

Borderlines

Summer
2019

The Magazine of Llandrindod and District U3A



Introduction from the Editor

Welcome to the Summer 2019 edition of Borderlines.

My thanks, as always, to our contributors, and to the Committee, who have generously agreed to fund extra pages. There was a lot going on this time, with the new Committee and May Day Medley on top of the usual interest activities. Enjoy!

Best wishes, Margaret

Welcome

We would like to welcome the following new members.

March

Nick Brookes; Anna Knowles; Michael Pace; Mike and Penni Stevenson; David and Jo Wright

April

Susan Collins; Brian and Jenny Minney; Rachel Palmer

May

Helen Jones

We hope you enjoy your time with Llandrindod and District U3A

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Cover Photo: Llysdinam Gardens, Newbridge on Wye : John Mason



The Singing for Fun Group

17 singers entertained the villagers at Howey annual afternoon tea. It had been raining but the sun came out as we sang "The Sun Has Got His Hat On" . Sue Turner accompanied on the keyboard. A delicious afternoon tea followed with a written quiz about cakes. Our Brexit song "We Can Work It Out " was a highlight of the show. People enjoyed our rousing version of "Jamaica Farewell " accompanied by drum and maracas . Yellow Submarine included a few kazoos. A fun , excellent performance enjoyed by both singers and audience.

Jane Stevens

Help Wanted - National Cycle Museum

The UK's National Cycle Museum , based in the Automobile Palace needs volunteer reception helpers to greet visitors from all over the world.

A knowledge of cycles is not necessary. Help on weekdays but especially on Saturdays , would be very much appreciated

Please contact Freda , trustee on 01597 825531 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or call in the museum on those days for a chat and look around.

The museum is only open 3 days a week , throughout the year, but I would very much like to open more days especially May - October



Meet your new Committee



Back row: Chris Thomas (Membership Secretary), Alun Thomas (Treasurer), Mary Davies (Joint Programme Secretary), Nick Talbott (Vice Chairman and Webmaster), and Bob Shorter (Member).

Front row: Kathie Richards-Jones (Secretary), Jan Willsher (Joint Programme Secretary) and Roger Malvern (Chairman).

Joint venture between Creative Writing and Art

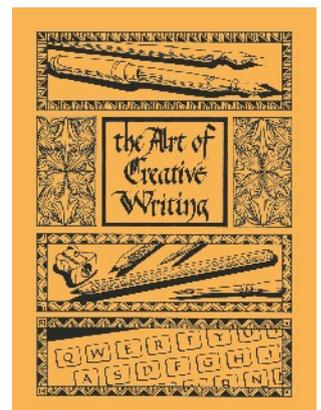
Readers of *Borderlines* may already have heard about the anthology created by these two interest groups. The idea originated in Creative Writing to mark the last five years, and members nominated pieces of writing that they had particularly appreciated at the time.

The resulting 34 stories were then shown to the Art group with an invitation to illustrate any topic, or particular story they wished and this resulted in 23 top quality illustrations.

Thanks go to Kirsty Williams, AM, Welsh Assembly Minister for Education, for contributing £250 in grant funding towards the publishing costs. The fund was created to support charities with education aims and is discretionary .

The book costs £5 and would make a perfect small gift for friends or family. It was launched at the Mayday Medley event, immediately eliciting 59 copies sold, and was then presented to the main May meeting.

If you would like a copy please contact either Kathie Richards-Jones (kathieerjones@btinternet.com) or Cheryl Davies (cheryldavies@clara.co.uk). All profits will go to the Welsh Air Ambulance.



A focus on your new Committee

It is a privilege to be elected as Chairman of such a large, active and growing organisation as Llandrindod Wells U3A. I have been involved for quite a few years, having run the Film Group for most of that time, and also have been Membership Secretary in the last year. Also, I do believe I am the first Chairman who is a “spouse” (oh, I do hate that word!) of a previous Chairman, because my wife Jane previously took on that role for two years a few years ago. At least I know what sort of pressures there are for the chairman of this vibrant organisation, and I can also turn to Jane for advice and guidance.

Our U3A is an amazing organisation. With over 30 groups covering entertainment (films, visits to Stratford-upon-Avon, and even the odd pantomime), historical groups (Landscape, Welsh, Military for instance) and a host of lunching and singing groups. The recent May Medley event at the Pavilion showed what can be done, as indeed does the recent publication “The Art of Creative Writing” anthology, which is a collaboration of the Creative Writing and Art groups. If you have not got a copy, at least borrow one to read the first short story, about a fictional person joining U3A. It is exactly what Llandrindod U3A is all about.

The next 12 months will bring, I am sure, many challenges. We are growing at an exceptional rate with some 70 members joining last year. The more members we have, the greater influence we can bring to bear on any of the “younger generation”, who think that when you retire, you are well past it. How wrong they are.

One last point to all our members: Never lose your sense of humour. Keep smiling, and keep your brain ticking over with fresh challenges, and, remember, you are among friends.

Roger Malvern

Grace Hope French, survivor of the Lusitania.

This is a personal plea! At the last meeting a question was asked about Grace Hope French, who survived the sinking of the Lusitania. There is a considerable amount of information about her online, which I would be happy to share with the questioner. If anyone knows her, please pass this information on. Thank you. Margaret

As a taster, Grace very nearly did not sail on the Lusitania at all. She was returning to the UK after visiting family in America and had originally booked her passage on the Anchor Liner, Cameronia. This was requisitioned by the British Admiralty and her passengers transferred to the Lusitania. They were the last to board, and Grace later said she was the very last passenger to go on board the Lusitania.

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A hugely successful and enjoyable event by Cheryl Davies

We can't thank Penny Everett and Sue Turner enough for their commitment and sheer hard work to make the day as excellent as it was. Their attention to detail was perfect. They were assisted by a happy band of helpers on the day. Too numerous to mention, but special thanks should be given to Jan Swindale in her role as town crier.

Among the large audience we were pleased to welcome members from a number of other Welsh U3As.

The day started off with a talk from Iolo Williams, the renowned naturalist and conservationist. He was on top form and had us all laughing at his colourful anecdotes. A gifted speaker, he managed to get his messages across in a delightful manner.

And he stayed for the excellent lunch, provided by 'Fingers and Forks'. The food was excellent and the caterers worked very hard to make sure that there was plenty for all.



Officially welcomed in English by Penny Everett (left) and in Welsh by Gareth Davies.

Below: Iolo Williams, the well-known TV presenter gave an insight to his life and work in today's world, which is becoming increasingly aware of the effects of climate change.





After lunch we were treated to a very interesting talk from Steve Hughson, the Chief Executive of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society (see above). Steve was clearly very proud of his work for the organisation and he gave us some valuable insights into their future plans.



The Willow Globe Theatre Company performed some short readings and scenes from Shakespeare.

Winners of the raffle held in aid of Welsh Air Ambulance. Prizes included the beautiful quilt completed by Jane Malvern.



The day was rounded off by a wonderful performance from the Swansea U3A Ukelele Band. This talented group played a rousing set of numbers, to which we could sing along. Their leader also kept us amused with a string of jokes in between each number and their enjoyment was infectious.



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The Art History Group visits the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

Organised by Jill Mouncer, thirteen of us took the “freebie” train to Swansea to visit the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery. Our train journey was enlivened by a session of “putting the world to rights” and a picnic lunch en route.

The Gallery is close by the Station and we arrived in good time for our guided tour which commenced in the Atrium where the space was occupied by one exhibit “End of Empire” by Yinka Shonibare which was on loan. This consisted of a steel framed see-saw which silently went up and down in slow motion. Seated at either end were figures dressed in highly coloured tailcoats and trousers inspired by the colours of Africa dyed in batik patterns. Each figure had a head made from a globe atlas, differently coloured to represent the world as it was before and after WWI.

Richard, our guide then led us to the upper galleries where a broad spectrum of the visual arts from the original bequest of Richard Glynn Vivian (1835-1910), including Old Masters as well as an international collection of porcelain and Swansea china. There was just time to take the lift up for a “behind the scenes” tour of the artworks stored in air conditioned comfort awaiting their turn to be on display. A convivial and stimulating journey of discovery for us all.

Glynn Vivian had a privileged upbringing and, as well as their properties in Swansea, the family had a house in Belgravia where they went for the Season. After an event which ostracised him from London Society, Richard Glynn was encouraged by his mother to travel and it was during his travels that he amassed his collection, which includes examples of his own artistic talent in sketches, paintings and photography.

The creation of the Gallery was made possible when, in 1905 RGV offered his collection to the City with an endowment of £10,000 and the donor laid the foundation stone himself in 1909; the Gallery being formally opened in 1911 after his death. 102 years later it benefited from a £6 million refurbishment. The former Chair of the Arts Council of Wales said “The Glynn Vivian is a major facility and the only purpose built art gallery in Wales that is still open”.

Penny Everett

The Art History Group



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Wales Region

Short Story Competition 2019

English Language

An opportunity to share your imaginative talents

Closing date 31st August 2019

Competition rules and entry details are available at

www.u3asites.co.uk/walesu3a

Stop press: Apparently several entries have been received (all from the same U3A and I have no reason to think it is us) which do not comply with the rules.

Please read the rules carefully - it would be a shame, after all that hard work, to have your entry disqualified before it even reaches the judges!

Vic Pardoe explains his work to interested members.



Photographs by :

Clive Barrett

John Mason

Humphrey Morgan



Our First Outing!

We visited Castle Bank near Howey, where Julian pointed out all the information that could be gleaned from what we had thought just a pile of old stones.



Focus on the Landscape History Group, by Clive Barrett

The idea of this new interest group was first mooted in autumn 2018, with the inaugural meeting taking place at the Royal British Legion Club, Tremont Road, on the third Thursday of January this year. Terri Couzens moved from Ludlow, where she was a member of a same named interest group there. It would be true to say that Terri brought the idea with her, it being very apt because the local area is crammed full of areas of landscape interest. The original idea was greeted with great enthusiasm, with the number signing up quickly reaching its maximum. So at the time of the third monthly meeting in March 2019, this popular group was full, with no vacancies. Terri told me that following the morning lectures, the ultimate intention was for members to get their boots on in the afternoons for field/ site meetings, but this wasn't possible at present because of the practicalities of taking a large number, and the need for the group to become settled in the morning sessions, but it was something she hoped to arrange in the future.

On the March morning which I attended Terri, the leader spoke about Bronze Age mines and quarries. She mentioned the different stones and minerals found there, including chalk which the miners had dug through to get to the flint. There were gold mines in Wales notably the North, and Cornwall, whilst successful mining of this precious metal became a status symbol. Axe heads, copper and tin were found, the latter two mixed to become bronze. Terri then supplied to her audience a printout of the "Excavations of Early Bronze Age mines in Wales". These sites included Parys Mountain on Anglesey, the Great Orme, Llandudno, and about a dozen in the Aberystwyth area, especially around Cwmystwyth. Previously tin and copper have been particularly mined in South West England notably Cornwall. The speaker showed her audience a map of the world which confirmed that there were not a lot of places where ancient tin deposits can be found. Ancient routes meant that bronze tools, weapons and jewellery were traded between Britain and other nations. Remains of boats have been found, strongly suggesting that was the means of transport used. Tracing life through the Bronze Age, the speaker described various objects found, plus the changes in customs and social practices during the period. At the time bronze was in decline, and tin wasn't used., however iron came more into use. All these changes increased because the temperatures went down and there was more rain. She described the Bronze Age civilizations of the time, and what happened when they collapsed in 1177 B.C.

Following the mid morning light refreshments the guest speaker for the morning, Vic Pardoe talked about Bronze Age artefacts. The speaker described the subject he was personally involved in as "Experimental Archaeology"----- amid some laughter he said in other words he makes things similar to those items found at Bronze Age sites. Vic also showed photos and explained where these artefacts were found.

KAREN LATHAM REPORTS ON THE CHARABANC CLUB VISITS TO

LLANGOLLEN AND CARDIFF

With the Charabanc Club's next outing to Bath pending on June 20th I have been looking back at the last two outings.



The photographs tell the story of the trip to Llangollen, and the visit to Plas Newydd House and gardens on a beautiful spring day. Lunch was overlooking the splendid river and bobbing into some interesting shops before visiting a World Heritage Site and enjoying a cream tea. The coach journey back I remember being very short with some less formal light entertainment and laughter.

Left: The exciting trip over the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, hearing the history of the canal.

The trip to Cardiff was very different with free time in the city in the morning. A few headed for the shops, others for the National Museum, and others ventured as far as the bay. It was a revelation to me that you can catch a boat from Cardiff Bay back to the centre of the city near the Castle, well done to Betty and Jan for finding that diversion.

In the afternoon we went to an exclusive music and history event for all Welsh U3A's held in the theatre of the National Museum. We enjoyed a lecture on the Davies' sisters Art Collection, a digital production of "Rhonda Rips It Up", and a talk by the head of the Department of History and Archaeology at St. Fagans, concentrating on the last building, to be opened. Dated from 1238, this was transported from Newborough in Anglesey. Then community singing at the end "The March of the Women" by Ethel Smyth.

Just my recollections but as others will have different memories.



Below: an example of the Jacobean wood carving at Plas Newydd.

Kathryn Hunt and Wendy Isles enjoy lunch in Cardiff.

A special recital by Zoe, a soprano from the Welsh National Opera.

