



## Llandrindod Wells and District

**Dear Llandrindod u3a Member**

### Welcome to Newsletter 9 – The December Edition

I hope you have all received your Christmas cards and cheques that you can use to treat yourselves. Thanks to Patricia Munro's daughter Jo for letting us use one of her mother's designs and to Alan Quincey for his input with the calligraphy.

In this Newsletter I am going to hand over almost completely to members, but before doing so please accept the season's greetings and best wishes from myself and all of the Committee.

I know that so many more of you will be spending this Christmas at home, alone, with partners or in your "bubbles" away from many of your family and friends. There is little comfort in this solidarity. But in this season of good cheer there is now hope, the vaccine is being rolled out and I can say "Here's to next year, a better year!" when I for one will no longer take for granted the freedom to travel and make physical contact with those I care for and love ... to mix freely again and share good experiences with the lovely people who make up our **u3a**.

In this strange year the days have merged into each other with so few landmarks and celebrations. So thinking caps on as to how we may celebrate if and when ...

### **u3a Wales Short Story Competition**

On the 11th November there was an online awards night for the Wales Short Story Competition 2020. Our own Maureen Jones was shortlisted for the second year running, quite an achievement. Her story "Mountain Thyme" is attached.

I was pleased to attend the awards as a Mid Wales **u3a** representative. The whole event was really well organised and in fact the Wales Short Story Competition is to become the "model" for a UK wide **u3a** competition next year. So sharpen your implements we certainly have the talent to compete! The award ceremony was also good fun with the three winners reading out their stories. The overall winner was Tina Lukey of Flintshire **u3a** with 'Will's Important Day'. You can [read the three winning stories here](#).

Margaret Mason was one of the judges reading and evaluating the stories. The judges are not told the authors' names. Margaret not only gave her time as a judge, but also the award ceremony fell on a rather special birthday for her. Of course she did not mention it and to my shame neither did I ... but it is now in all our diaries for next year Margaret!

### **Member Focus - Alan Quincey**

With encouragement and help from other interest group leaders I completed a Zoom hosting session/tutorial with Nick. But I am not in the same league as Alan Quincey who has mastered Zoom to the point where he was able to take part in an international event. He writes ...

*I completed a four day zoom seminar with 497 others from 38 countries, to become a certified zentangle teacher (CZT). It was done at US Eastern Standard Time, which meant I was working from 1:30 to 10:30 and on one day went on until 11.30. It was utterly fascinating. We drew 22 zentangle tiles in all.*

It seems Alan was also the oldest participant on the course.

Here is a clip from one of Alan's zentangles. You can [see the full image on the website](#).



## Member Focus - David Barlow

One of our members, David Barlow, is helping in a NHS/RNID pilot which if successful will be rolled out throughout Powys. The Rock Park Centre will be open on 14th December at 10.00 onwards to help with Hearing Aid repairs, new batteries etc. A Covid safe system with drive in, drop off, in envelope set up. The service will be available on the second Monday of the month thereafter.

## For Creative Writers ... "Census stories from the margins"

Aberystwyth University English and Creative Writing department has asked for some help in a [possible] project. There will be a series of five online workshops between February and April 2021, timed to coincide with the 2021 census.

The workshop facilitators are keen to work with members of mid-Wales **u3as** in a project that blends the historical, critical and creative. The idea is to undertake a journey of intellectual and creative discovery together, as well as enjoying each other's company.

Their interest is in the upcoming Census, and the experience of it among folk who can remember it in 2011, 2001, 1991, 1981, 1971, 1961 ... However this is this is definitely a "Creative Writing" project - nothing to do with population, geography, statistics, and so on. Of special interest is the manner in which women and men are not treated equally.

If you are at all interested can you contact [Kathie Richard Jones](#) in the first instance. You can withdraw at any time. Over the course of the project participants will have the opportunity to create personal reflections on the census. The results will be curated into an online exhibition.

## Aberystwyth **u3a** webcasts

Even if you do not watch the live sessions via Zoom. many of Aberystwyth's meetings are now available to watch on YouTube and supporting resources are also available. Here are some that may be of particular interest:

- The Rail Riders may be interested in the [slides from the talk on on Atmospheric Railways](#).

- The talk on [Toulouse-Lautrec at the Moulin Rouge](#) is available on YouTube.
- On 15th December there is a talk via Zoom by Roger Boyle on "Lise Meitner - where's my Nobel prize?". The link to join the Zoom meeting (please join at 10:30am) is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81201191459?pwd=VDdaZnVERlRzRkR3bjZVR3BPTkZXUT09>
- Aberystwyth **u3a** are also planning a Christmas Zoom Quiz on "Events and personalities, 1950-1980" on December 22nd. Please check the [Aberystwyth u3a website](#) for details of how to join in.

## u3a National News

I have been asked to bring to your attention and to encourage you all to look at ..

1) The [National website](#) specifically to look at the [Network Link page](#) where there is a Q and A section about Networks that the National Office hopes you will all find useful.

2) A book that has been produced as a result of the Lockdown. "**u3a** in the Time of Corona" is based on the Diary Project and has been created using contributions from **u3a** members all over the country. It chronicles our reactions to coronavirus and isolation, as well as how to get a supermarket delivery, how to cut your own hair and what to do with all that free time. Some people sent drawings, photographs and poems, which have been included. The book is A4, 120 pages, colour printed and costs £10 including postage. If you would like to order a copy, please go to [the national website](#). *(Please note that the book was not available to purchase at the time this newsletter was produced but may appear in the online shop in due course.)*

## Contributions to the Newsletter

Thanks to Patrick Derwent and Margaret Mason for their poetry contributions which are included with this Christmas Newsletter.

I have asked for members input to the Newsletter and to let us know what you have been doing. Please continue to send in your contributions. Jan Swindale has responded and in doing so managed to pull together many of the themes in this newsletter. Wishing you a safe and peaceful Christmas I hand over to Jan for the last word in 2020. She writes ...

### **OYEZ, OYEZ, OYEZ!**

Greetings to u3a members and friends, from a temporarily redundant Town Crier, and hope that you all are keeping well and safe in these very sad times. It's just as well that I am, as I have problems with my voice (lack of use?) and as my dear Mother would have said, I sound like Ruby Murray (if anyone can remember that far back!)

Not wanting to attract a crowd, I managed my Cry for Peace on VE75 Day from my balcony at home with the Mayor and his Consort standing in the garden to support me (see u3a website), and sadly had to cancel the huge community event planned to include u3a Singers, where I had raided my costume wardrobes for 40's gear. I only just managed to croak my Cry at the War Memorial for VJ75 Day with 30 attendees from The Royal British Legion and Town Council all socially distanced, as we did for Remembrance Sunday, even more emotional than usual.

David and I miss you all, our wonderful monthly meetings and especially all 7 of our Interest Groups which have taken over our lives. We would have joined more if the times hadn't clashed! Railriders are off the track, Charabanc trips are temporarily garaged and UFO has Unfortunately Flown Off! It is lovely to receive our illustrious Chairman's Newsletter and Nick's Website is most informative. The rebate from our subscriptions was most acceptable too.

Virtual Travel needs a PowerPoint show of our adventure last year to the Western States National Parks and Heritage Steam Railroads, USA, but the computer decided to go on the blink, then the printer gave up the ghost and no replacements could be found. However, things are now looking up, but how to reduce over 2000 pictures of another rock and steam train is doing my head in. We travelled with 18 other passengers in three cramped mini buses 3000 miles in two weeks from Denver to San Francisco, comfort stops being few and far between, a real trial for me with my bladder!

We have done the usual thing of clearing out cupboards, it's amazing how one loses things at the back of some cupboards that one really needs but have forgotten one needs and the charity shops have been overwhelmed by our unwanted detritus!

Our 70's louvre bedroom wardrobe doors needed replacing with posh sliding doors which involved cutting into the plaster walls, and it took me a week to decorate one wall, David sleeping in the caravan as the spare bed was too soft! It's taken several weeks to decorate the rest of the room one wall at a time as moving carpets and furniture is a bit too disruptive, and there's no rush, is there!

Shopping, now there's a thing. A shout from the office at the end of the house, "I've got a slot, I've got a slot!!" Yes, well, what does that mean? A two hour sit-in clicking on numerous lists with me losing the will to live is what it means.

I'm not one for social media, and have no idea how to enter Twitter or whatever they are called. I have deleted Facebook from my mobile, but have to admit the WhatsApp has been a lifeline for family and friends and the only way I know what the day is, is by writing daily in my diary and what tablets I have to take. If I miss a day, then there is a problem, what did I do yesterday, for goodness sake? I know if it's Tuesday it's my Keep Fit class under the canopy at the Rock Park, (visitors drawn by the music gawp in wonder) at ladies of my age, all socially distanced and masked (sadly now finished as it's too cold) but if we can motivate ourselves, the routines have been put on YouTube for home indulgence. Thursday is my Zoom gym class, with posh weights and resistance bands, and if I can curb my appetite (I blame many Meals on Wheels, with puddings, from local hostelryes) one day I shall have a washboard stomach like the professional dancers on Strictly, and that's just the women!

My Tangent Club (part of the Round Table Family) have managed a few Zoom meetings and last month we had a bitterly cold short local Treasure Hunt. Now, I have conducted many groups of visitors around town, so know much of it's lovely history, but now realise that it's important to look down as well as up, as manhole covers can be surprisingly interesting!

Goodness, time to stop or I shall go on for hours describing what we have been doing with all this spare time, hope to do more gardening if the weather is kind, but as there is a wonderful website available for us to use, perhaps a few of you would put fingers to computer keys and share your own stories (I am sure Nick won't mind). It doesn't matter if your experiences are the same as ours, we would love to read them and catch up in this way with all our wonderful friends we have made through this incredible organisation.

Take care and keep safe everyone.  
With Best Wishes,  
Jan Swindale AHGTC

The committee send their best wishes to you all.

## Karen Latham

Chair, Llandrindod Wells and District **u3a**

### **U3A Contacts**

|                                   |                       |  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Chairman</i>                   | Karen Latham          | <a href="mailto:karen@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">karen@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>           |
| <i>Vice-Chairman</i>              | Dr. Karyn Evans       | <a href="mailto:karyn@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">karyn@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>           |
| <i>Treasurer</i>                  | Jan Willsher          | <a href="mailto:jan@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">jan@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>               |
| <i>Committee Secretary</i>        | Kathie Richards-Jones | <a href="mailto:kathie@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">kathie@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>         |
| <i>Membership Secretary</i>       | Janice Horne          | <a href="mailto:janice@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">janice@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>         |
| <i>Programme Secretary</i>        | Nick Talbott          | <a href="mailto:nick@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">nick@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>             |
| <i>Committee Member</i>           | Cheryl Davies         | <a href="mailto:cheryl@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">cheryl@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>         |
| <i>Committee Member</i>           | Will Francis          | <a href="mailto:will@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">will@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>             |
| <i>Advisor</i>                    | Mary Davies           | <a href="mailto:marydavies@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">marydavies@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a> |
| <i>Borderlines Editor</i>         | Margaret Mason        | <a href="mailto:margaret@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">margaret@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>     |
| <i>Website Manager</i>            | Nick Talbott          | <a href="mailto:nick@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">nick@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>             |
| <i>Interest Group Coordinator</i> | Stephen Ashley        | <a href="mailto:steve@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk">steve@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk</a>           |

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