

# Borderlines

Summer 2024



## **INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITORS**

Hello and welcome to our Summer 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.

You can find additional information about the u3a online and on the notice board at the back of the room during the monthly meetings

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

With thanks, Margaret and Bob.

## **SINGING FOR FUN**

U3A Singing For Fun Group sang a variety of songs including Puppet On A String and Is This The Way To Amarillo at a fund- raising afternoon tea for Howey church. The vicar sang and played his guitar I Still haven't Found What I'm Looking For, a really good rendition of U2 Song, from the first live concert he went to. U3a Singers sang I'm A Believer, taking Jane back to The Monkees, her first live concert at Wembley.

The Singers donned 1940s hats and sang songs from the 1940s including We'll Meet Again and Accentuate The Positive at The Golden Age club in Crossgates commemoration of D Day. We got nationalistic and waved Welsh, Union and St George's flags as we sang Land Of Hope and Glory. Sadly we missed our soprano Jo Wright for the second performance, especially for the song We'll Keep A Welcome with a ladies only verse. She had been seriously ill with a brain hemorrhage. Our best wishes for a full and speedy recovery following treatment in Birmingham.

## **HOW ABOUT SHARING YOUR ENTHUSIASM? - Rachel Palmer**

When I gave my recent talk on Rocking Horses, our new Chair Bob Wood said how nice it is when one of our own Llandrindod U3A members gives the monthly lecture.

Meeting a number of you since I joined at the end of last year, I am amazed at the range of interests, knowledge and experience that we have in our U3A! Incredible! So, if you or your Interest Group has a story to tell or an enthusiasm to share, why not give us a talk? There can be one speaker or two or three of you could deliver the talk in turn. I find that plenty of pictures are a great idea – for the audience's enjoyment and also to help you remember what you were going to say!

Some of you may not realise that the IT support team at U3A helps speakers in advance to make sure that they are prepared and happy. In my case, Nick Talbott kindly checked some weeks in advance to make sure that all my slides were compatible with the projector and other kit used at The Metropole - and he backed

them up on his own laptop just in case mine failed at the eleventh hour! This was very reassuring - thank you so much Nick!

Remember, talking to the U3A is not like speaking on one of those political debates on television! Ha, no, not at all! The audience are your friends; everyone is on your side and will be very interested in what you have to say.

Do think about it!

Thank you so much for being such a lovely audience.

### **SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP 1**

The Sunday Lunch Group 1 is now in full swing visiting various venues in the area. We have been to The Lakeside Café, The Golf Club, Severn Stars, The Ilanerch Inn, Neuadd Henllan and The Cattleshed. The food and company at all the venues was very good. We still have vacancies, therefore if you would like to join the group please let us know. Contact details are on the website.



## GARDEN VISITING

### Hereford Cathedral

There are several gardens at Hereford cathedral. The cloisters garden is enclosed by 23 medieval buildings dating from 1475. They were built to house the Vicars choral who sang the services in the cathedral. Behind the Cloisters lies the Canon's garden which slopes down to the river. It has been replanted as an English Country Garden with added interest of plants with ecclesiastical connections.

The Dean's garden slopes gently south down to the river giving a pleasant aspect from the top terrace. The Bishop's garden is a private 4 acre garden, occupied for over 1000 years. Historically important it includes the remaining wall of a late 11th century Norman chapel. The current terraced design was laid out in 1841.

### Hergest Croft

The May visit was to Hergest Croft organised by Karyn and Wynne. Spring is the best time to visit Hergest Croft with all the rhododendrons and azaleas in full bloom. The gardens extend to over 70 acres and holds the National Collection of maples and birches. The favourable weather allowed us to walk over Haywoods Common to Park Wood which is half a mile from the Croft and this secluded valley contains over 30 acres of giant rhododendrons and exotic trees.



## Rock Mill, Abermule

In May the Garden visiting group visited a magical three acre garden in a wooded valley near Abermule. The weather forecast was awful the owners Rufus and Cherry had emailed us cancelling the visit, not realising we had left Llandrindod early to visit Kings Garden Centre. Rufus was surprised when I phoned him 30 minutes before our arrival and poor Cherry had to quickly make scones for our cream tea.

The weather held for us and the visit was one of the best the group has experienced. The owners had been there for over 35 years and had totally transformed the site from its industrial past (water-powered corn mill and railway line) to a garden that wants for nothing. With colourful borders, specimen trees, terraces, woodland walks, fishponds, and an African roundhouse.

This was a brilliant visit from very hospitable hosts. We will return next year.



## Rhodds Farm

In June the garden visiting group visited Rhodd's Farm Lyonshall after lunching at The Cattleshed which is nearby. The current owners have been living there since 2004 when they renovated the house and converted the outbuildings.

The woodlands consist of 13 acres. At the furthest end of the woods at the lowest point they dug out the duck pond in 2007. In 2008 they built the boardwalk down one side which leads to a summerhouse. There are paths through the woodland. There is a giant seat where you can watch the sun set. There is a sculpture of an owl called Lunar by Andrew Roach and an engraved standing stone by Catriona Cartwright.

There is a Shepherd's hut in the wildflower meadow.

The Stone Folly is in the field in front of the house. It was built by Anthony Mills in 2008.

The Dovecote was built in 2007 and now has 50 + residents.



## SEWING GROUP

The Sewing Group is thriving and now has a full take up of members. Members are working on a variety of stitch projects and enjoying the collaborative ethos of the group. Last month we welcomed Sue Copland's sister Rosey (far right in the group photo) who was visiting from New Zealand and is an accomplished keen stitcher. Rosey and has been a keen member of the U3a in Aotearoa - (Māori - The Land of the Long White Cloud) for many years. It is excellent to have a sewing machine readily available for us to use at our venue, The Hive, together with an iron and ironing board. Both are set up and ready for us to use at every session. With excellent daylight, space and other necessary facilities provided at The Hive we have all we need for sewers to progress and enjoy working on their projects. If you are interested in joining then please email Carolyn Grinnell or Susie Corke and we will add you to the waiting list - first come first served. Beginners and the more experienced are all welcome - come on you chaps now is your chance to take up a new hobby!



## RAILRIDERS GROUP – Brecon Mountain Railway and The Big Pit. June 2024

15 members met at The Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod and car shared to Merthyr Tydfil in plenty of time to catch the train. The journey was from Pant to Torpandau and return, a journey of is one and a half hours through the Black Mountains in the Brecon Beacons.

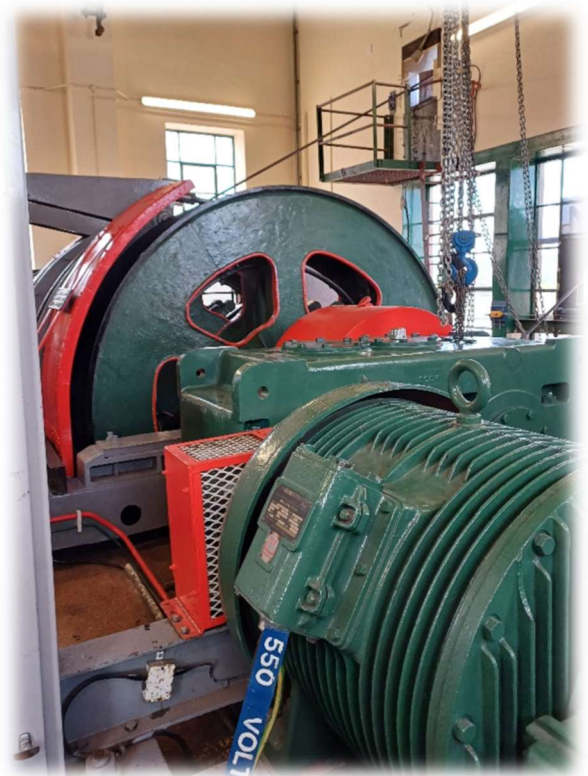






Following this we car shared to Pontypool and The Big Pit National Coal mining museum.

What a fabulous visit and a real life insight into what working life was like for our Welsh Miners. Some of the group actually went down into the underground pit to experience the conditions while others walked around the site.





## **RAILRIDERS GROUP - Swansea. March 2024**

Travelling on the Heart of Wales Line from Llandrindod Wells we travelled to Swansea, in a repeat of our very first railriders trip 7 years prior.

17 members met at Llandrindod railway station in plenty of time to catch the train. The journey is two and a half hours and we were lucky the weather was decent, affording us good views of Mid Wales and the South.

On arriving in Swansea we immediately sought somewhere to have lunch and similar to other trips we located a Wetherspoons establishment.

Suitably refreshed people did their own thing until it was time to return.

Shops, art galleries, museums plus many other attractions.

As always Blue Leader arranged for the weather to be unpredictable. Honestly the size of the hail stones needed to be seen to be believed.

You cannot invent this stuff.

A good day was had by all. It was a long day but a good day

## Entering the U3A Short Story Competition - Margaret Mason

The deadline for the U3A national short story competition for 2024 is 17<sup>th</sup> July. This article is intended to give some advice about entering this (and other) literary competitions. As a past judge and also as a shortlisted author for the first Welsh contest, I feel uniquely qualified to see both sides. On the one hand, I know how incredibly hard the judges work, pouring over the submissions for hours, balancing one story against another, and adjusting the scores accordingly. On the other, I understand how much time and emotion each entrant has invested in their story, and how much it means to them. You may feel these hints come a little late, but unless you have actually sent off your entry you have time to review it with these points in mind. That is because this article has nothing to do with literary skills – I'm sure you don't need help with those. It is more a guide to getting your work as far as the judges. You have worked so hard it would be a pity if it all comes to nothing because it has been disqualified. The U3A interprets the rules very generously, but even they have their limits, and other competitions are much less flexible.

My top tips are: -

### **1. Read the rules – and follow them!**

In the U3A, as in many other competitions, all entries will go initially to an administrative officer. Only those stories that conform to the rules will go forward to the judging panel. So if your short story develops into a novella, don't think the sheer quality of the writing will seduce the judges into ignoring the fact you are 2000 words over limit. They won't even see it, as it will have been disqualified at stage 1. One competition stated that each story should begin with a prescribed sentence. Most authors dutifully did – but not all. They might argue that their own opening was stronger than that they were given, but it was not what was asked for.

Make absolutely certain all rules have been followed.

### **2. Read your entry through after the spell check, and ensure it makes sense.**

The spell check on your package will only identify words it does not recognise. The word you have used may be the wrong one for your context, but still a perfectly valid word, so the spell check will not pick it up. My favourites are "Amanda admired the taught mussels displayed under his shirt" and "Edward threw himself into the endeavour heart and sole." Some competitions allocate a certain number of marks for spelling and grammar. Even if they don't, when trying to decide between two stories of equal literary merit, one with mistakes and one without, I would mark the perfect one higher. It is a competition and we need some sort of hierarchy after all.

### **3. Enter!**

It is so sad when someone says, "Well, if that was the winner I could have done better than that!" Possibly you could – but if you do not enter you won't win! Do not be put off if you don't succeed the first time. It doesn't mean you are unappreciated. You might have missed the shortlist by one mark. There are at least two stories that I thought were absolutely fantastic. Unfortunately the other judges did not agree, and neither was shortlisted, but I wish the authors could know how much pleasure they have given me. If you do make it the shortlist, then congratulations. You deserve it! The marking is so tight there is often very little difference between the winners and the rest of the shortlist.

Enter next year and the first prize could be yours! Good Luck!