inclusion of a small tree or two in a garden design generally, is to be encouraged. When I set out over twenty years ago to create a woodland atmosphere in my modest grounds I had a well-known nursery search the land far and wide for the multi-stemmed Himalayan Birch (*Betula jacquemontii*). Gradually, I acquired a small number of them. Most were twin stemmed, one had five stems. I planted them in an informal layout inside the front roadside boundary of my property. When I bought them they were about twelve feet in height reddish-brown stemmed, whippy saplings, needing staking until their roots got established in the soil.

Eventually, this species of Birch grows into a tall, slim and graceful white barked tree - stunningly beautiful. The lower branches are best removed (in my experience) as the tree increases in growth. The laterals will still be slim in the early years, enabling the sawn wounds to heal over quickly, thus avoiding large ugly scars should their removal be left until the tree is older. This 'pruning' lifts the canopy giving one a clear view to admire the bright white trunks. A characteristic feature of Birches is their peeling bark. The paper thin bark of the Himalayan species on the inside is coloured a pale gold and is a delight to see the glow when caught back - lit by the lowering sun.

When the tree tops have been elevated as described there is an opportunity for under-planting. The dappled daylight filtering through the tracery of spaces from above is sufficient

illumination to support ground level herbaceous plants that thrive in light shade.

I estimate the trees to be over thirty five feet in height now and strong enough to support nest boxes loosely strapped to the trunks. One of the boxes this year was occupied by a family of Blue tits. The adults were kept busy feeding their offspring through late May and the early days of June when they successfully vacated the nest box.

Birches are a rich insect food resource for birds. Over three hundred species of insects have been recorded inhabiting these trees.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge in one of his poems describes the Silver Birch as - 'the most beautiful of forest trees, the Lady of the woods'. Other British Romantic poets have been inspired by the Birch tree.

NB The quotation above is from the poem - 'The Picture or the Lover's Resolution'.



Photo Group Visit To Westonbury Mill Water Gardens.

The Digital Photography Group decided to have a trip to Westonbury Mill Water Gardens, near Pembridge, in July. The forecast was not very good, so an alternative was arranged in case the weather forecast came true. However, the weather seemed half decent when the group met at the lake, and so it was decided to go to the Water Gardens.

The Water Gardens have been created by Richard Pim over the last 14 years. The 3½ acres of garden incorporate a variety of areas intertwined by the stream, the old mill leat and a small lake, giving a variety of wet and dry habitats for plants, with interesting paths threading through the gardens.



A feature of the gardens are a number of follies – the tower run by a water wheel taking water up to a tank, which when up to level discharges through a gargoyle, a dome made of 5,000 wine bottles of various colours incorporating a small pond, and a water driven giant cuckoo clock in a wooden observation tower.

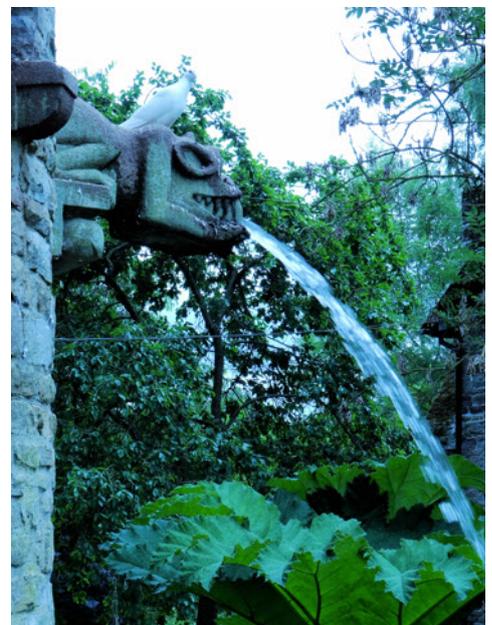
The planting varies with the wet and dry conditions through the garden, presenting interesting aspects as one wanders round the garden, and for the group, interesting photo opportunities.

The weather held for us and, after a quick cup of coffee, we were able to spend an interesting time wandering through the gardens – whether we got any decent photographs yet remains to be seen!



After our wander around the garden, we were able to have lunch in the garden café. After lunch the weather was changing, so after a few more photos we left for home.

**Words and pictures by
Tony Hodges**



Church Visiting Group – July Visit

For their July visit the group went to St Margaret's Church, St Margarets in Herefordshire.



This is quite a gem of a church. Of Norman Origin, the church's main feature of interest is a medieval rood screen (circa 1520) carved in oak which survived the reformation – presumably because of its isolated position. The carving is very intricate as may be seen from the photograph. The many bosses are all individual designs although some have been replaced – the newer bosses are darker with almost celtic designs. Above the rood screen is a gallery approached by stairs from the chancel.



The west window was designed and made by the renowned stained glass artist, Archibald Davies.

A striking feature of the church is several 18th century wall texts including over the door - 'Go and Sin No More' - which I hope our members noted before leaving!

On our way back, the group paused at Tunstone to visit St Mary Magdalene's Church.

A feature in this church was two tombstones mounted on the walls of the nave for protection. The more ornate of these is engraved with a medieval couple, Thomas ap Harry (in his armour) and Agnes his wife, with their dog at their feet.

After our quick visit to St Mary Magdalene's Church, the group hastened to the Pandy Inn, Dorstone, for much needed sustenance on this hot day.

Our thanks must go to Robert Bevan for arranging everything and giving us interesting and informative talks on each church that we visit.

Words and pictures by Tony Hodges



Afternoon Tea at Hafod y Bryn

U3A members came out in force to support the Afternoon Tea organised by the Llandrindod Hospital League of friends. It was hosted by Joy and Ewart Hilsden and the Recorder Group and Singing for Fun group provided entertainment. Llandrindod U3A also ran a plant stall and a horticultural quiz. The fete raised over £1600 and everyone had a great time.



Photos Fay Ramsden. Text Margaret Mason

If you missed this...The Recorder Group are playing Under the Canopy at Rock Park on Saturday Oct 11



Llandrindod Repair cafe

See opposite page for text



Jill and Jacqui brandish their newly sharpened axes and Margaret and Barbara learn it is possible to repair a zip.

The Film Club

The planned programme for the forthcoming "winter" is:

September: "Goldfinger"; October: " Carry-on Nurse"; November: "West Side Story"; December "Dr Zhivago" (a long film, but it will be a Christmas special with interval, mince-pies etc.); January: "Madness Of King George"; February "The Verdict"; March "On Golden Pond"; April "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning."

This is subject to acquiring the DVDs easily.

We plan to acquire a new sound system in the autumn (subject to full committee approval) which can also be used by other groups. This will probably be with a built-in DVD player.

All meetings will be Friday afternoon at 2.15, 3rd of the month, starting September 19th, at the Dance Centre in Arlais Road.

Roger Malvern

Llandrindod Repair Cafe needs you!

Do you know how to mend things? Would you like to join our team of volunteer fixers and share your valuable skills? Llandrindod Repair Café would love to hear from you!

How to contact Llandrindod Repair Café:

phone 01597 829203

email repaircafe@transitionllandrindod.org.uk

web www.transitionllandrindod.org.uk

The next Llandrindod Repair Cafe will be on 13th Sept at the Rock Park Canopy
Rock Park coffee house & tea room open from 10 a.m.

Anything portable can be considered for repair:

Electrical items including computers and vacuum cleaners; bicycles; clothes; sewing and darning; furniture and any small items in need of mending, sharpening or gluing!

Learn how to mend your broken items with help from local volunteer fixers.

Enjoy giving your things a new lease of life.

Help reduce waste and stop things going to landfill.

Make new friends in a relaxed atmosphere.

Information Martina Holmes, photos on opposite page Lis Davies



History Group trip to St Fagans

Photos Richard Hughes, text Margaret Mason



Penny tries her hand at hawking.

Mary Davies organised a fantastic trip to St Fagans Folk Museum for the History Group. Once there, we split up and did our own thing (which is why I have only got photos of a few). After satiating ourselves with buildings and activities , we all reunited for a lovely meal at Peterstone Court.

The Garden Visiting Group goes to Gregynog

Photos: Fay Ramsden

