

Borderlines

September 2015



The Magazine of Llandrindod and District U3A



Introduction from the editor.

We always have more outings in the summer, so lots for you to look at in this issue. My thanks to the contributors- people are very generous with their time and expertise to ensure the magazine reflects the activities of the U3A, and I am very grateful. Thanks also to the committee, who have, as Bob says in his report, allowed (and paid for) extra pages in this issue. Profuse apologies to the Walking Group, who sent me a lavishly illustrated account of a walk at Llanafan Fawr which for technical reasons I couldn't use. (It is more likely to be sheer technical incompetence on my part - I simply couldn't get my desktop publishing programme to accept it. I hope to have cracked the problem so it can be included in the December edition.)

With best wishes, Margaret

New Members.

The following new members have joined U3A. We hope you enjoy your time with us,

June: Karen Le Roux and Jackie Smith

July: Julia and Kelvin Evans and Kenneth Goodall

Useful Contact numbers

Bob Atkins, Chairman: 01597 823292

Berwyn Woolnough, Vice Chairman: 01597 823217

Mary Russell, Treasurer: 01597 823319

Karen Latham, Secretary: 01597 824222 karen@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

Helen Wyton, Programme Secretary: 01597 851677

Martha Wooldridge, Interest Group Co-ordinator: 01597 829252

Barbara Warner, Web Editor: 01597 825592 barbara@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

Margaret Mason, Borderlines Editor: 01597 825365 margaret@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

Cover photograph by Mary Davies. The Singing For Fun group appeared at the Llandrindod Wells 1940's weekend. Our photo shows the three evacuees: Bob Atkins, Joy Hilsden and Humphrey Morgan. I hope to have more pictures in the December edition.

Chairman's Report

How, I wonder, do you measure success, either as an individual or collectively with others?

It could be when you learn of a grandchild's O level results or maybe if you were in business, how much was paid to shareholders in dividends.

Not so with the U3A, in particular our branch here in Llandrindod Wells. The fact that you have the latest copy of Borderlines in your hands is indeed indicative of success.

So much material was received for this copy that our Editor Margaret Mason requested additional pages which your committee duly approved.

There is, I feel, a real buzz about what we are doing, new groups are emerging and existing ones go from strength to strength. More are enquiring about us and many are joining.

Why is this so? Clearly it is through the interest, support and involvement of you the member, your committee and the interest group leaders.

Ten years ago a small group of likeminded people formed, what was known then, as the Llandrindod Wells Lecture Group which eventually paved the way to setting up this U3A group. The number of members then was 30, we are currently declaring 223.

How do we measure success?

Bob Atkins
Chairman

Don't miss:

Mid Wales U3A Network Quiz. 10th October, 2pm Metropole Hotel. £5 to include tea. Please let Patsy Godfrey (822512) know if you are coming to support our teams. They need to bake enough scones! Also we could really do with some reserves, so if you are willing to be called upon please let Margaret Mason know(details p 2).

Our first ever **Mini Pantomime!** To be held after the Christmas meeting. Don't say we didn't tell you - oh yes we did!

The opportunity of a lifetime! After 5 years as **Web Editor**, Barbara Warner has decided to call it a day. She isn't going until December, so there is time for you to think about it and possibly have a go before making up your mind. Please contact Barbara if you are interested(details p 2).

The Other Hampton Court

Text and photographs by Ann and Humphrey Morgan



In July the Welsh History Group visited Hampton Court, near Leominster. We met, as usual, at the Thomas Shop where Mary gave us a very interesting talk on the history of Hampton Court and its occupants.

Originally a fortified manor house built in 1427 it was bought in 1810 by Richard Arkwright, the only son of Sir Richard Arkwright, the inventor of cotton-spinning machines and the factory system.

Sir Richard died in 1792 and from that date his son Richard, who was also very wealthy, began purchasing landed estates across England - the blockades of the Napoleonic Wars making agriculture a very good investment at that time. Richard's six sons were each allocated an estate in which to live and which they inherited on Richard's death in 1843. In 1814 Richard's fourth son, John, asked to live at (and therefore inherited) Hampton Court he loved it.

In 1830 John married Sarah Hoskyns (twenty-three years his junior) from Harewood House, near Ross-on-Wye, and they happily produced twelve children. The house that we see today is largely the one John created, through alterations and additions, to accommodate his ever growing brood. John died in 1858 and his eldest son, Johnny, inherited the estate where he had been brought up – he considered himself a true Herefordshire man.

After Johnny died in 1905 his eldest son, Jack, inherited but was forced to sell for financial reasons in 1912. The house and estate then passed through various owners, suffering thoughtless dismantling and neglect. In 1994, it was bought by a wealthy American who refurbished the interior, imported his idea of mediaeval artefacts, replanted the gardens, added the water features and built an imposing entrance gateway through which we drove towards our much anticipated lunch in the Green Room.

After lunch we had a guided tour of the house, which was great fun as our guide pointed out the discrepancies in provenance of the artefacts. The Great Hall and corridors are furnished with suits of armour from various sources – some genuine, some Victorian and others a combination of both. The displays of guns, daggers and swords on the walls are of British, Indian and continental origin – surprisingly effective, and probably most visitors wouldn't know until told. The spiked centrepiece hanging from the ceiling, a very 'mediaeval' looking weapon is, in fact a device to hit an intruder mounted on an elephant - very useful in Herefordshire!



The gardens are the result of one of the most ambitious modern refurbishment projects. The core of the garden is surrounded by Victorian walls, the area being divided by canals, islands and pleached trees. There is also a kitchen garden in which is grown organic vegetables for use in the Orangery restaurant. There is a yew maze in the park with a mock Gothic tower at its centre. We reached the tower relatively easily but found it surprisingly difficult to escape!

Thank you, Mary, for a most interesting day.



Some of the History group -several went home before the photo call.

L-R

Standing: Alwyn, Richard, Judy, Sheila, Terry, Margaret, Ann, Mary.

Seated: Gwyneth, Pat, Ann, Humph and Delphine.

Retiree Mental Fitness Evaluation Contributed by Ann Wheatley

There are 4 test questions. Don't miss one.

Giraffe Test

1... How do you put a giraffe into a refrigerator? Stop and think about it and decide on your answer.

The correct answer : Open the refrigerator, put in the giraffe, and close the door. This question tests whether you tend to do simple things in an overly complicated way.

Elephant Test

2... How do you put an elephant into a refrigerator?

Did you say, Open the refrigerator, put in the elephant, and close the refrigerator? Wrong Answer.

Correct Answer: Open the refrigerator, take out the giraffe, put in the elephant and close the door. This tests your ability to think through the repercussions of your previous actions.

Lion King Test

3. The Lion King is hosting an Animal Conference. All the animals attend ... except one. Which animal does not attend?

Correct Answer: The Elephant. The elephant is in the refrigerator. You just put him in there. This tests your memory.

Okay, even if you did not answer the first three questions correctly, you still have one more chance to show your true abilities.

Crocodile Test

4... There is a river you must cross but it is used by crocodiles, and you do not have a boat. How do you manage it?

Correct Answer: You jump into the river and swim across. Haven't you been listening? All the crocodiles are attending the Animal Conference. This tests whether you learn quickly from your mistakes.

According to Anderson Consulting Worldwide , around 90% of the Retirees they tested got all questions wrong, but many preschoolers got several correct answers. Anderson Consulting says this conclusively proves the theory that most Retirees do not have the brains of a four-year-old.

The Garden Visiting Group goes to:

(photos by Fay Ramsden)



Little Llanavon, Dorstone, Herefordshire Little Llanavon, Dorstone, Herefordshire (above).



Nant y Bedd (above) and David Austin Roses (below)



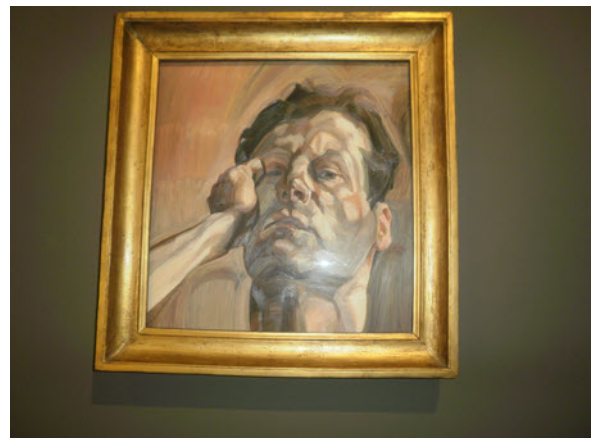
MANCHESTER ART GALLERY by Sheila Roberts



The History of Art Group visited The Whitworth Gallery which recently reopened after a £15 million redevelopment. The building has a handsome Edwardian façade and internal walls that contain reclaimed bricks reflecting its industrial past. This contrasts with a modern interior incorporating large glazed panels and shining metallic supporting structures, which accommodate an eclectic mix of exhibition styles and periods, although the art is predominately modern.

The gallery's eponymous, industrialist benefactor features in the portrait collection, reflecting those associated with the Whitworth's history, organised salon style. These hang alongside more famous paintings, such as Francis Bacon's portrait of his friend and rival Lucian Freud (shown here), an intimate portrayal reflecting an intense and lengthy friendship,

Works by Bridget Riley and Peter Philips are included in open plan exhibition spaces created in the 1960's, which was a transformational decade for the Whitworth, reflecting a vibrant and politically explosive period from a uniquely British artistic perspective.



The Whitworth is also home to a collection of internationally renowned British watercolours, including paintings by outstanding exponents of the medium, including J.M.W. Turner and William Blake, bequeathed to the gallery by another wealthy industrialist, John, Edward Taylor.

There are other exhibitions of a more conceptual nature, such as Sarah Lucas's work challenging gender stereotyping. Cai Guo-Qiang's reworking of classical Chinese ink paintings of mountains executed in gun-powder, explores a paradox that a scene of such severe stillness and calm is created by such violent means. Cornelia Parker concentrates on the dematerialisation of matter by suspending remnants from an exploded shed and its typical contents arranged in a cubist way to challenge our view of the world.

Textiles are also on show from the ancient to the modern. The colour green is a particular feature and as yet no single natural dyestuff will achieve green as a stable, unfading, colour. This adds to the debate on environmentalism and the use of chemicals in production processes.

There is something for everyone in and around this beautiful eco-friendly gallery and can certainly be recommended as a very enjoyable way to spend a day out.



Theatre Group

This photograph, taken a few years ago, is of the Theatre Group attending a Shakespeare workshop at The Willow Theatre, when Dr Hans Lichtenstein arranged for Phil Bowen and Sue Best to prepare us for a visit to Stratford on Avon.



We are standing in the Periwinkle Field, a traditional Hay Meadow, planted by the late Ursula Bowen, seen on the front right of this picture.
Patsy Godfrey.

Theatre Group Trip to see Othello by William Shakespeare.

Text Kathryn Hunt

Director Iqbal Khan. 2nd July 2015

Before going on my annual trip to Stratford I knew nothing about the play Othello, its plot, its actors or the director. The experience was challenging with satisfying amounts of the visually unexpected; from a boat being paddled on water which opened up on stage, to the shock of physical violence and the bloody outcomes. My stark realisation at the end, was just how little man has changed from Shakespeare's day to modern times. Still there are the jealousies, the bending of the truth, the pressures, the loves, the discriminations, the wars, intrigues and the violence, that all sadly still prevail today.

The Play

The story is as vibrant as ever. General Othello secretly marries Desdemona, a daughter of the Venetian senator Brabantio. Iago, an ensign harbouring resentment towards Othello, enlists the help of Roderigo – a frustrated suitor of Desdemona – begins plotting against Othello. Iago and Roderigo wake Brabantio in the middle of the night with the news that his daughter has eloped. When Brabantio learns that she married Othello of her own accord, he disowns his daughter.

Othello is immediately ordered to the Venetian colony of Cyprus to repel a threatened Turkish invasion. Desdemona sails with her husband, taking with them Iago, his wife Emilia – who is also Desdemona's companion – and Lieutenant Cassio, newly promoted over Iago.

Once in Cyprus, Iago plants the suspicion in Othello's mind that Desdemona has been unfaithful to him with Cassio. He engineers a drunken brawl for which Cassio is blamed and dismissed by Othello. Desdemona intercedes on Cassio's behalf but her pleas to Othello only serve to convince him that Cassio is her lover.

Iago acquires a treasured handkerchief from Desdemona (given to her by Othello) and uses it as 'proof' of the affair. Maddened by jealousy, Othello's judgement begins to cloud and facts become distorted; with fatal consequences. Desdemona is then killed by Othello, Emilia - Iago's wife is killed by her own husband – and Othello takes his own life when the truth emerges.

Main characters:

Iago, aide to Othello, was played cleverly, by Lucian Msamati with a bigger part in the plot than Othello. He brought ironic humour, a perverted view of jealousy, intermingled with a hardened self justification for his warped imagination.

Othello, a military General (Hugh Quarshie) is still perceived as the outsider in the play because of his dark skin (a Moor) with all the racial intolerances that come with it, even though in this particular production he is surrounded by different skin colours.

Desdemona, daughter of Brabantio (Joanna Vanderham) is strong minded in her love and faithfulness to Othello perhaps a little naively?

Emilia, wife of Iago (Ayesha Dhaker) is unable to comply with her husbands manipulations and or even obey him especially when she knows the truth of the betrayal plot.

Cassio, lieutenant to Othello (Jacob Fortune-Lloyd) is manipulated by Iago and flirts with Desdemona, continuing to hold feelings for her.

Roderigo, a Venetian gentleman (James Corrigan) is the hapless 'doer' of Iago's will.

Brabantio, Desdemna's father (Brian Protheroe) is a man of power, who hates Othello for eloping with his daughter. A timeless response?

Cinema Group

Following various consultations, the votes are now in for the film choices of the forthcoming season, and we will be kicking-off with "Chariots of Fire", the top choice of the film club committee, who have selected the programme from all the titles suggested to us by U3A members. As at last season, we will be meeting at the Dance Centre in Arlais road on the 3rd Friday of the month. Doors open at 2.15 pm, and the show starts at 2.30 pm. As usual, there is a contribution of £3.00 towards room hire and coffee. Please also note the remaining choices for 2015/6:

16 October: **The Godfather**

20 November: **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid**

18 December: **Oliver** (Special for Christmas, with Mince Pies and/or ice cream).

15 January **Lawrence of Arabia**

19 February: **Chicago**

18 March: **Doctor in the House**

15 April **Cabaret**

So, hopefully see you on 18 September. If you can let me know you plan to come, it will be helpful for catering etc., BUT no problem either if you just turn up on the day.

Happy Cinema-going!

Roger Malvern 01597 823806 Mobile 07932 185373



The Art Group

By Karen Latham



Art Group

The recently formed Art Group meets on the first Tuesday of the Month starting at 10.00 and finishing 12.00 -12.30.

Venues vary depending on weather and subject matter. Recent venues have included Ashfield Community Project in Howey, a members garden and the Rock Park.

The three musts for any location, good subject matter, tea/coffee, and toilets. Check www site or ring facilitator, Karen Latham, (details p2) if you are interested in joining the group. Some materials provided for beginners until they begin to acquire their own

Experience varies with in the group and we are grateful to those members who are sharing ideas, tips and supporting others in using different materials and techniques.

The photographs speak for themselves concentration, experimentation and a lot of laughs and mutual support.