

Borderlines

Spring 2022



Introduction from the Editors

Hello and welcome to our Spring issue of Borderlines

We would like to thank the members for their contributions because without your efforts we would not be able to produce an issue of Borderlines.

If you would like to join any of the interest groups all details and contacts are on the u3a website.

If anyone has anything they would like included in the next issue please contact us at email address borderlines@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk.

With thanks, Margaret and Bob.

Welcome

We would like to welcome the following new members who joined us between January 2022 – March 2022.

Janet Sims, Marjorie and Brian Lennox-Smith, Louise Haigh and Jeanette Hares. We hope you enjoy your time with u3a.

‘Radio Caroline’ - Talk to Llandrindod Wells u3a at March meeting

It was a privilege to host my ‘Radio Caroline’ presentation to a full room of u3a members on Monday March 14th 2022.

My talk tells of the first offshore commercial radio station which began broadcasting at Eastertime 1964. ‘Caroline’ boss Ronan O’Rahilly was a music promoter who had tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain radio air play for one of his artists, Georgie Fame. The BBC at that time only played established artist and Radio Luxembourg played specific artists from the big record labels like E.M.I. and Decca. They were booked up for 5 years!

So Ronan bought a former Danish passenger ferry M.V. Fredericia and transformed her into a floating radio station. As there was a 3 mile limit around the coast of the U.K. it made sense to anchor a ship with a tall transmitting mast 4 miles off the coast and blast pop music to the teenagers on land who were at that time ‘starved’ of pop music.

Radio Caroline had two radio ships ‘Caroline North’ anchored off Ramsey Bay Isle of Man and ‘Caroline South’ near Harwich.

Between 1964 and 1968 both radio ships transformed UK broadcasting forever and forced the BBC to begin Radio 1 in September 1967.

Many years later having ‘caught the radio bug’ I have been fortunate to work at the BBC, Radio City, Marcher Sound and Radio Maldwyn and now am proud to be one of the broadcasting team on ‘Radio Caroline Flashback’. The station is available via home internet devices such as ‘Alexa’ or via google. The u3a members seemed to appreciate my talk and I thank them for their concentration during my 45 minute presentation.

(Brian Cullen can be heard on Radio Caroline Flashback Sunday and Wednesday afternoon’s 2-4pm).

Landscape History

Landscape History looks at the features in the natural landscape that show evidence of man's impact throughout history. Wales is particularly rich in such evidence as much of it has been lived in, worked on, or fought over - and yet not been 'developed' since. Such evidence includes signs of settlement, agriculture, industry, and warfare over time. Our group has undertaken a number of field trips to local hillforts, and a few members visited Henllys Iron Age Village in Pembrokeshire.

"On 17th February, the Landscape History Group held their first meeting for just over two years, with ten members present. Terry Couzens diverted from the landscape



somewhat to give an account of a true story from the 17th C, based in the Corvedale and Hopton Castle in Shropshire. It highlighted the immense change in social attitudes between then and now, and a feature in the landscape that casts a long shadow of the Civil War. The next meeting on the 19th May at the Royal British Legion Hall, will cover the Saxon Shore Forts around the coast of S.E.England."

It is hoped more members will attend as the pandemic recedes.



The Earth Science Group has had 2 meetings so far in 2022, both at the Radnorshire Museum.

20 January – A talk and workshop hosted by Bob Loveridge – Cretaceous Fossils of the Araripe Basin, Brazil.

Bob Loveridge kindly agreed to repeat his talk given to us on 18th December, as a few people missed it, and we did not complete our examination of the fossils. So on 20th January 2022 at the Radnorshire Museum, we listened to the talk, and had a marvellous time looking at and handling the fossils. Bob also showed us how to



prepare the fossils by scraping them under a microscope. We were all amazed to see how the plants and animals are so close in appearance to their present-day counterparts, BUT are approximately 110 million years old!

Many thanks to Bob for his fascinating talk and guidance. And thanks to Lorna at the Museum who made this possible, and supplied the hot water for our refreshments. And thanks to Angela for the shortbread.

17 February – A presentation by Kelvin Huff, given by Michelle Thomas – James Hutton and Deep Time.

Kelvin is one of the National u3a Geology Mentors. He kindly lent his talk to our group, which Michelle presented on 17 February at the Radnorshire Museum. This gave a history of how the science of geology evolved, culminating with the biography of James Hutton, a Scotsman, who is known as the “Father of Geology”.



The group were introduced to geological concepts such as stratification, volcanic intrusions, uplift and erosion including the iconic unconformity at Siccar Point near Edinburgh. The idea of Deep Time was introduced, when Hutton was trying to bring this idea to the scientific community, who were still deeply entrenched in the Biblical version of Time and did not accept his heretical proposals.

The group had a short discussion afterwards to expand on some of the points made in the talk. Lots of new ideas were taken home, along with a Rock Cycle Fact Sheet, and a Chronostrat Chart listing all the different epochs, eras and periods used to describe and measure Deep Time.



The projector was supplied very kindly by Bob Loveridge.

Thanks to Lorna for making the room available to us, and for the hot water. No shortbread this time though – Angela was away!

Please contact Michelle if you would like to attend future meetings, email: michelle@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

Report on the French Group meetings held so far this year:

The revived French Group has starting meeting online on Zoom in 2022. We have decided to meet twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Monday afternoons of the month.

17 January. Our first meeting on Zoom went very well. Four of us met online and introduced ourselves in French. We then went through a vocabulary list of French Computer Terms, something which none of us had learnt at school! This prompted a lively discussion! The session lasted about 1.5 hours.

7 February. Three of us this time on Zoom, including 1 new person who introduced herself in French. We revised all of the conjugations of the verb être – to be. One of our number shared some photos of her family who live in France, so she explained them in French – all of us had our dictionaries to hand to help out! We moved on to reading a shared short story aloud and translating it as we went along, each taking it in turn to read a paragraph. We really felt like we had done some work by the end! Again the session lasted about 1.5 hours.

21 February. Our group was decimated by laptop issues and lack of power/wi-fi caused by storms. Two of us met on Zoom. So, as the other person had not been there at the last session, we went through the same short story as last time, reading and translating. Again it was a very useful session lasting about 1.25 hours.

If you would like to join us, please contact Michelle for the Zoom link – email: michelle@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

If the group gets bigger, we may start to meet face-to-face, probably in the Radnorshire Museum.

U3A Walkers *Elsa Harflett*

On 28th February the Walking Group parked on Penybont Common and walked up the gated road towards the quarry near the Pales. Taking the track beside the quarry we made our way up onto Coed Swydd Hill where we could see for miles, with Llandegley Rocks immediately in front of us surrounded by a patchwork of fields. Here is the group with the Rocks in the background, almost being blown away by the wind! As we walked across the hill, the view changed, and we looked down towards Penybont and our cars parked far below. This is open access ground, so we could walk wherever we liked.



Nearby, we came to the Coed Swydd Enclosure; an oval-shaped embankment of earth and stone surrounded by a ditch, measuring about 34 by 24 metres. It was quite impressive. The enclosure is thought to have been a small, defended farmstead dating from either the Iron Age (800 BC to 74 AD) or the Romano-British period ending around the late 4th century AD. (Source *Cadw*). Nearby was a large pool which would presumably have been the water-source for the farm.



Moving north-east across the hill the views changed yet again as we looked towards the Radnor Forest with its rounded hills, looking mysterious in the mist with storm clouds behind. We came to an old, abandoned horse rake which we paused to admire.



Continuing down the hill, we came to an area where there were many pillow mounds. These cigar-shaped mounds are the remains of man-made rabbit warrens where the Lord of the Manor would have farmed rabbits for meat and fur in the Middle Ages. Rabbits were brought into this country by the Normans. They were valuable animals and would have been carefully looked after by a warrener, an important man, often being provided with a house to live in.



Reaching the road again we walked past the farmstead of Rhonllwyn until we reached the Pales Quaker Meeting House. Looking into the garden beside the building we were delighted by a mass of snowdrops. We then returned to our cars along the route we had followed at the start of our walk.



An introduction by Roger Cumberland on the new Bridge Group

Hi everyone I am Roger, I applied to join U3A in March 2020 and attended one meeting at the Metropole Hotel where I agreed to try to set up a bridge interest group.

I live in Builth Wells in a bungalow overlooking the golf course. I have lived there for 44 years and for much of that time my two main hobbies have been golf and bridge. I am President of Builth Wells Golf Club and still play when the weather permits, but when my wife died in March 2019 my whole life seemed to have been stood on its head and I did not know at all what I wanted to do.

About a year later, my long time golfing partner John Walker, invited me to a U3A Sunday Lunch Group at the Greyhound Hotel. That led me to attend my first full U3A meeting at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells where I was introduced to Nick Talbott who agreed to put a notice about bridge on our website – which he did. Sadly we then had the Covid shutdown and any chance of forming a new interest group disappeared. Well things have now changed and I have had the “green light” to try again.

I have just finished reading Eric Midwinter’s article in the February “Third Age Matters”. He expresses his concern that *U3A was becoming a service to third-agers rather than a self-help organisation*. He reminds us that the duty of a member is quite clear in the constitution to

play our part as active members of learning circles and involve ourselves fully in the sustenance of the U3A. Well joining a bridge group for beginners would seem to be an excellent fit for everything Eric was saying.

We have a membership of over 250 in Llandrindod U3A. Probably half of you do not play cards at all but that still leaves over 100 members who do play cards but do not yet play bridge. If you enjoy playing other card games you will almost certainly enjoy playing bridge. It is played all over the world and is widely regarded as one of the best card games ever.

So, what do you need? Just a liking for card games and a willingness to learn something new. Very U3A. How many do I need to get a group started? Well, 16-20 people would be good. So, please come forward with your name, phone number and email address and lets get started!

I look forward to hearing from you. Regards, Roger Cumberland

Railriders group Christmas 2021

Well, we finally got going again!

It has been 2 years, almost to the day, since our last adventure and returning to the same venue. The pandemic has certainly taken the steam out of things but the end does appear to be an end in sight (Said he, hopefully). A lot of the restrictions have been eased.

Where most of the u3a groups can run virtually sadly we cannot. It simply was not possible to organise anything economically or safely for a large group of people.

It was with great anticipation therefore, that I was asked to try and arrange a trip before Christmas 2021. When I mentioned to folk in passing that we might return to The Armoury in Shrewsbury for a Christmas meal the response was superb.

The date chosen was December 8th and the journey was by main line train from Llandrindod Wells on the Heart of Wales Line to Shrewsbury.

Picture the scene. Wet (very wet) weather with winds of some speed to boot and reports of damage to trees and floods on main roads (We never do anything the easy way). So there we all are at the station at 08.35 waiting for the train. Originally 30, the party reduced to 24 for varying reasons and we are all wondered if we could get such a large group on the train. Only 2 carriages and pre-Christmas? In the end we need not have worried. The train was virtually empty.

The train left on time and we made our way up through some beautiful scenery, images of snow covered hill tops and by the time we passed through Craven Arms the snow disappeared and the sky brightened.

We arrived on time and all went off to browse shops, drink coffee and walk around until it was time to eat. 1pm and we were all sat at our tables and food was served in good order. Anyone who has ever been to eat at The Armoury will tell you that the quality of food and service is always excellent and this time was no exception.

A good time was had by all, including quite a few new members to the group.

If anyone wishes to become a member of this group please contact David Horne. Contact details are on the Railriders page on the website.

Here are some suggestions for trips this year.

1. Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway - Canal trip followed by train journey
2. Network Rail - Day trip to Birmingham with and tour of the canals and back to back houses and a meal
3. Brecon Mountain Railway - Train ride and canal trip with meal
4. Network Rail - Christmas markets in Birmingham
5. Snowdonia Mountain Railway - To the top of Yr Wyddfa. Meal on the way home
6. Gloucestershire and Worcestershire Steam Railway - Cheltenham to Broadway. All day rover ticket (hop on, hop off) and a meal
7. Dean Forest Railway - Lydney to Parkend Railway. All day rover ticket. Meal
8. Severn Valley Railway - Kidderminster to Bridgenorth. All day rover ticket. Meal

Garden Visiting group

The first meeting of the Garden Visiting group for 2022 was held in the Commodore Hotel on the 17th February when the group got together to agree and organise this year's garden visiting programme. The group is a model of democracy, under the Chairmanship of Ann Parkhouse, with all making suggestions. Then decisions as to gardens to explore and enjoy with individual members agreeing to take responsibility to arrange the monthly visits, timings, transport, which is by car share, and most importantly the lunch venue.

The group has decided to keep its visits for the first half of the year to larger public gardens. Although many of the past have been and future visits will be to smaller private gardens where there is a limit on numbers and parking.

The group is currently full and unable to take new members for the time being.

The start of this year's programme in April will be to Westonbury Mill Water Gardens, Pembridge followed by a visit to Powis Castle and Gardens with Plas Dinas and Ceunant at a later date along with others to be confirmed. We will, I am sure, be sharing some of the photographs of our visits on the website and in Borderlines.



Interested in Creative Writing?

Always thought you could write, but never taken the plunge?

Our group is necessarily small (to allow inclusion time at meetings for everyone's contribution) but due to house moves we do have a couple of current vacancies.

We work to a chosen list of monthly and topics, but there are no hard and fast rules. Examples of our recent topics include "The key", "Letter to a 15-year-old" and "How can we get rid of ?" Some of our work has been included in the chairman's monthly letters you have all received during the epidemic.

Members can work in prose, poetry, doggerel or any other writing medium of their choice. Additionally we use email to enjoy occasional mid-month challenges, and recently included writing a short story with every word beginning with the same letter, and "Favourite line from any song – and why".

During the past the group has created a radio play, a pantomime, two sequential stories and in conjunction with the Art Group produced an anthology of work over the last five years. Copies of "The Art of Creative Writing" are still available at a cost of £5 (plus £2 P & P if necessary) with all profits going to Welsh Air Ambulance.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month from 10.30am at the Commodore Hotel forthcoming topics include "What's in the picture", "The Layby" and "Atmosphere of a favourite place". If you would like a "taster" please contact me Kathie Richards-Jones @ kathie@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk

My Bucket of Bulbs

Only a few can give such a show
From April in spring to November in snow
They need no fuss and very little care
Just a drink of water here and there
And as they raise their heads and peer
They proudly say we'll be back next year

Craft Group

The craft group meet on the last Monday of every month and this is some examples of their work that they have produced.



A Poem at Night

Write a poem before bed

Get all thoughts out of your head

The dark, the sad, the unreal must go

No more worries, no more woes

A good night sleeping

Will stop the weeping

And tomorrow a brand new day

To bring light come what may