

Cardigan u3a Newsletter

No 160 SEPTEMBER 2023



Editorial

Hello everyone- well I think we can safely say that the summer holidays are now well and truly over!! The children have been back to school a couple of weeks, holiday suitcases are unpacked, caravans have been cleaned and parked up until the next time. Perhaps some of the 17 plus age group are away in their chosen university. What a major milestone that is – I remember it well with all four of mine in different parts of the country but obviously not at the same time I hasten to add. I did not have quads!!!! When I look at them now-all fortunate to have good jobs, families and homes of their own, there is a certain sense of achievement. I am really proud of them as all parents are.

It is also lovely to see the grandchildren following on in their footsteps too. I know that I have a lot to be grateful for.

My youngest son came home from Thailand where he lives in Chang Mai. Although he is now in his early 40's he has not changed at all. He lives in a forest in the house he and his wife built and his first view in the morning are gibbons swinging from the trees outside his kitchen window. I would not be surprised if he told me he had built a treehouse to swing with the gibbons!!! It was lovely seeing him for those two weeks.

Website: www.cardiganu3a.org.uk

Email: editor@cardiganu3a.org.uk



Events for your diary

Do not forget that Liz and Will North are organising regular coffee mornings and afternoon tea groups to take place on one Thursday every month.

The first Coffee Morning was held on Thursday, 7th September at Penrallt Garden Centre, Pavilion Café with 19 persons attending, surrounded by flowers.

It was a lovely morning, plenty of different conversations around the tables and a lovely time was had by all.

A total of nineteen people attended which is a great turnout for the first gathering.

Well done to Liz & Will North and Jane for organising this.

Sharon Swift





The first Afternoon Tea Meeting was on Thursday, 21st September at The Cliff Hotel, in the Carreg Bar at 3.00pm.

Once again – with sixteen of us including 8 new members -it was a very pleasant afternoon, with good service and a choice of either a Welsh or English cream tea. What a decision to make!!

Thank you again to Will and Liz North.

This is a great idea – giving people a chance to meet and get to know other members whilst in lovely surroundings. The locations will regularly change but all details of venues and times will be in the newsletter.

Again - many thanks to Will and Liz for their brilliant organisation in contacting the different venues and for arranging these social gatherings. Thanks also go to Sharon Swift for sending me both pictures and the report about the coffee morning.



INTEREST GROUPS

CREATIVE WRITING

Hello everyone.

Not a full team this month as Peggy was on holiday and Pam, unfortunately, was in hospital with a severe gall stone infection. She is out now but things are taking a while for her to recover fully.

We had the pleasure of Jacqui and David with us again and a guest writer, Jean's daughter Rosie, we are sharing her charming piece about Castle Farm below. Being as Jean is not quite in the best of health as she used to be in the earlier years of The U3A. Colin and

Rosie help to keep her included as much as possible, as Jean, at times, doesn't know who is who. They are both kindly and understanding as are we all under the circumstances. Thanks for all the various writing pieces everyone.

OLD CASTLE FARM -

Remarkably hidden from view on the Old Castle bend of the River Teifi, with an unlikely approach weaving your way through the back streets of Cardigan. Finally, down the long straight lane, pause at the 2nd gateway on your right, to see the state of the tide at Patch. If you go fast enough down the lane, you might jump right over the river and land in St Dogmaels! A glorious productive garden; the Kiftsgate Rose is a rambling magnificent sight in July, and earlier the many Camellias seem to flower for ever and the Agapanthus are a perfect blue. There is bounty of apples, plums, figs, walnuts, damsons, soft fruit and vegetables; but ask Colin about the squirrels – they enjoy it all too... The pond and the bird table are a centrepiece to watch from the kitchen table and the bench outside the door. The white lady statue enjoys the tranquillity.. She had a repaint last summer after Emily scrubbed up all her nooks and crannies with a toothbrush. The calls of curlew and oyster catcher, tawny owls at night and flocks of geese talking to each other as they make their way up or down river are the sounds of Old Castle. Other sounds are the clocks: the kitchen clock, a steady heartbeat of the kitchen, you miss it when it stops. The grandmother clock halfway up the stairs, it sounds every quarter hour- it is comforting in the middle of the night but it doesn't keep

you awake. Seagulls will stand on the roof and call down the Rayburn chimney, sounding as if they are right in the room.

Inside there's a warm welcome- warm and toasty in the kitchen and by the sitting room fire but cold and icy everywhere else. Reluctant to take that leap out of bed in the morning, but pull your clothes on quick and rush downstairs for a sociable, protracted breakfast around the large, round, wooden kitchen table. 'Lazy Susan' used to live in the middle to send the butter and marmalade round. Milk straight from the bulk tank was especially enjoyed by Stephen. Mwnt was and will always be a favourite destination: choughs, the little white church, the beach, swimming, French cricket, dig in the sand, catch crabs under the seaweed, climb the Mwnt and watch out for dolphins and seals. Once, a great big casserole was brought - wrapped in a blanket to eat for supper on top of the lime kiln watching the sun go down over the Western Sea. Up or down the river in the boat was memorable too. On a high spring tide, you can sneak up well above Cilgerran. The cousins from Devon had a once in a lifetime encounter with dolphins with Colin in the boat one visit. Puddling about the muddy river bed when the tide was out occupied children in a very messy way: digging up old bottles and clay pipes and other debris thrown over from by-gone sailing ships and coasters coming into Cardigan. But the children grow up and time marches on for all of us though our memories, maybe helped with a few photos, can last forever.

Rosie Gibson Sept 2023

TERMINUS

The disembodied voice on the train says
"We are now approaching Swansea,
Please take all your belongings with
you"

I wonder if at my journey's end I will
hear

A similar voice intone: "You must now
Leave all your belongings behind you"

Peter Rossiter Sept 2023

A BIRD IN THE KITCHEN

A bird in the kitchen today, perched on
a chair

I think it was asking for you, I said
"She's not here"

"She's gone away to a different room,
though it does have a view
Her life's gone awry, but through the
glass she can see

The clouds marching on by, to a beat,
with a very strange tune

And as afternoon turns to evening time
the greys on the ceiling get darker
And the nights are full of lights, and din
and suffering."

"Say, little bird, why don't you come
with me, and bring your friends to visit
her?

The sparrows, the robins all the tits and
the wrens,

It'd make her day to hear the feathered
gang cheeping and chirping away

You all could do a random fly on bye
with absolutely no proper formation

Dance away in the wind without any a
plan,

Enjoy yourselves

Without pretence or duress,

Just be free, be free as freedom itself.

I think she'd smile, and be happy again,
just for a moment or two."

Peter Rossiter. Sept 2023

I COME FROM

I come from great expanses of
wilderness, mother tongues plural of
French and Cree.

I come from the roar of jet planes and
the heat of the East.

From England's introverted war child
and Canada's passionate soul.

I come from generations of pious grey
nuns, black garbed priests, a blend of
earthy hunter and indigenous woman.

I come from the trees, the wild places,
the call of the bear and the flight of the
fish.

I come from sisterhoods in boarding
school, hospitals and the love of the
horse.

I come from knitters and home makers,
from teachers and gardeners,
From the cry of the sick, the soon to
die, the miracle workers, the
tenderhearted, the quick to laugh, the
quick to reply.

I come from quicksilver Familiars, cats,
horses and dogs whose souls meld with
mine.

I come from within, the Universe,
shared energy, belonging to none,
I come.

Jacqui Brown 2023

Pam Rossiter.



Digital Photography

A message from Dave Thomas!

The homework for September was
action shots/something that moves.

This could have been a sporting event,
animals/insects, moving

objects/vehicles or anything else that
moves. Everyone had the opportunity
to consider if they want to achieve

background blur, foreground blur or no blur at all.



Adrian Milner



Colin Luker



Margaret Evans



Dave Thomas



Ron Hill

Our next meeting is 10.30am on Tuesday 10th October 2023 in Coracle Hall, Llechryd, but then we are moving to **2.30pm on the LAST WEDNESDAY** of each month in Coracle Hall, Llechryd, except for December when there is no meeting.

So the meeting schedule is 2.30pm to 4.30pm on Wednesday 29th November 2023,

31st January 2024,

28th February 2024,

27th March 2024, etc.

So what happens in December? Well we are doing something a little different this year and are meeting on 12th December at the Welsh Wildlife Centre in Cardigan for a casual get together with lunch being served around 12.30pm.

The Digital Photography group welcomes beginners, intermediates and advanced digital photographers, so everyone is very welcome. Whatever camera equipment and level of experience you have, come and join us!

If you would like to join the group, please email Dave at digitalphotography@cardiganu3a.org.uk or davejthomas66@gmail.com with your name and contact number. Dave will then send you a welcome email, which will include information to aid you with the month's homework, just in case you want to get started straight away!

Finally, if anyone is interested in listening to a professional photographer, the Drefach-Felindre gardening club are having an event on Wednesday 1st November at 7.30pm in the Red Dragon Hall, Drefach-Felindre. Entry is only £2.00 and there is no need to book.

Dave Thomas Mobile: 07974 590946



Astronomy

Since Galileo last put quill to parchment, the Cardigan and Newcastle Emlyn u3a Astronomy group has met twice. At both gatherings we caught up

with the planets and stars that are currently easy to see with the naked eye, but we also covered comets, the Perseid meteors, Blue Moons and Supermoons, and were given instructions by Jon on how to find a number of objects outwith the Solar System using binoculars or a small telescope.

Taking Blue Moons first, we established that the Moon, full or otherwise, is rarely bluish. There are a few reports of bluish moons after some volcanic eruptions like Krakatoa and Mount St Helens (and also major bush-fires) so they do occur occasionally but they are more likely to be of atmospheric meteorological cause than anything to do with the Moon. The name seems to have come from ancient ecclesiastical calendars – and become synonymous with “rare events”. But in astronomical circles Blue Moons are defined as the second or extra occurrence of a full-moon in a given season – but, most commonly, we just consider months rather than seasons, and see Blue Moons as the second full Moon in a calendar month. This happened in August, with full-moons on the 1st and the 30th – and with more than 29½ days between full-moons, Blue Moons can only happen in 31 day months so we only get them about once in every 2 years and 9 months, (or once in a Blue Moon!).



Both the August full-moons met all the definitions of a "super-moon" i.e. nearer to Earth than 230,000 miles or nearer than the less demanding 360,000 km (and other even easier definitions). The next full-moon on 29th September is also described as a "super-moon" by some, as was July's, giving four in a row by some criteria – but Sept's will be further away than 230,000 miles, and July's was also further than 360,000 km so it wouldn't meet either of these criteria. We are sticking with the 360,000 km criterion and consider that there are/were 3x super-moons this year – and the next ones will be in Sept and Oct next year, neither of which will be as near as 230,000 miles, the most stringent criterion.

The picture above shows a supermoon from March 2011 (on the right) vs a more- average full-moon from Dec 2010 on the left. It is about 7½ % bigger in diameter, and about 15% brighter. That's the fact, rather than hyperbole, about "supermoons"!

We talked in August about the annual August Perseid meteor showers, usually the easiest and most convenient meteors to see. They arise from Earth orbiting through the debris left by the Swift-Tuttle comet.

This comet was spotted independently in 1862 by Swift and Tuttle, both American astronomers. Then a subsequent "re-discovery" in 1992 by a Japanese astronomer has led to our understanding that Smith-Tuttle was the comet reported in 1737 - and from the time-periods, probably also the one reported in 188 AD in China, and even earlier in 69 BC and 322 BC!

In September we discussed another comet first spotted on Aug 12th by amateur Japanese astronomer, Hideo Nishimura, using a fairly ordinary camera with a 200mm telephoto lens. We looked at more recent photos taken by amateurs at dusk in Arizona and Slovakia on the 9th Sept, when Comet Nishimura was fairly close to its nearest to Earth (78M miles on 12 Sep) and to the Sun – just 20M miles on 17 Sep, and well inside Mercury's orbit. Unfortunately the comet is pretty faint in the dusk shots so, although OK on the big screen, I haven't included the pics here – but there is a night shot from New Mexico on 6 Sept.



After Mr Nishimura's announcement of his discovery in August, output from some big telescopes was re-analysed - and PanSTARRS in Hawaii found it on 19th, 24th and 25th of January (though hundreds of thousands times less bright). With 7 months of time and positional data, NASA now believes the comet came from the Oort Cloud more than twice as far away as Neptune, on a very eccentric elliptical orbit which will take it back to the Oort Cloud and then return again to the Sun in 430 years.

It is now also thought possible that Comet Nishimura's debris is responsible for the Sigma Hybrids meteor shower around 30 Nov each year. If so, maybe this year we will see many more meteors then, following replenishment of the debris trail by the recent comet orbit.

Finally, here is a quick update on the brighter objects in the current night sky. Venus is now visible again having passed between us and the Sun in August. It is the really bright "star" in the east about 20 degrees above the horizon just before dawn, say 5.30-6.30am. Nothing else (apart from the Moon) is anywhere near as bright.

At the more hospitable hours of late evening to post-midnight, Jupiter is the "star", shining noticeably brighter than anything else (other than Venus later on) as it moves across the sky at about 45 degrees above the horizon from the SE towards the SW by sunrise. If the sky is not totally cloudy at bedtime you will not miss Jupiter in the southern sky.

Our next meeting will be on Wed, 18 Oct at 2pm in Llechryd's Coracle Hall. Please come and join us if you are interested, or ring 01239-891549 if you want more information.

Galileo



Ukulele

The group has had a very busy and enjoyable summer with several concerts given already and quite a few more planned.

The ukulele concert that we gave at Clynyw Community Garden was once

again a lovely experience both for us playing and the audience.

The Community Garden was holding an Open Day and had various stalls with their own produce for sale. As always it was very well supported – the weather helped a lot as it was warm without being too hot.

We were found a lovely spot to play with a very appreciative and enthusiastic audience nearby, joining in the various songs.

With free coffee and cakes made from the produce grown at the community gardens it was indeed a fulfilling and enjoyable afternoon.

We also played for the WI in Sarnau which again was well received. The audience knew most of the songs and were willing 'volunteers' in joining in!! They even want us back to play for them near Christmas.

Here are some further dates:

Wednesday 11th October Llwyndrynys

Friday 27th October Boncath Hall

Thursday 16th November Narberth R.C.

Wednesday 6th December Sarnau Craft

Thursday 14th December Ferwig Craft

Saturday 16th December Tesco (this is a swimming pool fundraiser)

New members are always welcome and if anyone knows of a group who would like to hear us play then please let me know and I will forward the message to the committee.



Cardigan U3A Strollers

Our August Friday walks, about 4 miles:- leaving at 10.30

Tuesday walks- leaving at 10.00 and approximately 6 + miles

Walk details are on the U3A website. We always finish with the option of either 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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tremain Harvest Flower Festival

29th September –Sunday 1st October

2-5pm

Harvest Service : Tremain Friday

29th September 5pm

GUILD HALL MEETINGS

October 26th

Archaeological finds from the Narberth by- pass.

November 23rd

Cranogwen – a speaker from Llangrannog welfare committee

No meeting in December and future dates to follow in October's newsletter



A Message from the Chairman

We are now well into the Autumn and the weather looks like it has promised

to be stormy and changeable, much like the late summer, no change there then.

Some good news - after asking for help we have had a volunteer come forward to take over the Website Admin/management.

Penny Catt who has skills and experience in IT and Admin, has taken over the roll very ably with guidance and help from Godfrey Green, who is now stepping down.

I would like to place on record our huge thanks to Godfrey for looking after and setting up our website for the last eleven years. He has helped the committee and many other members with computer and IT problems in this digital age we are in, and for that you and I are very grateful. I'm sure he's not going away and will stay with us so you will see him around. If you want Penny to put anything of information about your groups etc on the website, please send it to her, email address is, website@cardiganu3a.org.uk

Please don't use her personal email if you have it.

Penny informs me she will do the role away from the committee, but is always welcome to come along.

Moving on, I am still trying to fill the Group co-ordinator post that Adrian Milner has resigned from after many years of service to Cardigan u3a.

It is not an onerous task and just requires someone who has organisational skills to communicate with group leaders and run our yearly Open Day alongside the committee.

If you would like more information either contact me chair@cardiganu3a.org.uk or Adrian groupcordinator@cardiganu3a.org.uk I'm sure he will explain his role to you. **PLEASE we really do need to fill this post ASAP.**

More good news, we have two new groups starting up soon, Sue Milner has kindly offered to lead and host - at her home- a craft and textiles group covering knitting, crocheting, needlework, embroidery and I'm sure many other skills I know nothing about! The group will meet once a fortnight and I am sure will be a great success.

Sue has won many awards for her work so those joining will be in very good hands.

I put up an expression of interest form up at the monthly meeting but in the absence of our coordinator, message me back if you did not make it to the meeting and I will add you to it.

We also have a proposed Castle Bagging group offered. This will involve visiting the many Castles in the area and finding out as much about them as you can. I know they are looking at Cardigan Castle and are planning to get Glen Johnson along to give the first informative talk- then it is up to the group to proceed. More details to follow!

That is all from me. It's amazing when you start typing, how the words just seem to come along, Shirley!

Thank you and best wishes

Howard Lillyman Chairman



For the benefit of the new members- and welcome to those who have recently joined U3a - all meetings usually take place on the fourth Thursday of the month in the Guildhall

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!!



ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Those wishing to tread the boards will be really joyous to know that the writing of the pantomime is finished!!

It is very simple, will be hilarious- and that is without us trying. It will not last long - we could be booed off the stage and could well lose all u3a members in one fell swoop.

The date is to be arranged -but probably for the Thursday meeting in March. The venue is the Guild Hall.

We do need to have space for rehearsals however. Even me- with my never-ending optimism- realise that we will need to rehearse and they must start a little while before the actual performance!!

If anyone has any ideas then please get in touch with me as soon as possible

At the moment we appear to have a full cast. I am somewhat surprised after the initial – 'OH NO I'M NOT' when I was trying to instil enthusiasm into some very wary 'volunteers'.

If there is anyone who wants to join in then please get in touch –we have room.

wallaceshirley@hotmail.com



AMAZING GRACE



Above - Grace showing how to supply a gas Tilly lamp

September's speaker was 'Amazing' Grace Albison, originally from Oldham, Manchester, but now resident in Ceredigion. Accompanied by some

wonderful old photographs, Grace took us through her life story from growing up in a two-up-two down terrace with an outside loo, going to school in clogs and having meals of dripping on toast. Grace took up conjuring as a childhood hobby, entertaining fellow youngsters with magic tricks at parties and in air-raid shelters during the war. This led to a semi-professional career in illusion, touring with acrobats, contortionists and the like, eventually becoming assistant to illusionist-escapologist The Great Levante in the 1950s. As part of his stage show, Grace was fired head-first from a canon through a 16th of an inch steel plate, landing in a net 40 feet across the stage clad in a sparkly leotard and crash helmet - I'm not sure Debbie McGee ever had to go through anything quite that extreme! Marriage and family brought a slightly less frenetic lifestyle, following which Grace became a Magistrate. During a talk at the local Magistrates' annual dinner, her magical past came to light. Local and national media picked up on the story of the Magistrate who had been a magician's assistant and coined the name 'Amazing Grace' which has stuck to this day. Never one to rest on her laurels, Grace also became a specialist social worker with the deaf, learning British Sign Language at record speed, interpreting for hearing-impaired defendants in Court, teaching sign language to widely, including to Sainsbury stores around her home area and producing a dictionary of sign language still in use today. As if all that wasn't enough, after making her daughter's wedding dress, Grace set up her own bridal wear shop to hire out the dresses she made. Since moving to

Wales with her daughter and family, Grace hasn't really slowed down much. She remains actively involved in several local organisations and still sews costumes for the Cardigan Girl Guides' annual panto. Nor has she abandoned the art of illusion: Grace performed two amazing pieces of magic to close her talk and I have absolutely no idea how she did either of them!

Judi