

CARDIFF



Dysgu, Chwerthin, Byw




Learn, Laugh, Live

MAGAZINE



Photograph: Jim Bartlett

February 2022



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Welcome to the 2022 edition of the Cardiff u3a Magazine

The keen-eyed and those with a long memory will realise that it is two years since the magazine was last published. Now I wonder why?

In that last edition our then new chair Owen Parry wrote the introduction, which stated that, and I quote - **“It seems to me to be a good time to have taken over as Chair of the Cardiff u3a”** little did he know what was in front of all of us. A tribute to Owen appears deeper into this edition, but suffice to say that his leadership over the following two years which of course included firstly the onset, then the steep rise and continuance of the pandemic proved vital to our continued existence as a viable organisation.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed something to this edition, for without them it would be a lot slimmer.

This edition is also a little bit different to all the past ones, but perhaps it is not immediately obvious. It is now made available to all members; on-line! Of course there will still be a small number of printed copies available for those who are unable to receive it via their computer, as well as copies for handing to interested people seeking to join us at the Cardiff u3a. It also means that the outlay for the printing of the Magazine is less than previous editions. Another reason for an on-line version is that when it is being read on your device you can make the print LARGER which is a perceived need for some of our members; my eyesight is not all that good either, and I also suffer from a mild (ish) form of colour blindness, so if my use of colour within these pages looks a little odd in places to you, please be gentle in your observations!

The cessation of activities due to the pandemic has meant that many Group Convenors had difficulty in producing reports of their interest group activities. For many it was not possible to meet for the past eighteen months. To those that rose to the reporting challenge my thanks for your copy.

Mario Greening, Editor

WHAT IS THE u3a?

u3a (The University of the Third Age) is a UK-wide movement which brings together people in their ‘third age’ to develop their interests and continue their learning in a friendly and informal environment. If you’re wondering what we mean by the third age - it is a time after you have finished working full-time or raising your family and have time to pursue your interests or just try something new.

u3a has a ‘university’ of members who draw upon their knowledge and experience to teach and learn from each other but there are no qualifications to pass – it is just for pleasure. Learning is its own reward.

It's all voluntary; a typical u3a will be home to many activity groups covering dozens of different subjects; **Cardiff** currently offers subjects ranging from ‘All things Welsh’ to ‘Writers enjoying words’ with many others in between.

Formed over 30 years ago, there are now over 1,000 u3as across the UK, with thousands of interest groups between them and more than 400,000 members nationally.



I am pleased to give a warm welcome to all our members from your Executive Committee, on the occasion of our first Magazine for some time. On behalf of us all I hope you will find it enjoyable to read and full of interesting and useful information. Great credit to Mario Greening for the extremely hard work he has put into this – especially as his first outing as its Editor!

Committee matters. This is also a first for me as your Chair: I left the Vice Chair post to replace Owen Parry in December, as he stood down after leading us through the toughest times over the last two years. I am sure you will join with me and the whole Committee in recording our considerable thanks to him. I am honoured and proud to have the responsibility of trying to lead us smoothly into a far better position in 2022.

I hope you will also join me in thanking the whole Executive Committee for their excellent work since the last Magazine: as well as Owen and Mario, Alison Firth (Past Treasurer), Lesley Hales (Committee Secretary), Nonn Vaughan (Groups Coordinator) and Kirsten Freeman (Membership Secretary).

You will see more about Committee matters on the next page

Pandemic times. This Magazine comes to you at a unique time in the recent history of Cardiff u3a, dominated as we still all are by thoughts of the Pandemic. At Committee we have tried very hard to not allow the worst public health pressures to stop us serving you with whatever group and other activities have been allowed as circumstances kept changing.

I hope you will agree that some of the highlights of those difficult times have been: moving to extensive online contact, courtesy of expanded 'Zoom Meeting' time - a particular success story being keeping monthly Open Meetings at very high levels of attendance – as well as making adjustments at venues to be able to meet, some of the time, face-to-face as safely as possible.

I take this opportunity to thank all of you who came out to those Group Meetings - for your patience and especially your willingness to play your part in helping with the different ways we had to operate in order to be compliant and safe.

It's never been truer to say that "no-one said it was going to be easy" – with new things like "Risk Assessment" Regulations to contend with. All praise to those Convenors who worked so effectively with the Committee (led by Nonn Vaughan) to navigate the way to getting the best experiences we could.

Being back for everyone. Obviously, with over 600 members and their different wishes, it hasn't been possible for every single member to stay fully active. That's disappointing for us all. As I write now, however, the Regulation situation does seem to be changing in favour of a big step-up in social activity – particularly face-to-face.

Since my Chair's Letter to you all just before Christmas, the magic phrase "Level 0" is being used right now in predictions about what will be allowed socially in the near future. We have always, to coin a phrase, 'followed the science' in the advice we have given to you and are doing so now.

SO - ending here on a positive note, I can assure you that plans are in place for us to be able to be back to the full range of services as early as feasible in February and March.

As they say these days: ENJOY!

Tony Baines 26 January 2022



"YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!"

Please volunteer to join us: what might that wartime reference have to do with us in peacetime Cardiff u3a? Well, less dramatically but extremely importantly it does right now - as we, your Executive Committee, take on the task of serving all our members back at full scale.

The blunt facts are:

We very urgently need volunteers to become members of the Committee: we are below normal strength: 7 members against a possible 12. See # below.

Some Committee members will need to step down later in 2022

Other u3as in South Wales of similar size DO have Executive Committees with that many members.

Being below strength means that we may not be able to provide the best standard services to members – below the standards offered by those other u3as

We can't do this without you.

We are in this position because we understood that the uncertain Pandemic conditions over the last 2 years would be a big barrier to potential volunteers coming forward. Hence we haven't asked before.

What do we need ? Starting end-February, early-March (see # below)

We need new people on the Committee to share duties with existing members – so that we can get more things done more quickly. Ideally, those people would become full Committee members – but this can be done gradually if they want to have some experience before committing to that. In particular:

Communications: helping **Owen Parry** with the Website, Beacon, Social Media

Group activities: helping **Nonn Vaughan** organise over 40 Group activities

Finance (Treasurer): working on finances with **Alison Firth**, taking over as Treasurer

External relations (S Wales Network): helping **Tony Baines** liaise with other u3as

How to get involved? Please start thinking of ways that you (or other members you know) could help. For example, you could think about the kinds of things you like to do - that you have experience of - that you think you are good at - that you may want to become good at. Previous experience of administrative and/or committee work could be useful but is definitely not essential.

#: A Members Letter. Please look out for a letter from me on this subject. It will give further detail about **i)** the nature of the Committee work **ii)** exactly how to start getting involved. At the same time, we will be involving all Convenors in this effort – so you will have a good way of finding out more and expressing your interest, with somebody directly supporting you.

Conclusion. As in my main article, public health conditions are set to improve dramatically, very soon.

Many thanks in anticipation.

Tony Baines

Chair Cardiff u3a

chair@cardiffu3a.org.uk

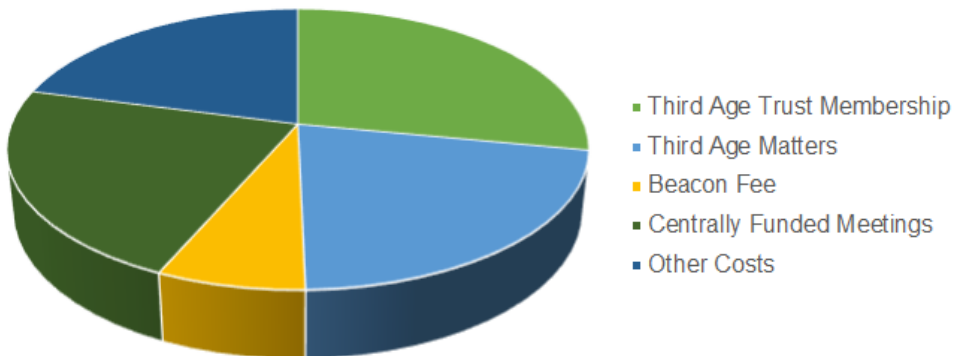
**SO NOW'S
THE TIME!**



Handling other peoples' money brings with it a responsibility to ensure that actions and procedures are performed correctly, and that money is not wasted or used inappropriately. So along with the expected duties of: handling the income and expenditure, operating the bank account and ensuring that mandates are updated as signatories change; the treasurer must verify and ensure that all expenditure is used exclusively in pursuance of the Cardiff u3a's charitable purposes. Provided that the latter is adhered to, and as a registered charity, The Cardiff u3a can claim Gift Aid on subscriptions. Should money from subscriptions be spent inappropriately our Charitable status would be at risk.

The treasurer proposes the subscription fees, having presented a budget (something which is usually 'on the go' and updated as the year progresses), they also advise the Committee on financial viability of any plans / proposed strategies. The regular monthly report (standing item at committee) should allow for any issues or concerns to be flagged up as they arise.

The Split of Members' Subscriptions



Subscriptions cover the Third Age Trust Membership fees, and their publication 'Third Age Matters' for those who want to receive it; Beacon fee; several centrally funded meetings such as: Convenors' day, Committee and AGM, New Members' Coffee mornings, South Wales Network, the monthly meetings are subsidised, and more recently, in 2020/21, the Zoom licence fees; and finally the other costs which include: postage, cen-

tral photocopying, stationary, copyright licencing agency licence, website and email charges, the Cardiff u3a magazine, PayPal commission and bank charges.

The aim is for Groups to breakeven. It has always been accepted that new groups and small groups may need a subsidy for a limited time. However, as face to face meetings restarted, some groups had lower attendances than expected and subsidies have been given. As we move to 2022, the aim to breakeven will be encouraged and may necessitate a rise in the attendance fee at group meetings, or a change of venue.

The Charity Commission (CC) dictates when an Independent Examination of the Accounts is required. This was expected in the financial year ending 31st August 2020, but with the cessation of activities due to the pandemic the trigger point of £25,000 income was not reached. As preferred by the CC we have a Reserves Policy, which ensures that we hold a minimum balance so that financial commitments and completion of the membership year can be fulfilled in the event of unplanned closure. At the other end of the scale it also guards against Charities ‘sitting on’ a pile of money and not spending it on it’s charitable purpose. For this reason in 2019 some Groups took advantage of utilising funds offered for extra workshops, teaching sessions or equipment needed for their groups.

Perhaps most feared by those unfamiliar with our ways is the preparation of the Annual Accounts. But with the use of the Beacon financial administration system, provided entries have been made for all transactions and the monthly bank reconciliations done, then the financial report is merely printed off – and all there is to do is a few tweaks (i.e. adding some categories together, and changing the font!).

Alison Firth, Treasurer 2018 - 2021

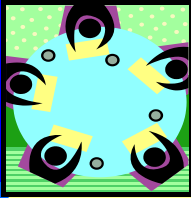


MEMBERSHIP OFFICER’S REPORT

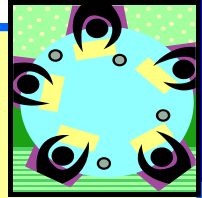
The Cardiff u3a has currently 678 members (January 2022)
Last year 112 members did not renew their membership.
This year (to January 2022) we have had 75 new members

£ The MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FEE - for continuing members paid by 31st March 2022 will be at the discounted rate of £10. After that date members renewing will be charged the full rate of £15





CURRENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021/2022



CHAIR	chair@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Tony Baines
SECRETARY	secretary@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Lesley Hales
GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR	groups@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Nonn Vaughan
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	memsec@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Kirsten Freeman
TALKS & OPEN MEETINGS ORGANISER	talks@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Mario Greening
BOOKKEEPER	treasurer@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Alison Firth
BEACON AND WEBSITE OFFICER	beacon@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Owen Parry

OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

ACCESSIBILITY OFFICER	access@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Lesley Hales
SOUTH WALES NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE	network@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Tony Baines
MAGAZINE EDITOR	magazine@cardiffu3a.org.uk	Mario Greening

NON COMMITTEE ROLE

LIAISON OFFICER		Linda Price
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Tony Baines

Chair

Tony has held this post since just before Christmas 2021, having been Vice Chair to Owen Parry since 2020. He gained valuable experience from the Committee's proactive handling of the Pandemic. He will use this in leading our efforts a) to serve all our members well and b) to be connected to the rest of the u3a.

The Chair serves members through various Committees and Meetings (with attention to u3a aims and Constitution), the activities of all Committee members and Convenors, representations from members and the operation of communications arrangements.

The Chair also acts in complaints and disciplinary matters and liaises as required with other u3a's and The Third Age Trust (TAT).



Post vacant

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair's key responsibility is to be able to deputise effectively for the Chair as necessary, being aware of all the requirements of the Chair's role.

The Vice Chair advises and assists the Chair and other Committee members - generally and with particular issues and projects as they arise.

Note: The Vice-Chair does not automatically succeed to the Chair.



Post vacant (Urgent need to fill this role)

Treasurer

The Treasurer is the member of the Executive Committee responsible for handling the financial affairs of the Cardiff u3a. This has to be in accordance with the Cardiff u3a Constitution, the wishes of the Committee, Charity Legislation and should follow Third Age Trust guidance.



Lesley Hales

Secretary

Lesley has held the post since January 2020. Her role, in consultation with the Chair, is to draw up the Agenda for the Executive Committee meetings, which are usually held once a month. Lesley then produces the Minutes, which are circulated to Committee Members and published on the Cardiff u3a website. She also takes the Minutes at the Annual General Meeting and furthermore helps Committee Members with any queries which they may have concerning compliance with the Constitution. Lesley makes the Annual Return to Third Age Trust, which supports u3as around the country.

She also sees her continuing role as helping and supporting other members of the Committee, and of course, the wider membership.



Nonn Vaughan

Groups Co-ordinator

A key activity, and perhaps the most rewarding part of the Group Co-ordinator's role is to visit all the groups to get to know how they work and what they need. It is only then that a Coordinator can recommend and book venues, source equipment, solve problems and advise on financial matters. Working closely with the treasurer and the rest of the Committee, to understand the financial and legal constraints u3a works under, is both important and interesting.

As well as working with established groups, the Coordinator meets new members to understand their interests and direct them to current groups and also finds out what new groups could be started. An organisation like Cardiff u3a has to grow to remain vibrant and up-to-date.

It is an absorbing role, at the heart of what u3a is all about..





Kirsten Freeman

Membership Officer

Membership Secretary, Kirsten supports people wanting to join Cardiff u3a via the paper process. This involves posting application forms and once the completed form is returned the information is loaded onto our Administrative Tool, better known as Beacon! A membership card is then posted to the new member. Membership data is sent to the national u3a so enabling members to receive their Third Age Trust magazines. Kirsten is also the first port of call for membership queries of new and old members. Kirsten also organises regular Coffee Mornings for new members.



Mario Greening

Talks and Open Meetings Organiser

Responsible for all that concerns the monthly Open Meetings. This includes finding a speaker for each month as well as the room preparation for the meetings, ensuring refreshments are on hand and that there is a friendly trio of 'volunteers' to man the welcome desk to record the members present, and ready to take your entry fee.

The Covid situation of course meant that face to face meetings were suspended for some considerable time resulting in the Open Meetings only being held by zoom. Not every speaker who had been booked, often months in advance, was keen or indeed able to present via zoom, resulting in a search for fresh zoom-friendly contributors.

Mario hopes that he has succeeded in bringing to you a varied and entertaining series of zoom talks and that the online registration procedures (for which he must thank Owen Parry) have not put you off joining each month.

Mario also makes you aware, if you are on email, of occasional informative zoom talks originating from outside the u3a movement.



Mario Greening Magazine Editor

Yes it's the same person as the Talks and Open Meetings Organiser! Like many on the Executive Committee Mario 'doubles up' on his responsibilities and therefore his work

load. If you are reading this then he will have been successful in compiling, editing and producing the latest edition of the Cardiff Magazine.



Owen Parry

Website and Beacon Administrator

When Owen retired after 35 years in IT, he swore he would never get involved with computers again. Which is why he is the Beacon administrator and Website person, obviously lacking in will power.

Beacon admin is easy, really, he says as not much changes on a day to day basis, and convenors and committee members in general know what they're doing. The period up to and including renewal of membership is rather more fraught, as that's the time ordinary members have to interact with the system and they are often confronted with the very, very fussy login process where a misplaced capital letter means a blank screen and no indication of why. Email your Beacon admin is the only answer.

Owen took over the website as well when the previous committee member's period of tenure was coming to an end. Owen didn't like the free system provided for u3a's as it seemed very unfriendly and difficult to manipulate. That prevented it being kept up to date in a timely fashion, which is essential for a good website. So that's been changed and whilst it's not the best site in the world, and he admits to being no design guru, it is at least easy to maintain and Owen always does any changes immediately on request.

We also have a Facebook page and a Twitter account, Owen admits, but is afraid that he rarely finds time or interest to exploit them. Offers of assistance gratefully accepted!



The Executive Committee have recently decided that there is a need for two new roles within the Cardiff u3a.



Lesley Hales

Accessibility Officer

Lesley's role is to help every member to access meetings and to participate in the Cardiff u3a to the utmost. Should any member require additional support to participate in a group meeting, or a monthly Open Meeting, then Lesley's role is to look into the possibility of clarifying whether that support can be provided.

Although every effort will be made to meet individual needs, some venues may not have the required facilities, particularly during the current pandemic.



Paper Advocate Post Vacant

The member of the Executive Committee responsible for ensuring that members of Cardiff u3a who do not have email and internet access are kept informed of the Cardiff u3a's activities.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We are looking to provide more **Services to members** by expanding the Committee.

These additional volunteers would help existing Executive Members carry out their tasks in a variety of essential areas! Contact any existing member of the committee for further details.



It is with great sorrow that we record the death of Eric Hurley in early December 2021. Our condolences go to Alison, his wife.

Eric was convenor of the very popular **Local History Group** who meet at the Heath Citizens Hall.



VAL MAIDMENT WRITES:

Eric was well known in Cardiff

u3a especially to those who attended the Local History Group meeting in the Citizens Hall at Heath Park. His sudden, unexpected death on the 2nd December was a shock to his wife Alison, his fellow walkers that day, his two sons, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.

The funeral on Friday afternoon on the 17th December at Briwnant Chapel, Thornhill Crematorium and after at the Manor Park Hotel, took the form of a Celebration of Eric's Life.

I first became good friends with Eric when Colin Merrick stepped down as Convenor of the Local History Group. It was regularly one of the most popular groups and no-one wanted to see the group close. Eric, myself and Rita Isaacs agreed to share the work. Later Mary Allen took over from Rita and later again, I stepped down to join another group.

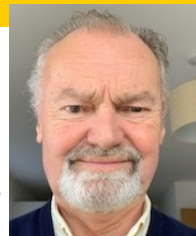
We kept to the same popular mixture of talks and visits covering a wide range of subjects- from the earliest settlement, its rapid growth during Victorian times, our parks, churches and people who have shaped our diverse and rich culture. We looked at artefacts, toured buildings and parks, listened to stories and asked questions.

Eric was above all, a family man who enjoyed his retirement even though he had a heart condition. He was active in other groups including woodcarving, Healthy Hearts and a walking group. He followed the Cardiff Devils Ice Hockey team and arranged away trips to support them. Eric and Alison had a canal boat and he loved to tell tales of exploring our waterways. They also enjoyed music concerts especially anything with brass bands.

Eric will be much missed.



As told by Nonn Vaughan and Tony Baines



'We came through the early summer, 2021, holding our collective breath that Covid numbers would retreat and that we could tentatively resume activities'.

On 5th August the Welsh Government announced that we were at Level 0 from the 7th and so groups could slowly officially re-start. Immediately upon having that opening-up freedom, we started to visit City Centre venues. We felt as though we were visiting a foreign land – both familiar and strange at the same time. In the eighteen months we had been away, pavement cafes had sprung up, every pub had sprouted outside tables and cyclists whizzed everywhere. The weather was balmy and things felt hopeful.

We knew from the Welsh Government guidelines that the five things we had to consider were - space, ventilation, time spent in a space, mask wearing and keeping hands and surfaces virus free. Once we were clear about those constraints, we realised that

The five things we had to consider were:- space, ventilation, time spent in a space, mask wearing and keeping hands and surfaces virus free.

finding venues which were big enough and had ventilation, would be our main challenge. The other things could be organised by group members.

Infection rates were coming down, but stringent restriction were still in place. We stood in doorways and on pavements to talk to venue managers. We filled in Track and Trace forms and exchanged u3a Covid safety protocols with the various venues, to make sure they were compatible. We tested window opening and paced out the measurements of rooms, to try to decide how many people would fit in comfortably and still be able to hear each other.

Three brave groups agreed to pilot the new venues. We realised that face coverings was an issue as was unvaccinated members.



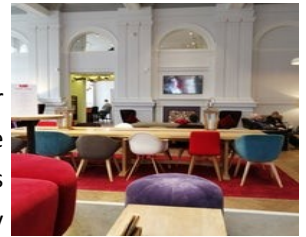
Most groups had, and still have at least one member who is shielding someone else and so not able to meet face-to-face so we explored the idea of hybrid meetings where most members are together in a room, but some join on zoom.



It was unfortunate that St David's Hall, The Virgin Money Lounge and the Library had not re-opened.



The United Reform Church, on Windsor Place, which had been a friendly home to many groups, was limited by access to the 1st floor at the time, while they waited for a stair lift. However, we soon saw the potential in the ground floor cafe which was only going to be used as a cafe one morning a week and realised that the church had audio-visual facilities and could house the larger groups which needed it



(*the church now has a chair lift to the upper floor Ed*).

It is clear that u3a members are an independent bunch and want to make their own decisions. It is equally clear that on practical and insurance grounds, the Committee had the formal responsibility of laying down some safety guidelines. All this was explained in full to everyone in the letters sent to all members – with a separate one to Convenors – by Chair, Owen Parry on 19 September 2021.

I was glad that we made the decision to put the onus on groups to look after themselves, following the guidelines which we made into a simple checklist. A key decision made as part of that was that the wearing of face-coverings at indoor activities would be optional rather than compulsory.

It is clear that u3a members are an independent bunch

The Committee agreed that the membership of any group was perfectly capable of deciding whether to meet face to face or not. The Welsh Government was advising, not insisting on measures. So we followed suit.



Looking back, we could not have overseen every safety aspect to the point of total protection, but what we could do was to provide groups with enough space, ventilation, cleaning material and guidance to enable members to decide for themselves, which I am glad to say, they have.

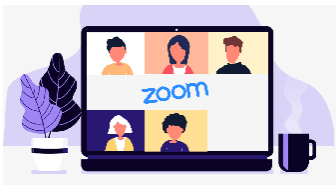
The editor, on behalf of all Cardiff u3a members records our thanks to Nonn and Tony for the immense amount of work that was needed to undertake this very essential task.

The Hybrid AGM November 2021

Hybrid: something that is formed by combining two or more things.



And that's what we did. The AGM this year took place in the church part of the URC, or 'sanctuary' as it is also called. The sanctuary has an audio-visual system which enabled us to show our slides on big TVs and drop-down white screens and have our dulcet tones amplified in the room.



Not wanting to exclude those who either by choice or ability were unable to attend, a Zoom meeting was also made available and many members took advantage of this.

Everything ran from one main laptop with our able Talks Organiser, Mario, using a second one to admit Zoomers to the meeting. The speakers – myself as Chair and Alison as Treasurer – were able to show our PowerPoint slides to the room and to the zoomers,

although we did have to use two microphones as the laptop ran out of appropriate sockets (don't ask!).



The big innovation was the use of Zoom polls for voting. We had a show of hands in the room but for Zoomers, we had on-screen voting which proved easy to set up and easy for members to use as we had very rapid results.

The one technical issue we had was the rather poor Wi-Fi signal in the sanctuary but we worked around this using my trusty iPhone to create a connection for the main laptop to the Internet.

But I can say it was with a big sigh of relief when we finished the meeting, still quorate and still connected!

Owen Parry Chair 2019 - 2021

Monthly Open Meetings

When you become a member of Cardiff u3a you automatically have access to the Monthly Open Meetings. Pre covid, these meetings were held with the speaker presenting to members at a large meeting room at the Masonic Hall. With the last such meeting taking place in February 2020.



September 2020 saw the monthly meetings restarted but via the online platform zoom, enabling members to access the presentation in the safety of their own homes. Tuition in using zoom was offered to all Cardiff members. The setting up required the earlier agreement of the Executive Committee to purchase a zoom account; which later became two accounts, and some software magic from Owen Parry in devising an online

booking process for each of the monthly presentations.

The **first** zoom Monthly Open Meeting was presented by Computer Group convenor David Harrison. His presentation 'Keeping safe online; tracking, scams and phishing exposed' was very appropriate as of course many of us were now substituting online for physical shopping and banking. This has been followed by a further 16 Zoom Open meetings, up to January 2022.

What of 2022?

The Executive Committee have agreed that the first four months will see the continuation of **zoom presented talks**, for which speakers have been duly booked. During this time member safety for Open Meetings will be reassessed. This may result in the continuation of zoom meetings or the restarting of face to face meetings or possibly a combination of the two. Whilst there are speakers willing to give a their presentation via zoom, many are still unwilling to present face to face.

You will find the **Open Meetings calendar on the Cardiff u3a website at:**

<https://www.cardiffu3a.org.uk/whats-on-and-when/monthly-meetings>

Zoom meetings to May 2022

15th February

Speaker: Stephen Wells; The story of the Butlins Holiday camps.

8th March

Bridgend u3a member Rowena Williams presents; 'Gunpowder, Treason and Plot' but with a difference! Find out more about this month nearer the date!

12th April

Cardiff u3a member Lesley Hales returns with another presentation: 'Hitler was defeated, despite the best efforts of one Staff Sergeant'.

10th May

'John Batchelor: Friend of Freedom' presented by Cardiff u3a member Dr. Jean Silvan-Evans.



The Open Meetings format yet to be decided for June onwards, depending on the wishes of the speakers. Face to face meetings when they resume, will take place at The Cornerstone, Charles Street.

Mario Greening; Talks and Open Meetings Organiser

The Executive Committee would like to put on record their thanks to **Owen Parry** who has been our Chair during the last 2 years. Owen has worked tirelessly to guide, not just the Committee, but also the wider Cardiff u3a membership.

He has led committee meetings via Zoom, not only chairing the meetings, but has handled the technical aspects as well. His experience in IT has meant that Executive meetings have been able to continue during the pandemic. Those meetings have had to make some difficult decisions about the running of Cardiff u3a, but Owen has calmly guided the meetings and supported committee members in making decisions which have hopefully kept the Cardiff u3a community together.



Not only has he kept in touch with members via the website and e-mail, he has not forgotten those who do not use the internet. He has regularly written to them, keeping them updated and included.

He has been available to any committee member who needed help with any aspect of their role on the Committee. His wide experience of managing meetings, communicating with members and ensuring that our legal responsibilities are met, has been reassuring and invaluable.

Although the Committee regrets that Owen has decided to stand down as Chair, we are pleased that he is remaining on the Committee, overseeing the Beacon Administration, until such time as a replacement is found.

So, once again, our many thanks to Owen.

The South Wales Network (SWN) ... and you!



Network organisation: all local u3as throughout the UK are independent service organisations for their Members. At the same time, they belong to an overall Movement that is called 'The Third Age Trust' (referred to as 'TAT') – as per the Third Age Matters (TAM) magazine many members will know about.

Like any organisation with thousands of parts to it, TAT (at its base in London) takes responsibility for deciding and communicating big matters – in particular, what is provided for members and the best ways for that to be delivered.

To carry that through - in ways that are consistent and equal – it is necessary to have some levels of organisation in between: these are known as 'Networks'. Committees operate at these levels:- South Wales / All Wales / All UK (the 'Network Link') / TAT central Office itself.

Cardiff's contribution to the Network organisation (2020-21): At the start of the pandemic one person on the Cardiff Executive Committee represented us at the South Wales network level (SWN). Meetings were held Quarterly - where all u3as (at least 28 on paper) in the area could share information about what they were doing in general. Involvement was entirely voluntary.

All local u3as throughout the UK are independent service organisations for their Members. At the same time, they belong to an overall Movement that is called 'The Third Age Trust' (referred to as 'TAT')

In the absence of the SWN Representative position being filled, our u3a has been represented by Tony Baines in addition to his main duties.

The SWN level: since March 2021 with the pressures of the Pandemic, the South Wales Network Committee increased greatly the work it was doing - moving to monthly meetings (zoom) and with a stronger need for all u3as to attend. All were asked to be very active in sharing experiences and ideas about how to adapt to Public Health information, together with Government Regulations.

For example: all u3a's were faced with the same need to decide on the ways they would move back into face-to-face Group activities - whilst being as correct and careful as possible about health protection for their members. This applied especially from the declaration of 'Level 0' in Wales at the beginning of August.

In particular, there was extensive sharing of ideas at SWN about so-called 'Risk Assessments' – that is, how the venues we used could be assessed as safe to meet in again. From within our Executive Committee we were able to use some of our expertise to suggest to others some best practice ways of:- coordinating with the staff at venues, setting standards for controlling the environments (as far as possible), recording and documenting that standards are met, communicating these new arrangements to convenors (for them to be confident in leading their Groups) and to all members.

The 'Checklist' (regarding the safety of venue environments) that members may well have seen being used by Convenors came out of this sharing of ideas at SWN. (Naturally, we consider the one we designed to be the best!).



As many of you will know, for Cardiff these new ways have meant many adjustments – including some Groups needing to change venues and change numbers attending. You will also know that our Committee (and others across the SWN) has supported Group activities that were chosen to be either remote-only (by 'Zoom' online meetings – for example Monthly Meetings, kept going very successfully by the efforts of Mario Greening) and so-called 'hybrid' meetings – where some are in-person and some are on-screen. A very successful example of this is the way the 2021 AGM on 9 November was conducted.

Beyond the SWN level: since September 2020, the requests for Cardiff involvement in Network business have widened greatly – that is, to join in the Wales and Network Link levels – resulting in Tony Baines being asked to attend more Meetings. One way in which Cardiff has been able to have an influence is regarding communications down the levels from TAT: our representative pointed out (to the Wales and Network Levels) where some information which was intended for all members was put out in inefficient and confusing ways. It is hoped that this kind of helpful feedback will be accepted and worked with to make improvements.

At present, Tony attends every SWN zoom Meeting and the occasional All-Wales Meetings and engages in the necessary ongoing correspondence around those attendances. In October, the Committee resolved that this must be held to a minimum until further notice - due to the workload effects on current Committee members arising from the high level of unfilled positions.

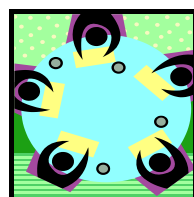
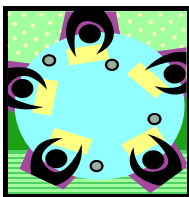
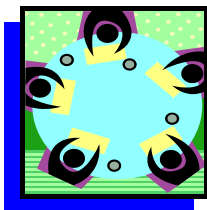


CARDIFF u3a
NEEDS YOU!!

**COULD YOU SPARE A
FEW HOURS TO SIT ON
THE COMMITTEE?
No experience needed.**



Interested! Contact Chair for details





Marilyn Guest u3a Photography Group



INTEREST (Activity) GROUPS

Cardiff u3a offers a wide range of interest groups to its members which are shown on the following two pages. Some meet once a week, some fortnightly, some once a month. However, some may yet have not restarted. Clicking on the link in blue (unless you are reading a paper copy) will enable you to send an email to the Convenor of a group that interests you. If there are any alterations to the list, then you can get up to the minute information at: [GROUPS](#)

If you are contemplating joining Cardiff u3a, You are also welcome to try a couple of taster sessions of our groups without having to join Cardiff U3A. Current details of the groups are on the web site [GROUPS](#) but please contact the Group Convenor first. You may be charged a small fee at some groups to cover the session costs.

Do you have an interest or hobby that is not listed on the following two pages?

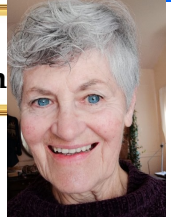
Then please consider starting a new group! Help with doing so is available from the **Groups Coordinator**, Nonn Vaughan at groups@cardiffu3a.org.uk who is always looking forward to expanding the range of activities we offer in Cardiff, and encouraging anyone with a particular interest, to set up a group and to help find other like-minded people.

**CURRENT CARDIFF U3A INTEREST (Activity) GROUPS
AND
CONVENOR CONTACT DETAILS**

All Things Welsh	Myfanwy Roberts	atw@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Art	Julie Guest	art.group@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Art Appreciation	Nonn Vaughan	art.apprec@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Book Group	Carole Ann Loveridge	book.group@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Bridge	Marjolein Whittaker	bridge@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Bus Pass Thursday	Mario Greening	bpt@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Canasta	Valerie A. Maidment	canasta@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Circle Dance	Pat Adams	circle.dance@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Coffee Morning	Marion Poyner	coffee@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Computer	David Harrison	computer@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Knit and Knatter	Shelagh Passey	craft@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Current Affairs Discussion	Nonn Vaughan	discussion@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Cycling	Robert Morris	cycling@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Digital Projects	David Harrison	digital@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Folk Singing	Michael Tynen	folk.singing@cardiffu3a.org.uk
French Conversation	Jackie Farrow	french@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Games	Michael Foster	games@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Gardening	Nonn Vaughn	gardening@cardiffu3a.org.uk
German	Linda Mahony	german@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Great Lives	Nigel Lyn Smith	great.lives@cardiffu3a.org.uk
History	Philip Stewart	history@cardiffu3a.org.uk
The Inquirers	Michael Young	inquirers@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Italian	Pauline Bezodis	italian@cardiffu3a.org.uk

Lightroom	David Harrison	lightroom@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Literature Through the Ages	Hilary Ryley	literature@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Local History	Nonn Vaughan	local.history@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Music Appreciation	Lynne Plummer	music.apprec@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Outings	Frank McLean	outings@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Philosophy and Spirituality	David Marsland	philosophy@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Photography	Jim Bartlett	photography@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Photography2	Michael Barnes	Photography2@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Prose and Poetry	Nigel Lyn Smith	prose.and.poetry@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Prose and Poetry 2	Nigel Lyn Smith	prosepoetry2@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Recorder	Marion Thomas	recorders@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Science	Nonn Vaughan	science@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Singing for Pleasure	Lynne Stewart	singing@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Spanish	Owen Parry	spanish@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Sunday Lunch	Shelagh Passey	sunday.lunch@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Swimming	Jeffrey Parkhouse	swimming@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Tai Chi	Mary Allen	tai.chi@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Walking	Mary Allen	walks@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Weekenders	Nonn Vaughan	weekenders@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Welsh Beginners	Robert Morris	welsh1@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Welsh Conversation	Jean M. Hughes	welsh.conversation@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Welsh Improvers	Robert Morris	welsh2@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Writers Enjoying Words	Richard Garman	writers@cardiffu3a.org.uk
Writers2	Owen Parry	writers2@cardiffu3a.org.uk

ART APPRECIATION Convenor: *Ronn Vaughan*



An enthusiastic group met in early December to discuss re-starting the Art Appreciation group. Since we no longer have the previous tutor, Mary Lace, we wanted to think about how we would run the group without a tutor. We discussed the various themes and strategies for introducing artists we like to the wider membership.



We decided to start with a visit to The National Museum of Wales to see the exhibition, **“The Rules of Art”**. The Museum is prepared to give us a guided tour as soon as we are able to meet indoors again.

John Akomfrah - Vertigo Sea (2015)

<https://museum.wales/cardiff/whatson/11098/The-Rules-of-Art/>

A short presentation on ‘Tiepolo, a 17th c Venetian’ artist followed. The picture here is one of four panels from the National Gallery. It is based on a popular sixteenth-century poem ‘Jerusalem Delivered’ set during the First Crusade.

Seated Man, Woman with Jar, and Boy ... Giovanni Battista Tiepolo

There is a wealth of material on-line and a great deal of knowledge within the group. We agreed that member-led sessions would be not only possible, but lead us into a greater understanding and appreciation of our chosen subjects. Our



only problem may be to decide which artist and their work to talk about first.

BRIDGE GROUP

Convenor: Marjolein Whittaker



A plea from the Bridge Group

The group is short of members, so no matter how rusty you are, please come and give us try. We'll soon get you up to scratch. We are a jolly bunch, playing under the maternal eye of our leader Marjolein, who ensures that after hand inquests are held in a friendly and civilised manner Recriminations are not allowed. We play every Monday 10am to 12noon at the United Reform Church, Windsor Place. So, I repeat, come and join us. Give us a try. You won't regret it.

From devoted member,
David Smith .



BUS PASS THURSDAY

Convenor: Mario Greening

It's a pretty good chance that if you are a member of Cardiff u3a you have a concessionary bus pass. Of course most of you put your pass to good use in your daily life. However, Bus Pass Thursday enables you to use your pass and travel by bus with other



members on a monthly basis, perhaps to destinations that you have yet to consider. BPTuesday has a trip once a month, as you guessed, on a Tuesday. There is no joining fee, no group meeting fee, leaving you all that extra money to spend on ... yourself!! So what does a typical trip consist of?

We start from a central Cardiff bus stop, depending of course on the destination. Travel will take perhaps an hour



depending again on the destination and sometimes involves more than one bus; for example when we went to Monmouth or The Mumbles, which of course also takes a little more time.



Arriving at the destination we refresh ourselves with coffee or tea at a carefully chosen venue, but cakes are rather high on the

agenda too!

We then as a group explore one or more places of interest within the destination. As an example, in Brecon we explored the cathedral followed by a trip on a canal



boat as well as taking in the shops. Lunch will be at a suitable venue; chosen with care on a pre trip expedition by the convenor, Mario. After our lunch there is often a chance to do a little self guided wandering (shops?) before we gather at the bus stop to catch the bus back to Cardiff. As a rough guide, we leave Cardiff between 9.30 and



10.00 and arrive back about 4.30 to 5.30 though these times can of course vary with the destination. We have also travelled further; both Bath and London, but on a train as it would be too long a journey by bus.

BPThursday restarted in September 2021 but what happened during the period March 2020 to August 2021? Step forward zoom!

Regular meet-ups of members were soon organised for March.

Mario realised that the group members needed something to replace the 'fix' of monthly Thursday trips, so the cancelled visits to Hereford, Mumbles, Usk and Caerleon were visited **virtually** with material compiled and sent to members in a 'real time' process just as if we were all actually taking the trip. These can be seen at

<https://www.cardiffu3a.org.uk/groups/bus-pass-thursdays>

Many members also organised themselves, as did other groups, to meet up for coffee and a chat. BPThursday devotees met at the outdoor café within Cardiff castle ... on Thursdays of course.



The restart with a small group of BPThursday members, was Cowbridge once more. This was to establish that such trips were safe to run and in accordance with guidance laid down by the Cardiff u3a and the Welsh Office. That trip was found to be safe and included lunch at the Bear Hotel; in their 'cube' dining area. Further trips were set up and we visited Caerphilly and its castle, Newport and its museum (well worth a visit by anyone) before our annual Christmas lunch at Valentinos in Cardiff Bay. More to come including Castell Coch, Abergavenny, Hereford and Raglan.



COMPUTER GROUP

Convenor: David Harrison

It was suggested that members might be interested in finding out how one group – the Computer Group – has handled and coped with the Covid pandemic by using Zoom. We haven't actually met in person since the beginning of the 2020 session in September. We were quick out of the blocks however even before that and we held our first Zoom meeting on the 23rd April even before the Committee had taken out a subscription to Zoom I believe. Since then, almost without a break, we've met virtually every fortnight.



Supporting us in our meetings we've kept Notes and added them to our website "Thought grazing" at <https://thoughtgrazing.org> – which any Cardiff u3a member is welcome to view by just sending an email message to computer@cardiffu3a.org.uk

We've had an attendance of between 12 and 24 at our meetings with 16 being an average number, so that means probably 50% of the group have been able to participate at any meeting, but of course it's not always the same 16!!! We've adopted a new way of organising the meetings to match with the virtual world, focussing on getting members to share issues and problems, matters of interest and general chitchat about matters digital. It's become a much more social group with everyone encouraged and requested to participate – when it's their turn at the very minimum. This has led to reduced time for presentations and facilitator-led talks. Some might say this is a good thing ... I couldn't possibly comment!

The pluses ...



- We've enjoyed each others company and supported each other through these difficult times.
- The technology has really helped, since we've found screen-sharing to be an excellent way of showing and telling what we're discussing. . . [Not having to rely on the venue Wi-Fi has also been a real boon!]
- The technology, I think, has actually made us much more inclusive as every member has a chance to make a contribution – far more so than when we met face-to-face.

... and the minuses.



• Nothing can make up for meeting people face-to-face, the chance for casual chatter, the chance to add a cup of coffee or share lunch before (or after) the meeting.

• Perhaps the number of informational presentations has dropped, but this doesn't seem to have been a factor in attendance.

• As a technology group we would hope that our members would find using Zoom relatively straightforward. Hopefully, we can still encourage some "lapsed" members to try this way of meeting, but we do accept that some members are perhaps "over-Zoomed" as well.

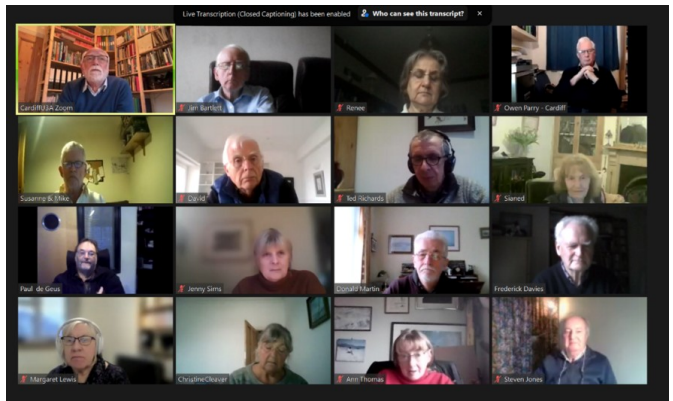
Could we manage so-called hybrid-meetings?

The occasional one-off event with some members remote on zoom and some face-to-face might work but it would have to be a presentation-style meeting.

We have concluded that we might try an alternate meeting style when we are able to return to face-to-face, with Zoom meetings still being scheduled.

Would we miss meeting over zoom?

In the end, probably not, because the benefits of face-to-face would outweigh any benefit from the new form of interaction, much as we like it. However, I think we'd want to take some of what we've learnt from our Zoom meetings into the way we organised our in-person meetings in the future. Roll on that day when Zoom doesn't have that view!



Our meeting on January 6th 2022





CIRCLE DANCE Convenor: Pat Adams

Put on the Music and Dance!

The circle dance group has done just that throughout the pandemic – both weekly on Zoom from 5 May 2020 and, at last, in person again last autumn, fortnightly as before, at Tabernacl – well-ventilated, unjoined, and distanced! Not quite the same as pre-Covid but joyful none the less. What better way is there to keep your spirits up when the world closes in around you?

In the beginning, as for everybody else, the technology was a challenge. Eventually, through experimenting and buying new equipment, plus increased familiarity with zoom settings, the transmission quality did improve. However, internet connections can be unstable and for participants there may sometimes be a time-lag between audio and video. Fortunately for me, as convenor, I have amazingly patient group members!



Of course, the programme of dances had to change to suit this new environment – dancers were perhaps watching on only a small i-phone screen, on their own in various living room spaces, with furniture to be negotiated. Dances had to have clear steps and arm movements for online teaching, with a sequence straightforward enough to remember when dancing at home.

A lot for us all to learn. Still, zoom has now become a regular feature in our lives, and a good way to keep us connected – helping to give the week a framework so that days don't just run into each other.

Alongside this has been an opportunity for U3A dancers to join other dancers at Insole Court gardens for regular outdoor dancing – where we have all discovered that Cardiff



weather is far drier than we ever thought – at least on a Thursday morning – and dancing on grass among majestic trees to the song of the birds is where circle dances should be danced!

Some of the dancers who have continued to dance throughout the pandemic were members of the original U3A circle dance group of 2013. I appreciate their friendship, loyalty, enthusiasm, and willingness to adapt and also to welcome new members. It has been very special finding ways to keep the group going through these trying times. It has felt important for our health and our wellbeing, and to maintain the connections that we have built up over so long a period.



Friendly chat at the end of a zoom session

Thank you to the U3A committee who work hard behind the scenes to enable us to keep going. Let's hope that many more of our regular activities can restart in 2022! **NEW MEMBERS** needed for the group. Interested! Then contact Pat at circle.dance@cardiffu3a.org.uk



CURRENT AFFAIRS Convenor: Nonn Vaughan

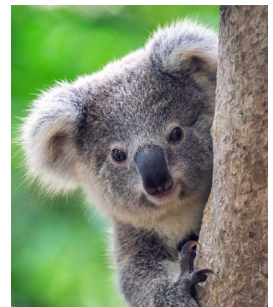
The Current Affairs Discussion Group resumed indoor meetings in October in a new location so that we could be sure to have plenty of room, with good ventilation for what has, always been a large group.

During the previous eighteen months, some of the group continued to meet outdoors, bringing seats and buying coffee at a kiosk. This was to prove a lifeline, providing company as well as discussion, especially for those in the group who did not like the zoom experience. In early spring, the group even braved the weather, meeting under a convenient bandstand in rain and sleet.

Those of us who used zoom really enjoyed it. We soon got over the technical difficulties and the ease of hearing the arguments really paid off. We continued our usual practice of suggesting topics before we meet and giving a brief introduction if we wish. In this way, we discuss a wide variety of topics, with something for everyone.

Since we resumed in October, we have covered topics such as:

- How to pay for Social Care
- The exit from Afghanistan
- The House of Lords Bill on Assisted Dying
- The benefits of pen and paper over electronic communication
- Racism and anti-Semitism in cricket
- How to enforce mask wearing on public transport
- The Rittenhouse not guilty verdict in the USA and its implications for right wing vigilantism
- Anti-vax extremist anger and violence in the Netherlands
- Koala bear numbers have fallen by 40%. What more evidence is needed before action is taken?
- Has the North of England been short changed on transport?



We do our best to give a voice to all sides of any argument and to remain accepting and friendly. It is certainly much better than shouting at the radio.





CYCLING GROUP

Convenor: Rob Morris

This cycling group has only recently been formed and we are looking to recruit new members in readiness for more



Winter rides and to be really up and running for the Spring.

Rides, as mentioned have now begun and recently we started one from Bute Park in

Central Cardiff and rode up the beautiful Taff Trail to Tongwynlais.

Group rides will be of both short and long duration - depending of course on members' requirements and abilities.



The use of Electric Assist Bikes is fine but please be careful not to go too fast !

Visits to taverns and cafes along the route will be an enjoyable diversion, as demonstrated by Martyn Williams, Rob and Kevin Gregory at the Lewis Arms.



Our intention is to mix some exercise with interesting views of the city and surrounding countryside

and, of course, to have a chance to socialise.



Members could help one another - such as advice on bike purchase, clothing and bike repairs.

Nationally, the u3a is in the process of forming a national network and this will prove to be a valuable source of information to us. More news as it arrives.

The group is entirely for the benefit of us, the members. If you have any ideas or wish to help shape the group into a well organised unit and ready for the Tour de France :-)) then please join us.

GERMAN GROUP

Group Contact: Nicola Buckley



A growing group which gives German speakers an opportunity to have a general chat about whatever they want to talk about, in relaxed surroundings.

There is no agenda or programme just people meeting up once a month for a coffee and a chat - in German, and it doesn't matter about ability.

The group meet at 11am on the **third** Tuesday in the month. However, please check the [Cardiff u3a calendar](#) before setting out

GREAT LIVES Convenor: Lyn Smith

What constitutes a 'great life'? I suspect that we all have different views on which person, dead or alive, is deserving of that epithet. Therein lies the attraction of taking part in this group. A member can select a person that they deem worthy of presenting to the rest of the members and this then leads to discussion as to the merits or otherwise of that selection.

Often the subject has excelled in a particular field of arts or sciences, maybe has shown courage in adversity, has become an icon of history or has in some way transformed people's lives. Some lively discussions have taken place over some inclusions, such as many of the following. Napoleon, for example, had a massive influence on events in the late 18th and early 19th centuries but was it a positive one? Is that criteria relevant?



Edith Cavell died for sheltering soldiers in the First World War from the Germans. To those on the side of those rescued she was a heroine, but to the Germans she broke the rules and was also deemed a spy.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a deeply religious man who stood up for his beliefs and helped many followers, but who was accused by the Germans of plotting assassinations and was subsequently killed.

Robespierre was a controversial figure too. Some contributions that we have had were easier to accept with little antipathy generated. Among these were Beethoven, Robert Owen, Mel Brooks, Mark Twain.



Whilst **Mary Anning** and George Gershwin are some of the less controversial subjects we have covered. So, if you would like to put forward some great lives for discussion then come and join the group.



ITALIAN CONVERSATION Convenor: Pauline Bezodis



The group has made it thus far through the pandemic and, although it was a challenge for many of us to begin with and not all of us succeeded, zoom kept us together and in touch and we are grateful to the Cardiff u3a for providing it for us. As a fairly new group, still getting to know each other and building up friendships, I think we may have floundered without zoom.

No, the Italian conversation group didn't get to Venice but enjoyed lunch and a pre Christmas get together at Ciliegino's in St David's Centre.

Having said that, we were delighted last spring and summer when we were able to meet face to face outdoors and, weather permitting, our meetings took place in Bute Park cafes or members' gardens. We eventually settled on the outdoor cafe in the Castle grounds which was perfect for our needs and covered by giant umbrellas too. We decided to continue there as long as we could and made it as far as mid October when a chilly day made us rethink our plans. We considered several venues but settled on Ciliegino's restaurant upstairs in the food area of St David's Centre. It is an open, airy space and already we had links there with one of the owners when he was visiting from Sicily. (A few months before the pandemic, one of their chefs made it to the UK finals of Best Pizza, held in London. Those of us who have eaten there would recommend their pizzas and many other dishes too.)

It's come full circle and, sadly, we are back to using zoom but looking forward to 'resuming normal service' asap.

We are happy to have picked up a few new members during the last year who have contacted me through Beacon and have come along to join us.



David Harrison: The Lightroom Pantry Group



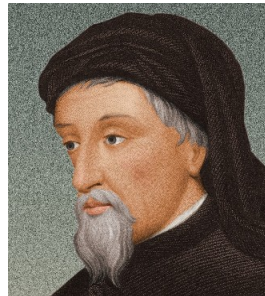
LITERATURE THROUGH THE AGES

Convenor: Hilary Riley

As its name suggests, the aim of the Literature Through the Ages group is to work our way through the literary canon.

Having started with **Chaucer over a decade ago**, we have recently reached the 20th century. We started Zooming on March 25th 2021, with Nonn Vaughan getting us online whilst I tried to ‘chair’

the meeting. We continued Zooming right through the summer with Janet Warren very kindly pressing the buttons. As we usually go round the table giving our views on the book, author and background, the Zoom format has worked well for us – even enabling one member to join from France!

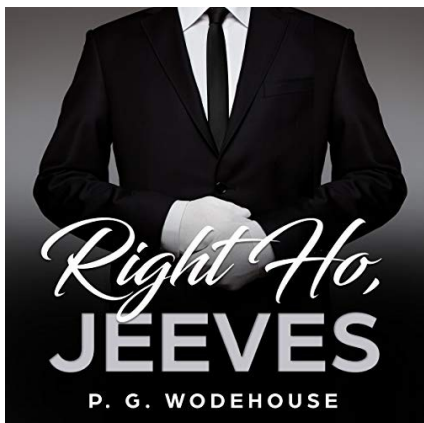


We have read Hemingway, Somerset Maugham and widened our horizons with ‘The Nine Tailors’ by Dorothy Sayers. We didn’t agree about ‘The Burnt Out Case’ by Graham Greene, but all found ‘The Radetzky Mark’ by Joseph Roth an example of good writing. By great coincidence, in November we read ‘Passing’ by **Nella Larsen** just as the film came out.



We have had two face-to-face meetings recently in the old café of URC, and found the room very conducive, as it is well-ventilated and the acoustics work well for the group discussion. Sadly, but necessarily, we will be back to using Zoom in January, given current conditions, when we will try a different genre by reading ‘**Right Ho, Jeeves**’ by **PG Wodehouse**.

New members are always welcome to join the discussion.



As a group, we very much appreciate Nonn’s work in getting us onto zoom, as well as finding a suitable room for our meetings.



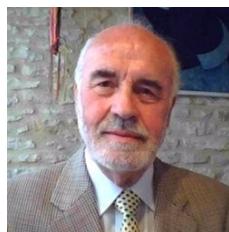
MUSIC APPRECIATION GROUP

Convenor: Lynne Plummer



Music Appreciation has been kept alive for several months thanks to the suggestion made by Mario Greening, early in 2021, that perhaps I could approach a very experienced speaker from the Abergavenny U3A music appreciation group, who had lots of music talks at his fingertips. He used to be a speaker on cruise ships in his retirement from being a pharmacist. His knowledge of music is extensive and he really enjoys putting his points across, taking care to illustrate them with lots of wonderful illustrations, which he even makes change in time with the music he's playing.

My thanks to **Malcolm Meadows** knows no bounds and my thanks are also due to Mario, who has been Master of the Zoom for nearly all the talks we've enjoyed! There has been a stalwart group of about 25 of us every time Malcolm was to speak. I hope we can bring those numbers up in this new year, as we have to get used to staying in our own homes for talks.

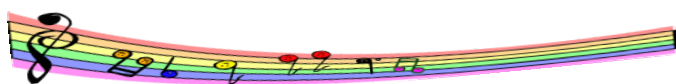


During the weird weeks of lockdown I have tried to keep the membership informed by email about key events in the music calendar, some of which we have been able to attend by Zoom or via YouTube, a useful tool used by several musical ensembles as a method of keeping their own music 'live'. For a while it was possible to go in person to the Royal Welsh College, to St David's Hall and to the Millennium Centre, for those prepared to sit through a performance properly distanced and masked. It's obviously out of all our hands as to when things will be safely returned to what we used to know as normal. In the meantime I have been plotting quietly to myself what we might listen to in the months to come. For some time my hope was that we would reopen for business, face-to-face in the City URC, but these days that's uncertain, so the Zooms will plough on for now, with the intervention of Those Who Know How, and I hope that many of you will overcome your reluctance to attend the talks



that way. Surely it's better than nothing? Meantime, don't forget the informative programmes which start at 06h30 every morning and the daily concerts in the afternoon and evening on Radio 3, with the occasional opera thrown in from the Royal Opera House or the Met. If your preferred station is Classic FM you will already know their time-table without my help. Just be sure to keep listening to music. It lifts the spirits; it soothes the soul; basically it's good for you!

In February John Sadler will give us part two of his talk about vocal technique. The future talks will depend on who is free, but I will do my best to keep them as varied as possible.



Marilyn Guest - u3a Photography Group

Poetry and Prose Group Convenor: Lyn Smith

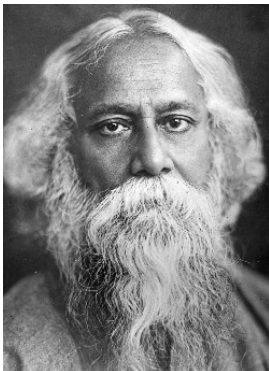
“The whole joy of reading aloud comes from the act of sharing; the known reactions of both parties in the undertaking; the mingling of emotions as the work slowly unfolds....” (Oliver Edwards, ‘Reading aloud’).



That, in essence, is what the Poetry and Prose group is all about. However, it is more than that.

As Opsimaths (yes, good word that – it means people who begin to learn or study late in life), we also introduce elements of learning whereby individuals give brief talks on aspects of literature whether it be on specific writers or periods of literary history. There have been quizzes and for the personal touch we will be introducing ‘My 5 Favourite Reads’ by group members.

The main element of our meeting is the reading aloud of monthly extracts that relate, sometimes rather loosely, to the chosen theme. Individuals, each in turn, provide 2 short readings from novels, short stories, poems or even plays which others can comment on. Some contributions are personal, some moving, some funny and some can even be a bit risqué! Writers from all over the world are presented (I like to champion Welsh authors and poets - both old and current) and we have had some self-penned efforts. People are introduced to writers that they may not have encountered before and old favourites are always popular. Some recent themes have been ‘Nostalgia’, ‘Pets’, ‘Fashion’, ‘Nightmares’ and ‘Insults’ (a cracker that one). Forthcoming ones will be ‘Light’, ‘Music’ and ‘Sleep’ with talks on Gerard Manley Hopkins, Cardiff Authors and Ogden Nash planned.



The following poem was written by **Rabindran Tagore** and is an example of a poet to whom I had never been exposed before I joined the Poetry and Prose group.

He is regarded as the father of modern Indian literature and some of his work is very intimate and moving. I could have selected many but, hopefully, this one will resonate with many of you Here overleaf is his poem; The Gift

The Gift

'I want to give you something, my child, for we are drifting in the stream of the world.

Our lives will be carried apart, and our love forgotten.

But I am not so foolish as to hope that I could buy your heart with my gifts.

Young is your life, your path long, and you drink the love we bring you at one draught and turn and run away from us.

You have your play and your playmates. What harm is there if you have no time or thought for us.

We, indeed, have leisure enough in old age to count the days that are past, to cherish in our hearts what our hands have lost forever.

The river runs swift with a song, breaking through all barriers. But the mountain stays and remembers, and follows her with His love.'

Rabindran Tagore

WRITERS ENJOYING WORDS Convenor: Richard Garman

Pat Stowell writes:

We are hoping to resume our face to face meetings *shortly, and so abandoning zoom.*

However, we will be holding on to one part of our Covid working which we found helpful.



We have been asking members to send their work in online & these are circulated for discussion. In the olden days, we just listened as they were read and then passed rather superficial comments. The quality of critique and discussion has benefitted, so we plan to keep that going.





WRITERS 2 GROUP

Convenor: Owen Parry

**Necessity being the mother of invention,
we added WhatsApp to FTP, email and
web browsing**

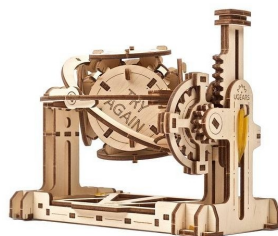
No, you haven't stumbled on a write-up for the Computing Group. This was our solution to lockdown. The key question is how do you let other members of the group see what you have written and then allow them to share comments. Well, the sharing of comments is quite easy – we used WhatsApp in a group so that everyone could see the comments.



But the writing itself was more complex. If you normally use a mobile phone to communicate, including WhatsApp and email, trying to read a five-page document within a WhatsApp chat can be quite daunting. Yes, it can be done but there are other ways. And not everyone can run WhatsApp on several devices where longer documents are handled more easily.

So writers would send their submissions to me as convenor by email and I would convert them to PDF files, adding authorship if necessary to preserve copyright, and use FTP (file transfer protocol) to load them up to the Cardiff U3A web server, into a different folder each 'meeting'. I would then send the folder address to everyone who could use whatever device they desired to browse the documents, assemble their comments and then post them on WhatsApp on the 'meeting' day.

This allowed us time to comment over the whole day and I would wrap things up towards the later afternoon when we would choose topics for our next fortnight's efforts. One member has a random word selector which proved very useful when we couldn't think what to write next.



So we're back face-to-face now, but we've had some

members come in on Zoom as well and we're still writing. We're agog for more of Keith's detective story, Wendy's homeless man in the garden shed kept us hooked, Peter's sci-fi opened new avenues, Mary, Gemma and Bev's poems lifted us and the other Wendy's stories were (and are) always interesting and we've had lots more.



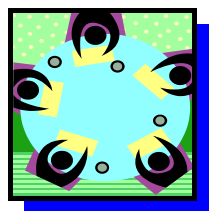
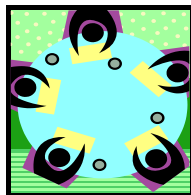
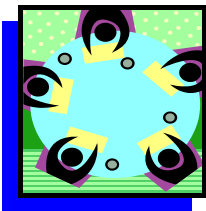
We've had new members and new horizons opening up. Never written before but fancy stringing a few words together? Come and join us, new blood (or romance, historical, thriller, poetic, crime or something a bit literary) always welcome.



CARDIFF u3a NEEDS YOU!!

**COULD YOU SPARE A
FEW HOURS TO SIT ON
THE COMMITTEE?
No experience needed.**

[**Interested! Contact Chair for details**](#)





BLACK ANGEL in the PARK

Winged bride; saluting the dead.
Immobilised for one hundred years.
Your cold heart feels no summer warmth.
Unseeing eyes fail to absorb the perennial spring confetti.
You cannot touch the butterflies of multi-culturalism
As they taste the nectar amongst the worn pathways,
or hear new voices as they play.
You were here before their birth.
Only the wind kisses the chiselled names on the stones
beneath your feet.

This poem was written about the Memorial in Grange Gardens, Grangetown, Cardiff. It contains the names of men from Grangetown who died in WW1 and also additional memorial stones; one relating to the men whose names are not mentioned on the memorial and the other paying tribute to those lost in WW2.

Zena Mabbs, December 2021

Many of our members will have experienced the lows of covid induced separation from among others, their grandchildren.

Here is a double sonnet penned by Ray Pearce, reflecting on missing his granddaughter during the first covid lockdown in 2020.

Missing Gwen

Once upon a long distant time, now done,
Before the whole wide world closed down in fright,
We had days of great adventure and fun.
We laughed as "Winnie" swung left and right
Balanced carefully in the hanging strap
Rocking to the sway of the stop-start bus.
At Playgroup showing you could run and clap,
Knocking-over, squeezing-in, never fuss,
And buttered toast eaten in mouth-size squares.
Before we say goodbye we group to sing
And put aside the cuddly toys and bears
And gather close together in a ring
To point to the ceiling, point to the door,
Point to the window and point to the floor.

Then, home, spent time to take a little rest
To the gentle rolling of the pushchair,
And after a debris-strewn lunchtime mess
Spotting gulls and magpies in the sky's glare
On our library trip to find you books
Where you would sit on the high purple seat,
Bracketed, flicking pages, intense looks.
Such small joys and pleasures grew week by week
That now there gapes a hole I cannot plug
The very shape and sound and sight of you.
No hand to hold, no chortling you to hug,
Those special days we spent now seem so few;
Feelings much more than I could truly say,
I deeply yearn for their return some day.

A photo of Gwen and Ray at Victoria Park taken after some of the covid restrictions had been eased.



Dorothy Alkhafaji wrote this recently to share with other members of **the writers group** and thought that other people might enjoy it as it is topical.



THE BIG ISSUE

Who are you, dark traveller from a land far away



That I happened to meet in Llanishen
one day?

In your colourful clothes, baggy trousers and blouse

Are you there to chastise us, our shame to arouse

Did you come here with dreams of a much better life

Wretched of the earth left behind you, no more war or strife

And then find yourself living your own Grapes of Wrath

Behind walls you can't conquer, a new stony path

Do you think of the children that wait for you there

Will they think you've forgotten and no longer care

As you offer your wares to the folk on their way

To park up their trolley with a "Have a nice day"

Your inadequate outfit's now clinging and wet

And it's clear from your face that you've not sold one yet

So I take back my pound from the lock on the stand

And weep as I place it in your outstretched hand



Apart from u3a Zoom meetings, what have I been doing this year asks Patricia?

One of my children sent me a DNA kit from Ancestry for Christmas 2020. I sent the test away and the results came back about 6 weeks later. It confirmed what I had always thought – there was nothing exciting in my DNA. My ancestors had always been based in the British Isles. Not a hint of anything exotic.

The other part of the Ancestry information was intriguing, though. My closest DNA match on the database was someone I had never heard of. I looked at the information that was public about this lady, and recognised one of the surnames. I knew about a great-aunt who had given birth to a son in 1933, but had moved away and lost contact with the family. Could she be the link?

I sent a message to the DNA match, 'Wendy', and she replied within a couple of hours, very excited. Her father was in his 80s, and had grown up not knowing his origins because he had been informally adopted. After checking birth dates, and the 1939 Register, we realised that he was not the son that I knew about, but seemed to be a younger brother.

The 1939 Register for son no.1 showed an amendment of surname: fortunately the new surname was unusual. Guessing that he had also been adopted, and probably lived in or near Bristol, I found the descendants of son no.1.

I suggested to my new cousin, Wendy, that she might send for the Death Certificate of my great-aunt (her potential grandmother) to see where she lived, and who registered the death. When the certificate came back from the office in East Anglia, there was another surprise. The informant was named as 'daughter-in-law' of the deceased. So there had to be another brother.

Next, came some 'cyber-stalking'. Again, I was lucky because it was a fairly unusual surname. I found the marriage certificate and the name of son no.3. There was also a family business in the small town in East Anglia where they lived, so we found the names of his descendants. We did not want to intrude on the lives of people in their

80s, or to cause any kind of shock, so my cousin Wendy emailed one of the daughters of son no.3 at the business address. She received a text saying that her father did not wish to know anything about his ancestry, but she mentioned that he had a sister, who would probably want to contact Wendy, as she was interested in family history. (This was sibling no.4).

To cut a long story short, I arranged a Zoom meeting with all the new cousins in July, and, at the beginning of October, some of us met up (true Long Lost Family style) in a hotel in Gloucestershire for a brunch. Wendy's father was quite overwhelmed to find that, far from being an only child, he has three siblings, although he has only been able to meet his sister so far. I am delighted to have found many lovely second-cousins whose existence I would be unaware of were it not for DNA, the Internet, and a bit of 'cyber-stalking'



Pat is second from the right

This photograph was taken in 1925 at the wedding of one of my great-aunts. All of my great-aunts and great-uncles are in the picture, but the one who went 'missing' is sitting next to the bride (her sister).



Brother and sister after they met. Neither knew of the other's existence until this year

Patricia Thomas

“Mario, I notice in your email of yesterday that you are seeking contributions to the u3a magazine, and it occurs to me that I may find something useful to you”.

Of course I had to read Bill’s email

Which went on to say -

“Over the past couple of years I have been writing short essays on various matters for my grandchildren, who seem to enjoy reading them - whether you think your readers would is another matter”.

So here goes -

Winston Churchill

I am writing my recollections of Winston during the Second World war. I know that Churchill has been described by some modern “wise guys”, as bad man because of being racist or some other sorts ist. Racist possibly, many people were at that time. Bad man? - certainly not!; like any other human being, he made mistakes, but when he became Prime Minister in May 1940 he had more knowledge of world affairs and of government than any other living politician. Moreover he had the courage to apply that experience, when most other men would have shied away from such a demanding job.



When Adolf Hitler was flexing his muscles in Europe, Winston warned of the need for British rearmament but his warnings were largely ignored. The pictures of the then Prime Minister in 1938, Neville Chamberlain, getting out of his little aeroplane after a meeting with Adolf, waving a piece of paper, and saying “peace in our time”, was a great relief. How wrong we were.

Hitler had ignored any promises of peace when his armies swept into Czechoslovakia, Austria and Poland. Cities were bombed, civilians were attacked, and Jews were sent to the concentration camps. Great Britain was the next aim of Hitler, and he very nearly succeeded, but for the RAF and the Battle of Britain. Churchill was there organising the building of aircraft, the secret development of radar, while the men and women of the RAF bravely fought in the sky the enemy planes which came over the channel with their bombs.

Who are these modern wise guys who criticise Churchill? What do they know of the circumstances which existed at that time, when Britain stood alone to defy such a powerful enemy.

I still recall in those times, hearing his voice over the radio. In his speech in the House of Commons on becoming Prime Minister he outlined his plans and he finished by saying "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat". After the Battle of Britain "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed, by so many, to so few". And again his defiant "We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall never surrender". And finally, "Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty and so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth and Empire lasts for a thousand years men will still say, THIS was their finest hour". It was not just the words he spoke, the power of his personality came clearly over the radio.

His image was also characteristic - homburg hat, a cigar, and his fingers in the shape of a "V" (for victory, not anything else). The nation loved him and cheered him for his steadfast efforts in leading the nation.

As the war ended, the country exhausted and spent up, Churchill was no longer seen as the man to get the country up on its feet again, and the job was given to Clement Attlee, and that is another story. The fact remains that Winston was a great man of his time, a greatness which far outweighed any defects perceived with modern eyes.

William Potter



Enquiries from the Editor resulted in the following.

Hannah, one of Bill's grandchildren writes:

My Grandfather had always told me snippets about his history when I was younger, which was interesting, but I found it difficult to put these events into any kind of context when I was a child. I spent time watching a program about WW2 when I was isolating with COVID 19 and became much more interested in history. This coincided with my grandfather sending me short written essays on particular topics in his history which I found fascinating because I had more understanding of general history and could see where the events he described fitted into the wider context.

So, well done Bill! His grandchildren are pictured below. At the beginning of this article did you think that they were still at school?



A further poem contributed by Zena Mabbs

THIS WAS YOUR LAST WINTER

**You wore a sparkling gown of frost so valiantly.
Each crystal turned your fronds to a magic display.
Still and stiff through Winter's days.**

**Afterwards, the snow powdered your form,
Waited a week before gently melting.
It left you resplendent, still virile and green.
You stretched to reach the hope of Spring.
But at the edges decay and crispness had begun.**



**Someone's tender touch endeavoured to
halt the inevitable.
By Summer
You were just
A husk.**

How to get the best out of your iPhone camera

Five tips aimed at those who want to improve their photographs. Words and images by **Vic Spears**

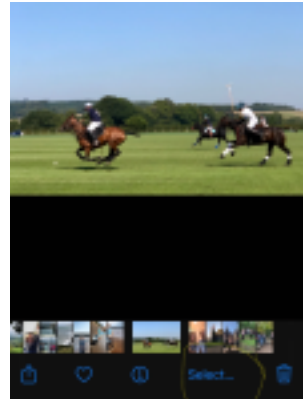
AVOID CAMERA SHAKE / BLURRED PHOTOS ! Keep the camera steady by holding the iPhone with both hands and keep your elbows pressed into your body. Even better, lean against a solid object (wall, doorframe, gate, etc). To make sure the focus is right, you can tap with your finger on the screen where you want the focus to be sharp before pressing the shutter.

'SELFIE' (USING THE FRONT CAMERA) Instead of trying to jab the shutter to take the photo (it might come out shaky and/or crooked), use the self-timer instead, and then choose just the best from the 10 shots the camera will take.

GROUP PHOTO Rather than the 'selfie' approach, use the back camera (it is higher quality), prop the iPhone somewhere steady, frame your shot, set the self-timer and press the shutter, then run and join the group! After the photo has been taken, choose just the best from the 10 shots the camera will take.

CAPTURE A FAST-ACTION SUBJECT Use the Burst Mode rather than rely on trying to click the iPhone shutter at what you hope is the correct time. Then pick the best of the sequential images taken by the iPhone.

GETTING THAT BLURRED WATER EFFECT A normal photo will 'freeze' the water, so if you like the blurred water effect, use Live Photos function - keep the camera very still when you take the shot, then when you view the photo, choose Long Exposure from the Effects options. Example: (A) Live Photo normal (B) with Long Exposure



A

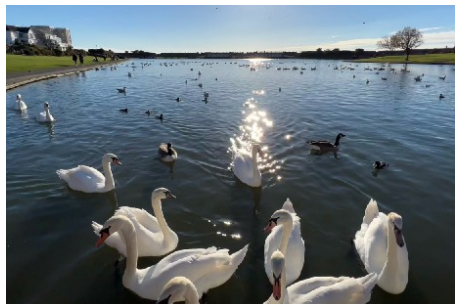


B

Penarth Pier



Nash Point lighthouse



Swans at Cosmeston Lakes



**Photographs
by Vic Spears**

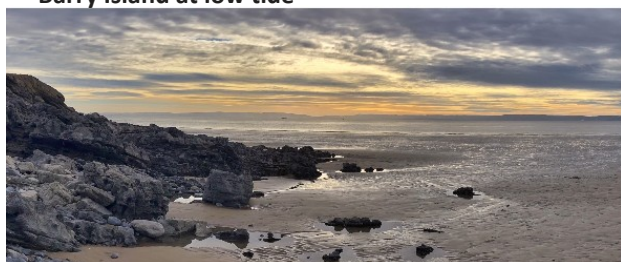
Castell Coch



Dyffryn Gardens



Barry Island at low tide



**Roath Park
Recreation ground**

Pure nostalgia: from Wendy Barkess



EDINBURGH 1967 At Freshers Fair. I plump for the Scot Nat Society. It's the only one I join. The guys are handsome and look good in their kilts, cracking jokes and talking the talk. But I'm here to study, not to have fun. I am completely clueless about politics; they think it's hilarious to have an English girl join up. "Scotland for the Scots, England for the English" I chirrup, whenever my accent is remarked upon. They have a

The guys are handsome and look good in their kilts

whole first floor flat in Potterrow, a room and kitchen, where members can drop in any time. Awful old saggy sofas but plenty of coffee and tea. And that's when it hits me. The music! We never had music in our house. My mother played a bit of piano, a few community songs like Cockles and Mussels, but never when my dad was home. He really hated music. And laughter. Whatever my dad didn't value had no value. I loved him to bits. My brother and I had a record player and a few records, pop songs, Elvis and the Beatles, Gene Pitney, but it was never on when my dad was home. The radio took priority. The Archers and the hallowed News. But the Nats were a world apart. Not only did they play music on the record player, they sang and played instruments! And they knew folk singers! **What was folk? I'd never heard it before, but to me it was amazing.** Songs and stories in British accents, I loved it. And then there was Diane. A feisty Irish girl from Belfast, she knew everyone. The sheer force of her personality, her constant smile and wry remarks, were my passport to this new world. For some reason she took me under her wing, became my new family. She was very clever and unlike me her studies never

We drank pints of heavy in the pub next door, the 'folk pub'

suffered from the fact that we spent coursework and lectures. We drank door, the 'folk pub' then as it is still. We Club which was seen as 'progressive' at the altar of The Tradition. **Hamish**



more time partying than on pints of heavy in the pub next door, the 'folk pub' then as it is still. We worshipped **Henderson**, the guru of the

Scottish folk Revival, a professor at the School of Scottish Studies, was usually propping up the bar, along with his cronies. Hamish fought, along with many others of his generation, in Sicily during the war, and wove many tragi-comic and poignant experiences into the songs he wrote.



Billy Connolly was often present, playing his banjo and cracking jokes. The McCalmans and many others were our friends. It was a heady mixture of beer, folk clubs, pubs and parties. Our flat became party central. The music taught me politics too. The Scottish Breakaway. In 1952,

Then there were the Polaris songs. The MOD had taken the liberty of setting up a nuclear base on the Clyde

when Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne, The Scots were up in arms. “We never had a Queen Liz before, so she canny be oor number two” they complained, quite rightly. I sang along with gusto. Then there were the Polaris songs.

The MOD had taken the liberty of setting up a nuclear base on the Clyde and the Scots refused to accept it, marching along to the songs they wrote to promote the cause. By the time I’d been at Uni a year, we were parading down the High Street in support of Alexander Dubcek of Czechoslovakia, with our banners. and buckets. There were as many Irish musicians as Scots and English – no Welsh that I can recall – I’m going to name drop now. My friend Diane had a similar role to that of a “Salon Hostess” of the French Revolution. She knew everyone. These names won’t mean much to non folkies but there are still a lot of folk clubs around where their names are whispered in hushed tones. **Martin Carthy** and **Dave Swarbrick** played in our kitchen; we practically adopted

The Corries, Ewan McColl and Peggy Seeger were occasional visitors

the **Furey brothers**, two of the **McCalmans** shared our flat, **The Corries, Ewan McColl** and **Peggy Seeger** were occasional visitors.

When folk singers arrived in Edinburgh, Diane was their first port of call. I just happened to be there too. It’s odd to think that those guys are dead or in their 80’s now. Only one McCalman left, Martin Carthy still on the go having founded a dynasty, no more McColls, Peggy Seeger in her 3rd incarnation. The Furey brothers still daggers drawn after all this time, as far as I know..... And now I’ve come full circle. I’m in folk heaven with all the



folk clubs in the British Isles putting their meetings on zoom. There is an Open Mike policy which means everyone has the opportunity so sing their favourite songs, and no-one can interrupt! I couldn’t do that in the Sixties, in fact I didn’t start until I retired. It gives me such pleasure; I do hope the zooms continue now that freedom beckons.

Maison Beaujean - Our French Adventure

It is now almost twenty years since my wife Shirley and I had a hair brained scheme to buy a plot of land in the South of France. The plan was to find a local company to build us a holiday home, where family and friends could spend the summer. We had never bought any land or had a house built in the UK, let alone abroad, and had no real expertise. Looking back we realise we must have seemed a little crazy!

So in July 2002 we set off for the South of France. With both of us working, we had just four weeks to get the project under way. We had caravanned many times in France, and thus had a good idea of where we were heading, and a few days later pulled into a campsite just outside the small town of **Uzès**, a beautiful, unspoilt historic town – a real gem. Fifteen miles from Nimes, twenty five miles from Avignon, the Pont du Gard on the doorstep and with the Ardèche a short drive to the north it is a perfect location.



Uzès

With very limited internet in those days, we found ourselves in the hands of the local immobiliers. We were looking for a plot, relatively close to Uzès so that we could enjoy the amenities there, but also fairly quiet. We quickly found that such plots simply didn't exist, well not in our price range anyway. The few plots available near to Uzès were incredibly expensive, and the ones we could afford were way out in the sticks. French estate agents are very reluctant to tell you exactly where their properties for sale are, being very wary of sellers doing private deals, You rarely see 'A Vendre' boards outside properties, and agents insist on taking you to visit, wasting your time on unsuitable plots.



Three weeks later and about to give up, we came across a plot of land in the village of **La Bruguière**, about six miles north of Uzès. It was relatively flat, about two thirds of an



acre, and planted with mainly young green oaks and hazelnuts. It also had a small stone built shed, or mazel. It was perfect. We put in an offer at 11am, it was accepted by 11:30, and at 5pm we were in the notaries' office signing on the dotted line - things were starting to move fast, and caught us by surprise. Unlike the UK where you can pull out of a sale any time before contracts are exchanged, in France you have a short cooling off period but then have to lodge a deposit with the notaire, which you lose if you pull out with no good reason! Equally, you cannot be gazumped, otherwise the seller has to pay you.

We had just one week left to find a builder. They all tend to have a portfolio of properties that you can tailor to your specific needs, the price adjusting accordingly. We chose a builder called Maisons Guitard, based in Nimes, and started negotiating. Unfortunately by this stage we had run out of time and had to head home, continuing the conversation from Cardiff. They spoke no English, and didn't even have email, so all correspondence had to be in French by fax. Fortunately, Shirley speaks excellent French, and so a combination of my engineering background and her language enabled us to cope very well. Once we had agreed on a design, amalgamating different



Shirley discusses progress with the builder

not fault the builder, everything being completed to specification and on time. Indeed, during our time in France we had dealings with many trades people and found them all to be very professional and reliable.

house styles and layouts until we were happy, planning permission was applied for. This took four months, so it was early 2003 before **work commenced**. The house was finished towards the end of 2003, and we can-



Once the house had been finished and the pool installed, the outside work began. Our

budget was well and truly spent by now, and so all the garden work, the design, building walls, laying paths, outdoor water supplies, garden lighting etc and general landscaping and planting was down to us, with some welcome help from family members.



I retired in 2008, and between then and when we sold the house we would spend about five months a year in France. We had lots of friends and relatives visit, all enjoying the house, garden and especially the pool!

With beautiful weather and loads to see in the general area we loved every minute. We are often asked why we sold. With family and grandchildren in

the UK, there was never any intention of settling there permanently, so it was a case of when rather than if. In 2015, with Brexit looming, we decided, reluctantly, it was time to sell, and when Covid arrived this confirmed that we had made the right decision. We shall always look back with great fond-



ness on our thirteen year French adventure, what we achieved, the friends we made and the enjoyment of seeing an ambitious project successfully concluded.

Article based on a talk given by Cardiff u3a member Dr Alex Beaujean to the Gardening Group in 2019

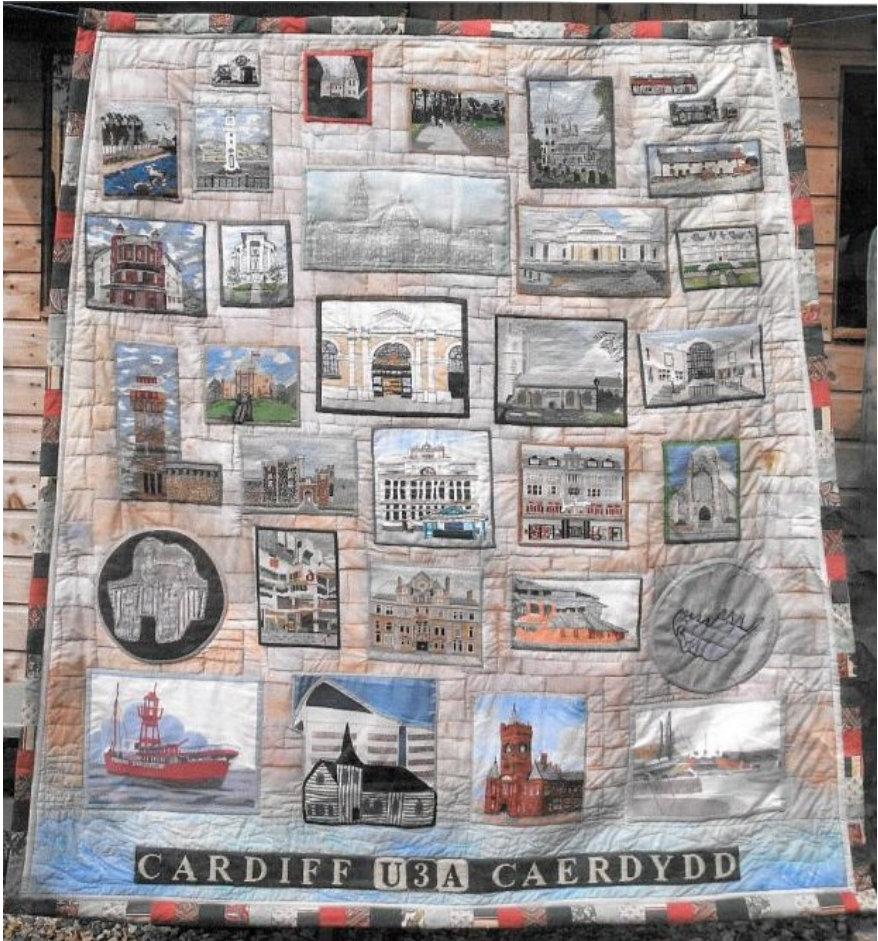


**Marilyn Guest u3a
Photography Group**



David Harrison: The Lightroom Pantry Group

'The Cardiff u3a Millennium Wall Hanging'



To commemorate the 10th Anniversary of Cardiff u3a in 1997 the then newly formed Stitchcraft Group were asked to produce a banner.

This was the starting point of what was to become the 'Cardiff u3a Millennium Wall Hanging'. It is a beautiful piece of work which represents several hours of hard work, and enjoyment. From the start it was a 'sharing of skills and experience' and as new members joined the Group they were recruited to help. The hanging was designed and made by just thirteen members.

The idea behind the Hanging was to celebrate the City. Thirty two scenes, primarily buildings, from around Cardiff are represented using a variety of traditional and modern techniques. Have a go at looking for:

The Lightship, Cardiff Bay; Norwegian Church; The Pierhead Building; Old dock area; Sculpture 'Bute Town couple and dog'; St David's Hall; The Coal Exchange; Cardiff City and County Hall, The Merchant Seamen's memorial sculpture; Cardiff Castle tower and wall; The Gatehouse, Cardiff Castle; The Norman Keep; The Old Library and Hayes island; David Morgan department store; The 'Ballast' Chapel, Charles Street; the Indoor Market; St John's Church; Queen Street shopping mall; The New Theatre; The War Memorial, Cathays Park; City Hall; The Taff and old Cardiff Arms Park; The Scott Memorial, Roath Park; Roath Park; Llandaff Cathedral; St Fagan's Castle and three buildings at the Museum of Welsh life; Castell Coch; and a Pit Head – 'to remind us of the importance of King Coal to Cardiff'.

On completion the Wall hanging was displayed in the New Library until the building was pulled down to clear the site for St David's Centre. It was hoped that it would go to the 'new New Library' but this did not happen. The Cardiff Story Museum were interested in taking it, but, in 2010 the committee were against relinquishing ownership. After being housed by a member the hanging then went to one of the meeting rooms at the Masonic Hall (Guildford Hall), and remained there until the refurbishments in 2019 when they asked U3A to remove it. Some of you may have seen the Hanging on the

Eisteddfod stand in Cardiff Bay in August 2018.



The then u3a National Chairman Pam Jones photographed in front of the tapestry

Marjolein Whittaker, the only member involved in the making who is still a current member of Cardiff u3a says:

“It was September ’98 when I joined Cardiff u3a and it’s Sewing Group. I was, therefore, not involved in the initial planning of the Wall Hanging. At the time there were 12 members of the group and the Convenor was Joan Fox, who was a retired Primary School teacher and an expert in all crafts imaginable.

I remember going with Margaret Evans to Shaws, the Draper, to buy the sheet which was to be the background for all our masterpieces. The sheet was cream and had to be dyed / painted. We were not allowed to work with water in the library so smuggled it in in jars! It took two sessions to paint, blue at the bottom for water and then the wall some shades of brown.

We then decided to frame each piece of embroidery before attaching it to the background. Once that was done we had to quilt the backcloth, the wadding and the top together to make it look like a wall.

Time was getting on. It was then probably already 2000! So we took turns to take it home and work on it there. By that time our number had dwindled to four.

When at last we had stitched it all together, Vera Bolton, one of the first and original planners collected it and stitched the surround in the Welsh colours.”

St Fagan’s museum had agreed to display the hanging in June 2020 for the week of the National u3a Day, but the event was cancelled. Maybe there will be another opportunity in the future. The Hanging is safely stored away and available for any suitable event. **Marjolein Whittaker** **Alison Firth**

Some of you may not be too familiar with the term ‘**Ballast Chapel**’ as portrayed in the Tapestry. It refers to what started out as Charles Street Congregational Church built with stone from all over the world, brought back to Cardiff in ships’ holds **as ballast**. Today it is known as The Cornerstone, which has been used as a venue by some u3a groups. **(Ed.)**



Gemma Jayne Paine textile artist creative writer and poet



A question I asked myself in late 2015.

I had just been asked to create a textile exhibition for the Attic Gallery, at the Factory Porth, in the Rhondda Valley. My thought process ran haywire,

probably due to fact that this was my first textile exhibition. 'Made with Love' to be shown in May 2016.



So I needed to do some historical research to answer my question and make my first garment a **pink dress**. Not just any dress though, each garment was going to tell a story. Therefore I began with "Pink for girls and Blue for boys" I soon discovered in the 1800's, children of both sexes from wealthier families all wore plain linen dresses. In fact in a childhood photograph **Theodore Roosevelt** could easily have been mistaken for a girl. During infancy many of these garments became soiled and people began dyeing the clothing with darker colours to hide the offending stains. It was only when a boy reached the age of eight that he was de-frocked or breeched and able to wear trousers.

However during the Victorian era men dressed in bright colours parading like peacocks mainly in burgundy. While many Victorian women, chose dowdy colours such as dark blue as a tribute to the Virgin Mary. It was in the early nineteenth century that pastel colours arrived for boys and girls. Although it wasn't until the 1940s, that clothing manufactures and retailers began to dictate blue for boys and pink for girls. Thereby following dress colours that had been adopted by their parents.

The **Pink dress** has images and poetry that have been written in a modern expression as

opposed to reflecting any historical events.....

Candy stripes in pretty pink

A name you find in seaside rock

The candy floss on a fairground ride

Music of the Pink Floyd Band

The Exhibition 'Made with Love' depicted various dresses such as a red dress with images and poetry as a tribute to Marilyn Monroe. A 'Coat of Many Colours', A Pop Factory Dress, resulted from the history of the factory when it was a Thomas & Evans Grocery Warehouse, then a Corona Pop Factory Later it became a famous music venue for the likes of the **Manic Street Preachers** and **Cerys Matthews** and was also part of the television **Live Music Scene**.

Gemma



The Attic Gallery in the 'Pop Factory' Porth

I have fallen into the river that surrounds the factory - in my boy-hood days I need add (Ed.)



'ALL IN A DAY'S DENTURES' As related by u3a member John Sanders, Chairman of Sight Life

Local charity 'Sight Life' has already helped thousands of people during the pandemic. Even so, we still get calls that surprise us -- and we've been supporting people with sight loss in South Wales since 1865 when we started out as Cardiff Institute for the Blind.



reasons, he couldn't leave home.

One of the more unusual pandemic calls was taken by our administrator Nicola, who does her bit on the front-line too. A service-user rang to say his dentures were broken. Could we help? This was no laughing matter as he was struggling to eat. It was lockdown and, for health

Nicola got on the phone and eventually, thanks to a tip from a colleague, found a denture repair business in Cardiff which offered to help. They collected the broken dentures (bagged up Covid-safely as requested), repaired them and returned them, all for the agreed price of £30.

Our services go beyond practical help like organising transport, food and medicine deliveries and helping fill in forms

TRUST Being partially sighted or blind is often very isolating. Even relatively mild sight loss -- which may not be obvious to others -- can stop you driving, discourage you from venturing out and make recognising people difficult. It can also sap your confidence, which is why Nicola arranged the denture repair from start to finish and checked with the service user that it had gone as planned.

"My concern was that if I'd simply given him the phone number, the repair may not have happened. It was better for me to arrange it than risk leaving him in the lurch. That's why people turn to Sight Life. They trust us because we have a reputation for helping," explains Nicola.

Sight Life (known as Cardiff Institute for the Blind until October 2019) provides a wide range of local services so that blind and partially sighted people across the majority of South Wales can enjoy independent, active, social and fulfilled lives

LIFE-LINES The dentures dilemma is just one example of how, during the

pandemic, our staff and volunteers have largely switched from face to face to phone support -- and sometimes Zoom. And our services go beyond practical help like organising transport, food and medicine deliveries and helping fill in forms.

As mentioned, sight loss is isolating, so we regularly phone people who may be cooped

up at home alone for months on end. Many tell us our calls are a lifeline. Sight Life's virtual quizzes, fitness, baking and make-up sessions – among other activities -- offer regular social contact too. Last Christmas our Swansea team even organised a phone-conference Panto. Hard to believe I know, but they assure me that: **“Oh yes, we did!”**

Many of you will be familiar with their old premises on the corner of Newport Road and Windsor Road. Shand House was built in 1951 to provide a mixed use building for the Cardiff Institute for the Blind, one of Cardiff's oldest charities which was founded by Frances Batty Shand





AMELIA TRUST FARM

Supporting vulnerable people



Many Cardiff u3a members will be familiar with the name **Amelia Trust Farm**, situated just off the Five Mile Lane between Bonvilston and



Barry. **Two u3a members Linda and Colin Martin** provide some of the background from its inception to the present day.

It came into existence following a visit to our church; **Trinity Methodist Church**, now the Trinity Centre at Four Elms Road, Cardiff by **Mr and Mrs Huggard** and their subsequent conversation with the then minister, the Revd John Stacy-Marks. The Huggards expressed a wish to use part of their land and buildings for the benefit of young people who, for whatever reason, had fallen out of the main stream of education. This land and buildings would be donated and they were looking for someone to organise both the lands and buildings to this purpose. Revd John agreed and with the help of members of Trinity, along with other Methodist churches, formed the Amelia Methodist Trust Company Limited which was incorporated in 1990 to receive the 160 acre farm complete with derelict buildings and barns. Benefactors Bob and Ethel Huggard worked with the Reverend John Stacy-Marks and the Methodist Church in Wales to create a living memorial to Bob's mother **Amelia**. Their vision was to use the Farm as a 'rural lung' for a variety of people but especially those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable in an attempt to foster self-help; build confidence and enhance employment prospects. which to this day remains the core purpose of the charity.



Much needed to be done to the land and buildings. Slowly, and with considerable efforts by willing volunteers under the direction of the Revd John, the site was developed. Young people began arriving with the Local Authorities playing a major part in the choosing of and conveying to, the farm of the these young people and their teachers. John, who was

appointed as the first Director in 1991 was also instrumental in arranging the all-important finance for the project and procuring partners who over the years have made a major contribution to the ongoing development of the Farm.

The work continues. Through the years large numbers of families visit and enjoy the



facilities - the café, woodland walks as well as **hides** to view the birds on the lakes. Currently, among other projects there is an application to introduce 2 beavers into the waters beyond the woods.

Many u3a members will of course have visited the Farm, if you have yet to do so, why not pay a visit!



(A footnote Ed)

Operating in Cardiff since 1989, **Huggard** runs a Day Centre for rough sleepers, in the centre of the city, that is open 365 day a year, providing quality food, clothing, washing and laundry facilities. Meeting the basic needs of individuals, Huggard engages with the users of its centre to



identify the barriers that are preventing them from breaking their individual cycle of homelessness, providing the help and support needed to achieve this.

Why is it called the Huggard Centre?

Money donated by the **Huggards** after the involvement of the Revd Doug Bale of City URC, was instrumental in turning a concept into reality.

Two lines from Susan (Sue) Biggin's email caught my eye

I was living in Trieste, and the Yugoslav war was in action

I spent 40 days and nights at a former convent in Slovenia

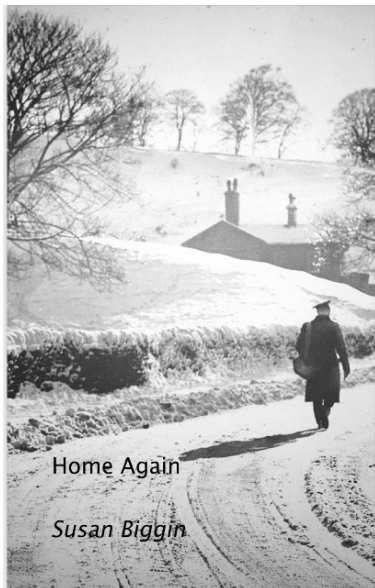
Intrigued dear reader - read on!

I began a poetry diary in the 90s. I was living in Trieste, and the Yugoslav war was in action. I'd been at a reception welcoming Croatian soldiers back from Bosnia. At the same time I saw an advert for a poetry competition. And so I wrote my first poem.

My poems are just a record, my memories. Many have been published in magazines and books but they were scattered. So for my 60th birthday I spent 40 days and nights at a former convent in Slovenia, collating 60 of them into *Bulletins from the East-West Border*.

In LockDown I finished a second poetry book, *Home Again*, this time 70pp, to mark my 70th birthday. Here's one poem (next page) from a LockDown workshop run by cousin Jean (on Zoom!). At the time, locked up at home, my eyes were focused on the sky. I watched Moon, sparkling Mars, and the space station circling overhead night after night, uncaring of our plight. I was reminded of John Clare's lament on the Enclosures Act, where he saw the heavens as our only bound.

Why the title *Home Again*? - **well, home from 20 years in Italy.** The cover photo, the postman in the snow, was taken by my grandfather in 1956. The scene is Cottingley, Yorkshire, close to where my brother Charles was born: he died in 2020, the year I turned 70, so this publication is particularly poignant to me, to some extent a family gathering.



Out of Bounds

As the Earth turns with that circling sky -

Down here in lockdown dawns another day.

How do we live thee? Let me count the ways.

On WhatsApp chat or Facebook or even bloomin' Zoom?

A hubbub of gadgetry that packs our living room.

On a hubbub of gadgetry that packs our living room.

The kids are all on Instagram, and Messenger and Meet,
Discord and HangOuts, YouTube and Tweet,
I stumbled upon Tumblr and their secret sites for geeks,
and there's Wayn-too-much gaming going on. See,
there are perfect spots aplenty to ferret out and go:
but don't tell the others that I want to be alone,
to break out, out of reach, just be me.

There's the hallway to knit in, attic to paint in,
laundry to sew in, patio to sun in,
landing to dine in, dark corners to hide in,
spots to chat in (and cats to sneak in)
beds to bounce on, ledges to crawl on,
staircases, spaces, a thesaurus of places.

But all their singular sights, smells and sounds,
do not persuade me to stay in their bounds.
The clicks, clangs, and clatter, crash to a head.
I'm making a break for it, I'm off to the shed.



- and all the while the silver spacecraft wheels silent overhead.

Sue's second poem - from her 'Home Again' book

CRASH LANDING, *Fishguard ArtsFest 2014*
- *Humpty Dumpty's fall from grace*-

The fall, absurd ovoid stunt, devised
ill-advisedly to thrill young unsullied minds,
contriving to win celebrity
through summoned regal riders,
entourage unsuspecting
of the plotter, aloof, aloft
surveying as Christ from Temple top.
Cave. Lapsus adami. Lapsus luciferi.

Unreal sitter,
high-horsing on innocent brick-stack,
symbol of dead factory and life's lost cause,
fell. 'Suicide!' cried the crowd alarmed
yet sensing a moment's *schadenfreude*.
But the brandy-stoked, dumpty ego, seeking
attention from a rightful wallflower's perch
thought not of death, but of glory, ascendancy,
cavalry-wrought.

No sound followed the cry,
as the once-pristine shell cracked
consolidating that spectacular fall from grace;
stickiness oozed from tempered tension
and then a drop drop drop
challenging the cracks a-glisten with life-clutching tears.

'What in God's name...?' cried the King's man,
reaching the dashed disfigured entity.
Might anything yet grow from this fragile waste?
And they worked the anthropomorphised membrane
till exhaustion had emptied their soul cisterns,
but failed to restore the crazed entity

The vanquished cavalry rode away east
clung fast to their day-long shadows into a new
dispensation, new duty, the end a beginning, the failure
their new beginning.

Leaves fluttered, drifting deep on the ground-bound relic.
This is the death of the egg. Not risen.

Failed metamorphosis.
Only that ineluctable transition from folly to dust,
mon frère, l'oeuf.



Patchwork Memories: Penned by Patricia Stowell

We saw our new grandson for the first time through the window of his home and I so desperately wanted to hold him so, in some small measure, could empathise with those who were suffering.

Daisy picked up the cushion from the chair. This was hers, full of special memories. Each chequered patchwork square evoking a special person or event. Her mind was full of them. She smiled to herself as she leant forward to touch the pink gingham. She could remember going into the haberdashery store with her mother and pleading to have a dress made of the sweet, candy-coloured fabric – a long time ago now. This couldn't have been the same material. The situation brought her up with a jolt. She shouted out.



“Julie, someone’s changed this square. It’s the wrong colour. My dress was much brighter than this.”

Julie nodded. “I’m sure it was but that was the best match we could get. I thought it would remind you of your school days.”

“And look at this, Julie. Do you see this green patch with the white spots? I had a skirt made from this. Wore it to Marjorie’s wedding. I almost outdid the bride’s mother. I had a tiny box jacket in the same olive green. Looked a real picture, even if I do say so myself.”

Julie smiled again. She had heard it all before but let Daisy go through some of the other patches, pausing as her finger caressed the smoothness of one square, alternating with a thicker, coarser material.

“This blue here – that was part of Reggie’s tie. He always wore it with his navy blazer. I think one of the silver buttons is here somewhere. I don’t know who made this. I think I must have put it together.”

“No, that was your daughter, Daisy. Vera said she would pop in later. It’s so good she’s allowed to visit again. It’s been a long year for all of us. Do you remember when she came to wave to you through the glass because she wasn’t allowed in? It was so cold outside as well but she and your grandson, James, came to see how you were.”

“Yes, I think I remember that. Why couldn’t they come in? It was silly just looking at them through the window. Why wouldn’t you let them in, Julie? That was just mean. I don’t know what they must have thought.”

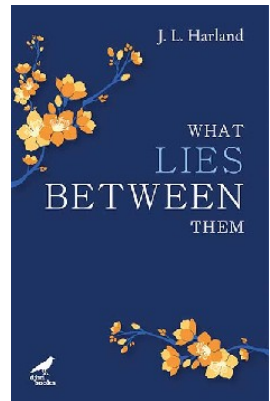
“Daisy, I would have loved to have let them in, but I wasn’t allowed to. The Prime Minister said I couldn’t. But it’s OK now and Vera said she will call this afternoon. Come on, just take these tablets. Here’s some water.”

Daisy dutifully swallowed her medication and soon she was asleep in her chair, dreaming of multi-coloured patchwork, weaving a tapestry of her life through the different fabrics of the cushion.

Writers Enjoying Words group member **Jacqueline Harrett** contributed the following.

Janet Laugharne, my writing partner, and I, have been members of the group for many years and delighted to belong to a wonderful group of talented writers, both published and unpublished. We have been supported and encouraged by the group on our route to publication.

Our co-authored **novel, ‘What Lies Between Them’**, will be published by Dixi Books in February 2022, in the UK and internationally in the US, Australia, America and Europe. ‘What Lies Between Them’ is women’s fiction and the story of one woman’s struggle to come to terms with the secrets of the past while dealing with problems in the present. We write together under the pseudonym J. L. Harland. **Writing together is a joy and creates much discussion** as our individual writing voices are different from our J. L. Harland voice. Jan writes poetry and a developing profile in that field. Our blog, at ilharland.co.uk gives a flavour of what we do together.



More recently, my debut crime novel, ‘The Nesting Place’, was published by Diamond Crime, a new Indie publisher (a form of publishing that doesn’t rely on the Big 5 publishing houses) They have been a joy to work with and, as writers themselves, the team have been collegial and supportive in their approach. **It was exciting to introduce my character, D.I. Mandy Wilde**, to the world and pleasing she has been well received. Both these novels have strong female protagonists, determined and independent. Mandy Wilde (The Nesting Place) doesn’t always follow the rule book. She is guardian

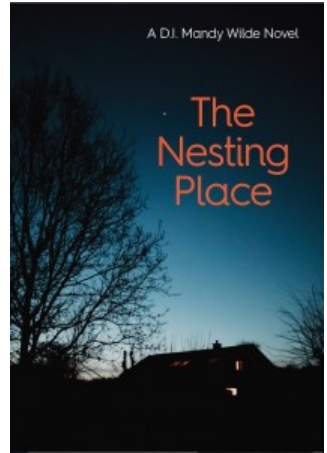
to her niece and unwavering in her quest to find the truth. You can find out more at harrett.co.uk.

The character, Elin Fiorelli, a Welsh Italian academic, in 'What Lies Between Them' is more measured, presenting a professional face to the world despite the secret hurt she carries deep within. Her life becomes increasingly difficult with challenges at home and work.

Both novels are set in Cardiff and surrounding and refer to familiar landmarks in the city although both the house, Nythfa, in *The Nesting Place* and Brynderwen University in 'What Lies Between Them' are fictional. Cardiff is a city of many contrasts and areas of beauty, so it was fun to include the names of areas and streets that local residents will recognise. Location is important and we both felt, with two of us writing the same story, writing about familiar places helped to ground the descriptions. Trawling 'Rightmove' for Elin's flat or her mother's house made sure that we had the same starting point.

Writers Enjoying Words, has a place in the acknowledgements page for both books. We appreciate the camaraderie and critical feedback from the group.

"The benefit of retirement is the time to develop learning in different ways. Creativity is so beneficial to well-being and sharing our words has helped us all to survive in these difficult times".
(And so say we all Ed!)



These stocks are one of the most photographed features of Cardiff Castle, but not normally from this angle. Visitors usually get their friends and family to stick their head and hands in the holes, or they frame the Castle keep in the centre one. The orange blob is a life-belt container on the side of the moat.

Photograph: Jim Bartlett Cardiff u3a

Lorraine Gray: Two of her poems

CLARKS PIES

If you visit Grangetown, a “must” for you to try
Oval shaped, lightly browned, famous clarks pie
Full of meat and gravy, a mouth-watering delight
Just the very thought of it will whet your appetite

Mary Clark the founder devised this recipe
Frequently enjoyed, for dinner, lunch, or tea
Pastry melts in your mouth; gravy rich and brown
A pint of ‘Brains Dark’ can help wash it down
Never share a Clarksies pie eat it piping hot
Nibble around the edges ensure you scoff the lot

After paying for your pie, never ever wait
Consume it immediately don’t put it on a plate
Don’t spoil the taste with sauce dismiss brown or red
Forget the knife and fork, use your hands instead
Cardiff City players insist upon their treat

Bluebirds always need protein from the meat
Ignore calories, grams of fat; you don’t need to know
Remember these pies were invented a century ago
At Bromsgrove Street corner smell before you buy
A tasty traditional scrumptious Clarksies pie





Murder in the Forest

A mere sapling a century ago
Planted with others all in a row
I grew in the forest eighty foot tall
Weathered the seasons, too strong to fall
Accommodating each acrobatic primate
Through decades aware of changing climate
Exotic birds, perched for a rest
Others remained, building their nest
Always an impressive sight
Entwined with ivy & snakes hugging me tight
Species who invaded my solid brown trunk
The sting of the scorpion - smell of the skunk
I watched creatures fight tooth and claw
Unprepared, for the savage chainsaw
Are lumberjacks unaware
That I help oxygenate the air
I shed sap tears, for soon I'll lay
On the forest ground in slow decay
My gnarled branches fought - I couldn't defend
leaves shake with fear as I reach the end
My forest home a sad goodbye
Just need a hug before I die
I will not fall gently into the darkened night
Rage Rage against my dying being right
It cut through my body with savage pace
Killing me dead just for the space

Ring, ring: Ready for the big ‘phone switchover’ asks Jenny Sims?

Only three years until 2025 when all telephone providers will do the big “switchover” **moving landline customers** from the country’s traditional telephone network to digital technologies and analogue services are finally shut down.



Though BT published a timescale back in 2019, many older people’s organisations have expressed concern that the public have not been given enough information about the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) moving to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), what it really means and how it could adversely affect older and vulnerable people.

Among them is the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), which represents 1.5 million members in Wales, England and Northern Ireland.

Among the big questions is what happens **if there’s a break in power supplies and people need to access emergency services - because the new system will run off broadband - and handsets will have to be plugged into an electricity socket.**

Providers say solutions will be found – which will include the provision of emergency battery-powered backups for phones and routers.

This scenario became a reality last November when Storm Arwen hit the UK, causing widespread power outages and left 9,000 homes without power for more than a week.

Jan Shortt, NPC General Secretary did interviews with Talk Radio and other stations, and heard from affected listeners.

She said: “They raised the issue of not being able to charge mobile phones and other devices and therefore not able to summon help. It is clear that the majority of the population had not heard of the digital switch.”

In January Ofcom held an online public meeting to give an update on the “switchover” rollout throughout the UK and provide an opportunity to ask questions.

Jeff Richards, an NPC Wales executive member and a retired Swansea BT engineer, attended. He said: “Unfortunately they did not answer any questions that I raised regard-

ing vulnerable customers nor anything on power supply. I felt that my questions were merely swatted away.”

BT have agreed to meet the NPC to address their concerns – which include, who will pay for the battery packs (some around £160) – the customer or provider?

Virgin Media has already promised that vulnerable customers with “accessibility needs or don’t have a mobile phone” will be given an emergency backup line at no extra cost.

Unsurprisingly, customers in various areas have reported teething problems as the system is being rolled out. For example, people in the Salisbury pilot area with visual problems have experienced difficulties with the withdrawal of the 1471 service and the need to get new phone numbers.

Hopefully, in the three years left of the rollout, teething problems will have been sorted. But be prepared: only an estimated 1.5million out of 29million landlines have so far been converted – and one day those old phones will stop ringing!

For further information:

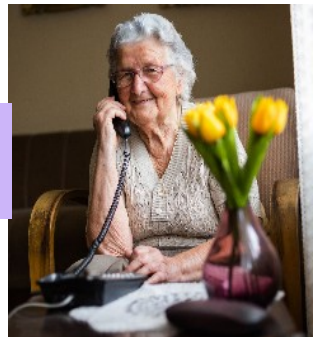
Which guide, Digital Voice and the landline phone switch-off: what it means for you

<https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/broadband/article/digital-voice-and-the-landline-phone-switch-off-what-it-means-for-you-aPSOH8k1i6Vv>

Also [Moving to Digital Voice https://www.bt.com/help/landline/digital-voice-migration](https://www.bt.com/help/landline/digital-voice-migration)



Jenny Sims is a Cardiff u3a Computer Group Member, Chair, NPC’s Digital Working Party and an NPC Wales Executive Member



and one day those old phones will stop ringing!



NATIONAL u3a DAY

This national annual event to showcase the activity, learning and fun which takes place across the movement every day. It is a celebration of positive ageing highlighting our members' lived experience.

Across the UK, members hold events and showcase what u3a is all about. The national u3a day is held on the Wednesday of the third week of September every year, along with a week of celebrating what it means to age well. In 2022 - our 40th anniversary - u3a day will be held on 21 September **or** on a day between 18 and 26 September, which is to be **decided by each individual u3a.**



If you would like to receive updates about **national preparations** and celebrations for u3a day sign up to our [national online newsletter](#)

Cardiff u3a Committee will decide the actual date along with plans for 'our' u3a day. It would be wonderful if as many Cardiff u3a members as possible were involved in all aspects of such a day. All members are invited to participate in the planning of our day as well as taking part in the activities.

Cardiff u3a Telephone Contact Number

For general enquires, change of contact details and new membership queries

07937 807 466

Please Note: - this is not a personal number; please leave a message if no reply.
Standard call charges apply.