

Borderlines

Spring 2024



Introduction from the Editors

Hello and welcome to our Spring issue of Borderlines.

We would like to thank everyone for their positive feedback on our last issue of Borderlines, it is very encouraging to us.

We would also like to thank everyone for the reports and contributions. As 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 and March 2024:-

Robert Eastham, Bob Dennison, Nick Willcox, Louise and Bob Hicks, John Wilson, Janis Pritchard, Stuart Hulse, and Jen Page.

We hope you enjoy your time with u3a.

New Committee for 2024 - 2025

The AGM of the Llandrindod Wells and District u3a (University of the Third Age) held at the March meeting, was attended by over 110 of the 255 members. The new committee, made up of both experienced and new committee members was unanimously voted in.



Pictured above from left to right,

Top Standing: Carolyn Grinnell, Martha Wooldridge (Secretary) Bob Wood (Chair)
David Wright (Treasurer) Susie Corke (Vice Chair), Wendy Isle

Front Seated: Janice Horne (Membership Secretary) Gail Tighe, and
Margaret Wood (Borderlines Editor)

Sewing Group

The sewing group is going very well and is a fun group to join. At our monthly meetings we have been making a variety of different items. These items include a lovely folded star Christmas card using Christmas printed fabric. Also we have made table centres using an unusual Japanese style of folded patchwork. Alongside these items individuals have been working on their own projects taking guidance from Susie and other members of the group. Our venue, The Hive, is perfect for a sewing group, it is warm and light and has tea/coffee making facilities across the corridor. It is a great central meeting place for all - the only drawback being the lack of a lift as our room is on the first floor. However, there is always someone there to help you with any carrying of equipment up the stairs. We will be observing a machined patchwork technique during our next session in April whilst also continuing with our own projects. Do come and join us - all are welcome - all you need for your first session is a small sewing kit, pencil and notebook and we will guide and motivate!



Art Group – Karen Latham

The Art Group's new season got off to a great start with a tutorial on how to use Acrylic paints given by Catherine Smedley. Catherine is a trained and talented local artist, a member of the group of artists known as The Picturermakers. Her beautiful and detailed work can be seen on the internet and in exhibitions.

The session took the form of a talk on the history and uses of acrylic paints developed from the 1930's. The use of colours and mixing of pigments. Unlike oil paints, no one knows how acrylic paints will stand the test of time.



Then on to a challenge set for us all, to identify from a number of picture's Catherine brought along, to say which were done in acrylic paints and which in oil paints. There was a lot of close scrutiny and debate. The only one who successful completed the challenge and identified the single oil painting was Inez, who is a professional art restorer in her own right. So I am not sure Inez should have counted. Well done to her any way, none of the rest of us could complete the challenge, which just goes to show how the medium and its uses have developed.

The group was then set a challenge to produce a work done using acrylic paints from a still life group of objects. There was little time to do anything other than get stuck in and experiment. The positive have a go and don't judge yourself to harshly approach was perfect. I love the quiet concentration while we are working and encouragement of the group.

At the end of the session we got together to review our amazingly different results.

Several of the group decided to persevere and use the next couple of art group sessions to continue to experiment with what is turning out to be, for many of

us, a very challenging medium. But isn't that what u3a is about, to challenging yourself to learn and experiment with new things, even if the results are in my case not quite or even close to what I had in mind and was trying to achieve.

As always some members bring along something which they are already working on and use the time to advance that piece, which is equally interesting to observe. The over whelming desire of the individuals in the group to get better and improve their own personal skills level through observation and practise and to find out which mediums they enjoy or could used depending on the subject matter.

Report from the U3a Walkers Group

It was a beautiful morning with blue skies but a bitterly cold wind when 18 intrepid walkers met at the Old Parish Church for our February walk. We had passed the disused mines and were heading towards the track to Llwynceubren when we encountered a sea of mud! We managed to bypass the first part of the track by going into the adjoining field and then rejoined it further along. Coming out onto the lane just before the Three Wells guest house in Howey, we turned and walked up the hill, passing Brynhir and Ty Gwyn farms, joining the Golf Course road which at this point is called Windy Ridge. We headed past Ty Gwyn Bach, Little Hill and continued down towards the Golf Club, admiring the stunning views of the surrounding countryside and an early flowering Rhododendron bush as we walked along. It was not a particularly long walk, but everyone enjoyed the sunshine after such a long spell of wet weather. 16 of us ate our lunch in the Clubhouse while looking down at the lake and the town.





Penny Constance Balmain Everett

Her life with the u3a by Chris Carpenter

Penny joined Llandrindod Wells u3a soon after it was formed in 2006 just 2 years after the untimely loss of her husband Richard and for a while enjoyed sitting and listening to the lectures until the Chairman asked her to start a magazine, hence Borderlines started of which she was the first editor.



In 2010 she became the first women to Chair Llandrindod u3a to be followed a few years later with another 12 months in the role. Penny always believed in all members taking some sort of role, be it on the committee, group leader or sharing responsibility for organising events in individual groups but definitely not just sitting on bums. In 2013 she started and led the Creative Writing Group from her home at Pye Corner. This group went from strength to strength until in 2019 they published "The Art of Creative Writing" in conjunction with the Art Group, an anthology of short stories written by members over the previous 5 years. This book sold very well and provided Christmas presents for many families and friends. On 1st May we were treated to the biggest event organised by Llandrindod u3a, namely "The May Day Medley", arranged and compared by Penny with help from Sue Turner. Guest speaker was Iolo Williams supported by Steve Hughson and the wonderful Swansea u3a Ukulele Band. The pavilion was full, lunch was provided and a good time was had by all including the author who was lucky enough to win one of the prizes in the raffle. During her time as a Llandrindod u3a member she supported many of the interest groups including, Art History, Calligraphy, Garden Visiting, Walking Group, Sunday Lunch, Rail Riders, Unfinished Objects, Cinema Group, Sing for Fun (a particular favourite) and Badminton which sadly ended in a broken hip but she still drove home! Many of you will remember Penny as The Fairy Godmother in the u3a pantomime "What Cinderella Did Next" put on by the Creative Writing Group and with scenery produced by the Art Group. Penny had many interests outside of the u3a, she was a School Governor at Builth Wells Secondary School, a member of Peny Bont History Group and Excursions Officer of The Radnorshire Society. In this role she was organising a trip from Crossgates to Tregaron, everyone was waiting at the coach but no Penny to be seen. Somebody telephoned Penny and found that she had overslept! They all made their destination eventually.

In December 2019 Penny left our u3a when she moved to Somerset to be nearer her son Fraser. This had been her plan for some time in the future, but was brought forward when Hendy Wind Farm erected 7 wind turbines directly in front of her home in Pye Corner. This was the end of a long battle against the proposed wind farm lasting several years involving numerous meetings and demonstrations. At one onsite protest Penny was pushed and fell in front of an onrushing cement mixer only rolling out of the way just in time. This accident made the national news in Wales. No sooner had she arrived in North Somerset and joined Bridgewater u3a when covid arrived to disrupt all our lives. However, when meeting recommenced Penny soon took over the Chair. Their u3a is run on very different lines to our own with just a monthly coffee morning, no speakers, but lots of interest groups. Membership dropped over pandemic, but Penny increased it under her leadership to over 300. For good measures she was also treasurer during her last year.

Penny also joined Minehead u3a, so she could enrol with the Tap Dancing Group which was a pastime she enjoyed in her younger days.

Finally, she signed up with Crantocks u3a which started up in 2023 and is just a few miles from her home. Away from u3a, she was on her local community council, a volunteer for the National Trust at Coleridge Cottage in Nether Stowey and an ardent supporter of the West Somerset Railway, serving in the shop at Bishops Lydeard Station and waitressing on board the train. Sadly all these activities came to an end when Penny was taken ill in late 2023. On the 18th January 2024 we lost a very kind, generous, good friend, but we can see her now in heaven, getting Saint Peter to reorganise his admittance files and sitting beside him making sure he can use the new record system properly, and getting the choirs of angels to put on a panto.

With thanks to: Robert Bevan, Jill Clay, Margaret Mason, Ann Parkhouse and Sue Turner for helping to put this together.

Garden Visiting Group – Jan Swindale

"We had a coffee meeting at the Commodore recently to set up the next year's programme, and Kelvin and Julia Evans had very kindly offered to take over as co-ordinators from Ann Parkhouse, who had done a splendid job for a long time. Kelvin and Julia presented Ann with a lovely floral tribute and the photo shows Ann's happy surprise at the unexpected gift.

We attended the Rugby Club car park as usual to sort out drivers to Hereford, armed with written instructions and maps to find our way, as Kel and Julia had sussed out that we could take 4 cars and use the cathedral's car park, which was inspirational. The weather was wonderful, we had lovely salad lunches in Cafe Mundi, and then spent a leisurely time wandering round the well tended gardens, which lap against the river. There was time just to sit in the sun (for a change) and have a group photo, Kel taking the picture with his back to the river, everyone shouting "Back a bit, Kel!"

We moved on to Oakchurch on the way home, where most of us stopped for tea and coffee and cakes, as if we hadn't had enough lunch! Thanks to Kel and Julia for the extremely well thought out organisations and we look forward to the next trip, no doubt with more food!"



Sunday Lunch Group 2

The Sunday Lunch Group 2 has been running for over a year now. We have had some enjoyable and delicious meals with great company. We have been to a variety of eating places including The Greyhound in Builth Wells, Llandrindod Golf Club, Severn Arms Penty Bont, The Bell Inn Lakeside Café and the Llanerch Inn to mention a few. The Group now has a membership of 19 which is very good after a year of running. Special thanks go to Meg Lewis who originally started the group in its current form



Welsh History Group

The Welsh History Group enjoying soup and scones after their first meeting in the New Year at the Thomas Shop in Penybont.

