

Cardigan u3a Newsletter

No 157 JUNE 2023



I have included the article below, written by Jane and Brian Morris in case there are some people who have not seen it.

It was in the Tivy- Side Advertiser (13th June) and sums up perfectly what u3a is all about.

Open Day for Cardigan u3a

The number of people involved in Cardigan u3a is increasing, after a dip during COVID. Recent studies have shown that social isolation is a significant health risk to older adults so it is heartening that the numbers joining are growing.

u3a is a UK-wide collection of over one hundred branches that provide the opportunity for those no longer in full-time work to come together or online and get involved in enjoyable activities. It is a collection of groups that run member-led learning, social events and activities.

Group activities offered by u3a Cardigan include walking groups of different levels, astronomy, ukulele, singing, book groups, digital photography and creative writing. A monthly meeting at Cardigan's Guildhall has a variety of guest speakers; recent talks have been on local history, the Peredur Tapestry, a local care farm and keeping fit.

On occasion, outings are arranged, the most recent will be to Powis Castle and gardens. Other events include meals

out, afternoon teas and an Open Day which was held on the 22nd June. (Further details to follow at the end of the newsletter)

Howard Lillyman, the Chair of Cardigan u3a, commented that, 'We are an inclusive, friendly, welcoming organisation, where you can both learn and offer your skills and knowledge to others, and enjoy yourself. Joining is a fun way to socialise and meet others in the local community.'

Jane and Brian Morris

Editorial

Where is this year going? I cannot believe that it is half way through June.

I guess many of you are going or may have already gone away on holiday. Please let me have any anecdotes that may have happened to you on holiday..

Has anyone been to somewhere unusual - trekked to the North Pole or canoed down a river whilst being chased by a crocodile?

Two holiday stories are below- it would be great to receive some more for the next newsletter.

1) I do remember when I lived in Baghdad and went away for a few days on a short break from work, I thought I would go for a swim in the Euphrates- as you do. I was young (early 30's), very foolish and thought it to be a good idea at the time. It was a good 40 degrees, no Iraqi people around- my then husband was wandering around

looking for-- I don't know what --so in I went. There was a lot of vegetation in the water which was quite clean and fast flowing.

All of a sudden I became aware of a lot of activity in the river fairly close to me followed by the sound of churning water and huge splashing noises. I looked up and to my horror there were five huge water buffalo making their way towards me. I think I broke the world record for twenty metres front crawl to the nearest part of the river where I could scramble out with the help of some branches hanging down over the edge of the river. Needless to say that was the only time I went '**wild**' swimming !!

What did my husband do? Not a thing - -totally unaware of the commotion!

Shirley Cole

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2) In 2020 Linda and I planned to walk the Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James); a 500 mile stroll from the south of France, over the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela in north west Spain. Sadly, Covid got in the way and we did not get a chance to do this until May this year. We decided to walk the first third (about 170 miles) and go back another time to finish the route.

Walking The Camino has been a religious pilgrimage for over 1,000 years, inspired by the resting place of the bones of St. James in the magnificent cathedral in Santiago. The 'classic' route from France is part of a network of routes from all over Europe leading to this holy place. The route has been made even more famous in recent

years due to the film 'The Way' with Martin Sheen and television programmes involving celebrities taking on part of the challenge (and often complaining mightily about it).

After some good coastal path training we arrived in St. Jean de Pied Port on 16th May full of enthusiasm and apprehension. The place was packed with 'Pilgrims'. These (like us) were mainly non-religious walkers looking for a challenge or wanting to 'reset' their lives. Everyone talks to each other, exchanging stories, experiences and advice.

On our first walking day we covered 16 miles and 1400m of climbing, meeting people from all over the world and finished our day in a small hotel catering entirely for pilgrims. Dinner that night (in response to a shout of 'fish or chicken') was in a small restaurant full of walkers delighted to get the hardest day out of the way but also flushed with the spirit of having experienced the stunning views over the top of the mountains. It was, frankly, magical.

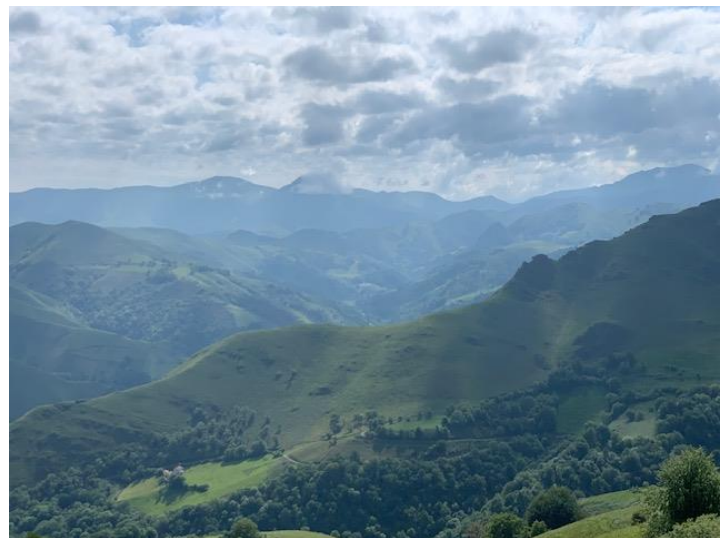
We walked for a further 2 weeks, including rest days in Pamplona and Logrono, which is the tapas capital of Spain. Each day we would see other pilgrims at breakfast and then meet them again 'on the road'. We averaged about 13 miles each day and the scenery was generally beautiful. At night we dined with new friends from across the globe in some lovely small hotels and hostels. On the walk there were interesting things to see from tiny chapels in the middle of nowhere to neolithic stones to the bodega with a

free wine fountain for pilgrims – and it only seemed to rain at night!

The Way of St. James is a Unesco heritage site full of beauty and enchantment. But it is the people walking it, young and old, sometimes very old (!) who made it the most uplifting experience I can remember. The enchantment of meeting folks from so many different places, bringing their stories and life-experiences with them was very special; a woman who had recovered from cancer and wanted to mark the next stage in her life with a challenge: another woman who had left a high-flying corporate job and wanted to 'reassess' and the 'chef of the stars' walking with only one lung were the most entertaining famous clients!

We finished this leg of the Camino in the city of Burgos, with its astounding cathedral. Even here, in a busy city, we were greeted by many people with the universal phrase of 'Buen Camino!' to help us on our way.

We'll be back soon to take on the last 300 miles!



Linda and Stuart Penny



INTEREST GROUPS

Science and Technology

Unfortunately our planned visit to a local secondary school to find out how science is currently taught did not take place. However, an interesting meeting took place where we viewed a You Tube video entitled " Top 10 Biggest Scientific Discoveries of 2022 " followed by a lively discussion on various science matters of interest to the members. Have a look at the video and see what you think?

The programme for the rest of the year is as follows:

24/07/23 - Computer changes in the next 10 years

21/08/23 - Climate Change – another record summer?

25/09/23 - Renewable Energy & battery storage balancing the grid

23/10/23 - Predictions for medical technology – impact on our lives

27/11/23 - Group Christmas Lunch

25/12/23 - NO MEETING

Please contact Colin at
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telephone:-07866502400/
01239682341

Colin Luker



Hello everyone,

CREATIVE WRITING

Once again we met at Jean and Colin's lovely house and garden.

The month of June's meeting was so hot that it began with chats in the garden, greeting two new members Dave and Jacqui in the sunshine.

Jacqui wrote and read an intriguing account of her life and the many house moves she had made to various parts of the UK and America. Dave shared a story called 'The Girl in the Red Shoes' which you can read below.

It was great to meet them both and enjoyed their contributions and company very much.

THE GIRL IN THE RED SHOES

I was walking down Douglas Street in the old town district of Wichita when I first saw her. It was hard not to notice her as she was walking briskly but still managing to maintain an elegant gait. Her blonde hair cascaded over the shoulders of her white knee length coat. Her lips were ruby red and to finish off the whole ensemble she was wearing red high heel shoes. She had turned the corner from Broadway into Douglas and was coming directly towards me. We both seemed to be going to the same place, the Intrust bank.

My first initial thoughts were from a song "there she was just a walking down the street, clicking her fingers and tapping her feet..." In Wichita the Intrust bank downtown is the go to place for foreign currency. In my case, it was for the British pound in readiness for a trip back to Old Blighty. I make the trip twice a year to touch base with old friends and family. We

both entered the Intrust bank at the same time and as I made my way to the foreign currency counter, I was aware that she was behind me and going in the same direction. My thoughts ran to exotic destinations that she may be travelling to. She looked Scandinavian with the blonde hair and fair complexion. Could she also be travelling back home to Sweden, Norway or Denmark to visit family and friends? I stopped at the foreign currency counter and paused to look around. As I turned around, she was there. Ice blue eyes looking right at me, fair complexion, blonde hair, ruby red lips, white coat, and those red high heel shoes. I offered a greeting "Hello, how are you doing today? ""I'm fine, thank you, I love your accent, Australia?" she said in a mid-western Kansas drawl. I had been asked that question so many times over the 20 odd years but was not expecting it this time from the Scandinavian blonde. My reaction to hearing this was palpable and I tried to hide my disappointment, probably not very well. When you first arrive in the USA every person you meet asks the same question, at restaurants, in bars or shopping at the mall etc... At first it's amusing and unusual and you play along, more often I would reply "No, South Texas". It was surprising how many people would accept that answer but view it with disappointment as the answer they desire is Australia. The reason is surveys have found that Australia is the one place that most Americans would like to travel to. Certainly, in Kansas, many had not even crossed the border into neighbouring states - Kansas being big enough to fit England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales with room to spare. They had no desire to leave the state as they perceived they had all

they needed right where they were in the USA.

I replied, "No, South Texas, I shouldn't be long as I have pre-ordered my currency so it should be ready to pick up". I turned and approached the foreign currency counter, told them my name and that I had ordered 250 pounds sterling. Within minutes I had left the bank with the cash and heading home reflecting on the encounter with a Scandinavian blonde who turned out to be an American Abba lookalike that had a desire to go to Australia. Maybe the foreign currency that she was picking up was the Australian dollar and she and her red shoes were going to her dream destination? Let's hope so.

Dave Brown.

SILENCE

The deep dark I like
Is the darkness of windless,
Stark still nights.
Full of quiet.

But better yet when they're adorned by
the questioning calls
Of the owl who habitually haunts our
nearby wood.

And still better yet, when the owl's
sharp shrieks and hoots
Are not rebuffed by silence or empty
echoes but
Receive replies
In answer.

Peter Rossiter.



Digital photography

Four new people showed an interest in joining us after speaking with us at the

Cardigan open day, so if you aren't sure about our group, come and chat to us at the Newcastle Emlyn event on Wednesday 5th July in the rugby club. It doesn't matter if you are a beginner, an intermediate or an advanced digital photographer, everyone is very welcome to join us!

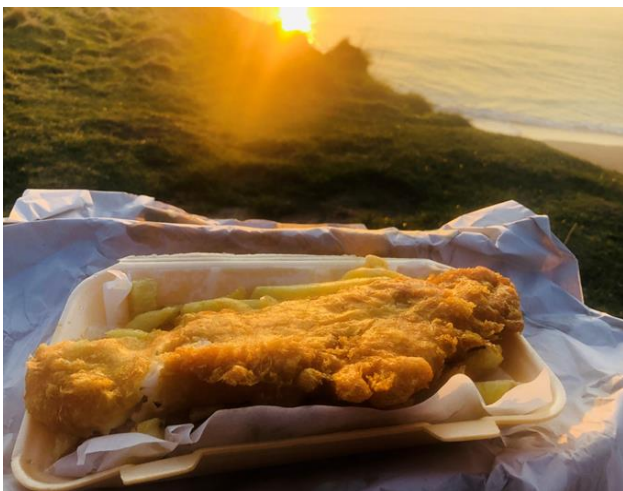
June's homework was 'Low Light Photography', with photos taken inside or outside with low light, at sunset, at night, etc. To aid with the homework we watched video tutorials called "Sunset through to night photography" and "Long Exposure Photography for Beginners". Members were encouraged to take photos inside or outside with low light, at sunset, at night, etc., while thinking about putting their cameras in 'manual' or 'bulb' mode, using a Neutral Density (ND) filter, using a tripod and getting to the right spot in plenty of time. They were also asked to consider if they wanted light trails. (Further information to



Howard Jenkins



Ron Hill



Dave Thomas



Margaret Taylor

The photography tutorial videos, tip and books that I am collating are still growing, with 364 e-books for members to choose from.

Our next meeting is 10.30am to 12.30pm on Tuesday 11th July 2023 in Coracle Hall, Llechryd, but please arrive around 10.15am ready for a 10.30 start.

We love to hear the thoughts of u3a members about a calendar, or if is there something else they would consider buying, such as notelets?

Kind Regards / Cofion Cynnes

Dave Thomas Mobile: 07974 590946

If you would like to join us, please email Dave at:
digitalphotography@cardiganu3a.org.uk
or davejthomas66@gmail.com
with your name and contact numbers prior to the next meeting. I will then send you a welcome email and links to the tutorial videos to aid you with the month's homework.

I was reading with interest last month's item asking if there would be any interest in the photography group re-starting the calendar and also notelets. The first calendar was produced in 2015 and continued until Covid stopped production in 2020.

I personally think this would be a great idea. The photos that are produced by the photography group are amazing and would look great on both items. The group leader has asked for an opinion as to whether our u3a group think it is a good idea. Perhaps our readers could get in touch via the e-mail address at the end of the photography section.

Shirley



Ukulele

Our last 'gig' at the end of May was at the Fishguard Folk Festival. It was a beautiful day- hot and sunny. Not only was it my first visit to Fishguard where I actually stopped the car, it was also my very first sight of the harbour. I felt quite emotional- what a beautiful place- a picture postcard could not have done it justice. I managed to park the car at the very far end of the harbour and for an hour those from the group who had come early, just sat and admired the view or watched those who had decided to go swimming the other side of the harbour wall.

Eventually we had to tear ourselves away and go the local pub right on the quayside to play. The whole concert was so well received. Several people unknown to our group, wandered in with guitars, banjos and ukuleles and

just joined in with us. The audience were appreciative and joined in the singing with great gusto.

What an afternoon- finished off with coffee and cakes.

The ukulele group has quite a few dates at various venues for this summer with more being arranged. Our membership has increased and we are definitely gaining in notoriety!!



These two photos are from the Fishguard Festival.

SOME FUTURE CONCERT DATES:-

- July 1st - Pembroke Castle
- July 8th - Shire Horse Centre
- July 15th - Pontgarreg
- July 21st - Aberaeron
- August 10th - Aberporth
- August 11th - Save the Teifi
- August 13th - Cilgerran festival
- Sept. 7th - Beulah Vestry
- Sept. 8th - Clynyfw Community

New members are always welcome.



Cardigan U3A Walkers

There are three walking groups -
1) Tuesday Walkers - for more serious walkers, usually achieve about 6-7 miles per outing, hills and valleys included ; 2) Wednesday Strollers - Two miles max per outing, easy-going only, includes walkers who may be hampered for some reason and 3) Friday Walkers.

Our July walks, about 4 miles:-

- July 7th - Patch, Cardigan
- July 14th - Cenarth circle
- July 21st - Newport Parrog
- July 28th - Coed y Foel, Llandysul
- August 4th - Bridell, near Cardigan

Weather no object !

Walk details are on the U3A website. We always finish with the option of a meal/snack/drinks in a pub or café at the walk's end. Like the Tuesday walkers we are not put off by

rain and we accept mud etc. as par for the course. If you turn up you'll get a walk.

Chris Edwards - programme organiser



Book Group

The book for June was "At the Edge of the Orchard" by Tracy Chevalier

The synopsis given on Amazon for this book is:-

Ohio, 1838: James and Sadie Goodenough have settled in the Black Swamp, planting apple trees to claim the land as their own. As fever picks off their children, husband and wife take solace in separate comforts.

Fifteen years later their youngest son, Robert, is drifting through gold rush California. When he finds steady work for a plant collector, peace seems finally to be within reach. But the past is never really past, and one day Robert is forced to confront the brutal reason he left behind everything he loved."

After his warring parents manage to kill each other, Robert leaves home aged about 10 (we reckoned,) leaving his little sister alone to be brought up by neighbours who treated her badly. He works his way west until he reaches the West Coast of America where he meets up with and works for a man who collects seeds and saplings of trees, including Giant Sequoia, which are sent to Arboretums in England. Robert loves and is in awe of the giant trees and they mean a lot to him. Eventually the little sister that he had been very fond of manages to catch up with him.

Unfortunately she then dies in childbirth leaving him with his nephew to raise alongside a daughter by his sometime lover who has also caught up with him. The book ends with Robert, his partner/wife and the two children going on the journey to England to oversee the transport of the precious seeds and saplings.

Most of us thought the ending was abrupt. After quite a lengthy discussion, which highlighted, among other things, the significance of journeys east and west, it was agreed that it was incredibly well researched and well written, but it was a split decision on how much we enjoyed it.

Our next book is Jo Jo Moyes "In Someone Else's Shoes" which we will discuss on July 11th at The Cliff Hotel.

If you would like to join us please contact our group leader, Norma Rees, on 01239621907.

We meet in Cardigan and it is an added incentive that Norma makes the best Welsh Cakes!

Michelle.

GARDENING NEWS

Readers may be unaware of the fact that 2 of our committee members- Liz and Will North, are avid gardeners and every summer open their beautiful garden to the general public with all proceeds going to charity. Below is an account of their first opening for this year.

We opened at 11.00am with two car loads of people arriving just before 11.00. It was pretty well nonstop all day. There was a short sharp shower

about 12.30/1.00ish but after that lovely sunshine. The day was very successful with 80 people attending, most had tea and cake and some also bought plants. The proceeds of over £600 raised will go to some excellent charities, among them Marie Curie, Macmillan Cancer Support, Hospice UK, Carers Trust, Parkinson's UK along with many other charities. The full list of all charities will be found at **NGS.org.uk/beneficiaries**.

A special thanks to our helpers Jane Edlestone and Di Green both from U3A, and also a good friend and neighbour Buddug who also helped. We couldn't have done it without them. We were all exhausted by the end of the day!

For anyone who couldn't make it on the 25th, **we are open again on the 20th of August**, when there will be different flowers in bloom as we try and have something in flower as much of the year as possible. There will be more cake ready for the tea and cake stall too!! Thank you to everyone who managed to come, you all helped us make our day really good fun and we thoroughly enjoyed showing our garden to everyone- it makes all the hard work worthwhile, not that I (Liz) find it hard work as I love doing it so much.

Liz and Will North.



A message from our Chairman

U3a Open Day held 22nd June

This was an event held primarily to promote the Cardigan u3a and to hopefully increase membership and gain ideas for new groups to start up.

This is to thank all those who attended the Open Day at the Guildhall on the 22nd June.

It was a good turn out from group leaders and representatives, I am sorry we were short on members of the public coming in on the afternoon. Maybe the lovely sunny weather prevented them from coming in?

A suggestion for next year is that perhaps we can hold it later in the year - October or November? The winter will be upon us and prospective new members may think about what to do with their time? It was nice for me to put names to more faces and meet some of you for the first time. Well done to the Ukulele group for the entertainment at the beginning of the afternoon.

A request from me, we need more help with doing the refreshments for the Thursday monthly meeting, if you can help do come forward. PLEASE...!!!



Cardigan u3a Meetings

Our last meeting on the 27th July - will consist of a talk by a representative from Marie Curie commencing at 2pm.

For the benefit of the new members- and welcome to those who have recently joined U3a - all meetings usually take place on the last Thursday of the month in the Guildhall. **Please do not forget the 'new members' coffee morning which is to be held**

in the Flatrock Café on Thursday
13th July.

We have our own website for all information. It is **cardiganu3a.org.uk**. We are also on **facebook**.
cardiganu3a@yahoo.co.uk

As you know the newsletter comes out on the last Thursday of every month. **I would be grateful if all newsletter entries could be in to me by that last Thursday afternoon at the latest-** preferably before if possible!! Howard would like to receive the newsletter on that last Thursday for distribution.



ENTERTAINMENT NEWS!

Just a reminder that we are putting on some light entertainment in the form of a short pantomime!!!

It will probably take place in January and will be short and sweet!!!! Sometimes January is a bit of an anti-climax after Christmas so something light- hearted would provide some hilarity- both intentional and unintentional!!!! A meeting will be held in the near future to discuss further details. Please get in touch if interested- don't be shy!!!!

Shirley