



Llandrindod Wells and District

Dear Llandrindod U3A Member

Welcome to our February 2021 Newsletter (number 11)

And welcome to our latest new member Michelle Thomas who joined this month.

Who would have ever imagined when I settled down to write the first Newsletter almost a year ago that I would be still be writing number 11 a year later?

Time for a good read ...

Too cold, frozen, wet and windy to be in the garden, other than to make quick checks on the delightful snowdrops, daffodils and tulips pushing their way up. The weather is the best excuse to indulge my reading habit during the day. Why does it still feel so wicked to read for pleasure during the day? I do so with increasing admiration of the local writing talent.

One of our own members who many of you will know, Barbara Warner, is now a published author under the pseudonym Hannah Nash. "Beyond the Dark Depths", published by Aspect in January, is the story of one woman's descent into and long journey out of depression. *"It is beautifully written, honest and compassionate a dark subject turned into a page turner."*

Mary Sim, another u3a member, has also been published. Grief is something that affects us all at some time in our lives: this past year probably more than ever before. This book has been written out of the author's own experience and that of many others the book is titled "Help! Someone's Died".

Fuller reviews of these two books accompany this newsletter.

I took up the recommendation from The Readers to get a copy of "The Berlin Shadow" by Jonathan Lichtenstein (book reviews accompanying Newsletter 6). I enjoyed reading the book, identifying with so many of the local places mentioned, and what an insight into a nearly "touchable" time in history and the effects down a generation on a father and son relationship.

"The Secrets of Saffron Hall", written under the pseudonym Clare Marchant, is an easy and enjoyable time slip historical novel. The book is dedicated by the author to her mother, Sheila Hollingworth, whom you may also know as she was for many years the chair of the Llandrindod Wells Art Group.

Now I feel I must reread some Iris Murdoch, as I have only just discovered that her friend and biographer Peter Conradi lives near Bleddfa where Iris spent much of the last period of her life. I am not sure I could tackle Peter Conradi's 700 page biography of Iris Murdoch but his more modest sized book about the Welsh Marches "At the Bright Hem of God" is, I am told, a delightful read.

This month's welcome contribution from our own talented writing group is the result of a challenge. The Creative Writing groups monthly topic was "At the end of the pier", but took some time out to respond to an additional little challenge – to rewrite any nursery rhyme of their choice without using the letter E! Some of the results are attached. I challenge you all to have a go yourself! Do send us your own works!

Llandrindod Wells and District u3a Annual General Meeting

It is clear that in the current national emergency, even with the positive progress on first vaccinations, we will not be meeting together in the next couple of months. Our AGM, usually held in March, will be postponed until June 14th, when hopefully many of the members will also have received their second vaccinations. Postponing the AGM is allowed under our constitution "in exceptional circumstances" I can think of no more exceptional circumstances than the one we are living through.

You will receive details of the AGM closer to the time. The existing committee will stay in place until the AGM.

Your committee meets via Zoom every month and it is surprising how much u3a business there is to conduct. We have all learnt new skills: IT related, dealing with the Charity Commission, HMRC (gift aid rebate – now received £331.08) Head Office requirements, answering correspondence, submitting surveys, updating information on the membership, Third Age Matters (TAM), liaising with speakers, ... The list goes on and we have worked together as a team sharing responsibilities and assisting and supporting each other. My thanks go not only to the committee but to past committee members always willing to advise and help if needed and those interest group leaders and members who come forward and contribute to Newsletters, and the website. Please don't stop!

We are always looking for new committee members and would welcome individuals coming forward. It is always easier to replace committee members on a rolling basis rather than find at the end of a three year period that the committee who have served their time leaves en bloc. If you wish to propose a member to join the committee or join the committee yourself the relevant nomination forms will be available soon in the Documents section of the website.

The AGM is also an opportunity for amendments to our Constitution, a copy of which can be found [on the website](#). This was so well written when the Llandrindod and District u3a was established it has only been amended on one occasion.

Please send any committee nominations or any suggestions for amendments or additions to the Constitution to the Secretary [Kathie Richard-Jones](#) by Friday 21st May.

u3a Subscriptions

Your annual subscription become due in March. The membership fee will remain at £25.00 for the year. If you pay by standing order, then you do not need to take any action as your payment should be made for you by your bank. If you usually pay by cheque or cash at the main meeting please post a cheque made payable to "Llandrindod Wells and District u3a" to

Mrs Jan Willsher, Treasurer
Tyr-nant,
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Past members who have left or did not pay their subscriptions in 2020 have been removed from our membership database to comply with data protection requirements. Any individual who has left and may want to rejoin will need to fill in a new members application form. These can be found with the guidance notes [on the website](#) or can be obtained in hard copy from the Membership Secretary [Janice Horne](#).

u3a online events: Wellbeing in Nature

It is not often that the National u3a magazine Third Age Matters (TAM) arrives just at the right time to be able to recommend an interactive talk with one of the National Subject Advisors. Wellbeing in Nature an online event is taking place on 25th February and the 11th March 2-3pm Free.

To book this event or find out about other online events go to <https://u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

Aberystwyth u3a online talks

A full list of past and future talks can be found on the [Aberystwyth u3a website](#). Forthcoming talks include:

- February 16th: Nigel Humphreys on "Miss Daisy's Diary 1916-1918; recording meetings with Rasputin, Lenin and the outbreak of the Russian Revolution" - extracted from the diary edited by local artist Muriel Delahaye.
- February 23rd: Chris Simpson on "Coastal Slumping around Aberystwyth"
- March 2nd: Nigel Humphreys on "The Paintings of Caspar David Friedrich within the context of the Romantic Movement"
- March 9th: Fred Long on "Being an Aberystwyth Coastguard volunteer"
- March 16th: Elizabeth Darlington on "A mystery writer, a journal, and an injustice"

Many of their past talks can be viewed on YouTube, including Vince Howells excellent talk on [the 1921 Abermule train disaster](#).

Interest Groups

The **Art Group** has been contacted to ask if we could do a joint project with the Bracken Trust producing some designs/pictures to go on the front of stationary, notelets etc. I know there are a great many of the members who are artistic and are not members of the art group so if you as a u3a member, want to do a picture or design based on bracken. Any medium is acceptable, final size for printer, 10cm by 15cm. To be completed by 27st February. Please feel free to have a go.

Initially send a photo of your work through to me, karen@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk so I can collate material. If you want to take part and need longer to complete let me know. I am pleased to say I will not be the one who decides which are used. If your work is chosen we will arrange to collect the original to go to the printers which will then be returned to you.

The **Computer Group** is operating virtually has several new members which is great news. Unfortunately Nick Talbott is having problems with his Broadband, an issue irritating and frustrating for all of us when it happens, even more so for Nick. If you want to join in the Zoom meetings, which are fortnightly on Monday afternoons, please contact Nick

New u3a branding

You may have noticed the new u3a logo which is part of a recent task to update the u3a brand. Nick has been a major contributor in terms of trying to get the new u3a branding guidelines into something workable and easily implemented at the operational level, as always his calm and positive attitude is solutions based so I read with interest the article on page 7 of TAM.

National High Street Project

Thanks to Jan Swindale for volunteering to represent us at the proposed workshops held in January. Unfortunately it was impossible for her to register via the website, so it looks as if we will have to wait for Third Age Matters to find out "What happens next". But we are one of the u3a's involved.

Keep Smiling!

Finally you will also find a copy of Keep Smiling accompanying this newsletter. It is a (roughly) weekly publication produced by u3a member Phil Joiner of Wanstead and Woodford u3a which he started during the first lockdown and now goes to hundreds of u3a members round the country. It is not a u3a publication ... just Phil's personal project. Let us know if you appreciate it and if enough of you are interested we will either circulate copies or make them available through the website or occasionally attach a copy to the Newsletter just for amusement.

If you are in contact with members who do not use email would you please pass on this information.

The committee send their best wishes to you all.

Keep safe!

Karen Latham

Chair, Llandrindod Wells and District u3a

U3A Contacts

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The contact information for all Interest group leaders is available on the [Llandrindod U3A website](#).