

Cardigan u3a Newsletter

No 164 FEBRUARY 2024



Editorial

I cannot wait for the Spring – today is yet another dreary day although when I went out early this morning it was really quite pleasantly mild and there was even a glimmer of sun. Still –it is only February so we cannot expect much just yet.

It is lovely to see the daffodils and snowdrops out though- a sure sign that spring is on its way.

My daughter got married in America in the middle of January. The preparation for the departure for the flight over there was extremely stressful. Jason – her new husband- (not that she had an old one to get rid of!!!) is American and was working there although he did make visits back to Windsor, where they lived, in order to see her and the girls. She was living in a flat which I frequently visited before she made the move to America. Every time I went there, she had sent another shipment of furniture and toys over the pond so by the time I made my last visit to see her before the departure –the flat was almost empty. Jason had bought a house in Austen, Texas, in readiness for their wedding and life out there. A couple of days after arriving Becky showed me- on Skype- round the new house. From having to climb 60 concrete steps to her old flat- whilst carrying a baby, a pushchair and also supervising a very independent 2 year old who insisted climbing the steps to the flat on her own- her new house has no steps, stairs or incline of any description. It is all on one level with 5 bedrooms- all en suite, a lovely kitchen, a pantry you could put a 3 piece suite in and –to cap it all -even an en- suite attached to the children’s bedroom with a miniature bath and low level shower! I hasten to say the controls can only be worked by an adult!! From not having any sort of green play area in Windsor attached to the flats, they now have a huge park and what the Americans call ‘a modest garden! The bungalow where I live could be transported over there and put into this ‘modest garden’.



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INTEREST GROUPS

MORNING COFFEE AND AFTERNOON TEA GROUPS

The coffee morning this month was held on the 1st February at Y bryn A'r Bragdy in Brynhoffnant. What a lovely venue- my first visit there. I think when I first moved here they had started work on it and I must say that the owners have done a wonderful job. Once again the coffee morning was very well attended with approximately 30 people attending.

Looking over the countryside plus having the knowledge that the sea was not far away, made for yet another welcoming venue. There was a slight blip as they had run out coffee and so hot chocolate was put on the menu. The drinks were soon ordered and every one could tuck into the scones and jam. Once again everyone appeared to have a lovely time. As I have said before, these social gatherings are a great idea for members to socialise. Thank you again Liz and Will for organising them.

The Morning Coffee Group meets on the 1st Thursday of each month, usually at about 11.00am. The venues are selected within about a 10 mile radius of Cardigan and should be able to host around 20 members and enable free parking. Forthcoming events are:-

Thursday, 7th March, 11.00am at the Albion, Cardigan (on the Teifi by the bridge).

The Afternoon Tea Group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month, usually at about 3.00pm. The venues are selected within about a 10 mile radius of Cardigan and should be able to host around 20 members and enable free parking. The next tea group is :-

Thursday, 21st March at Cenarth Tea Rooms, Cenarth at 2.30pm.

Liz and Will North are also avid, hard- working gardeners and every year open their fantastic garden to the public. All monies collected go towards a charity.

The dates for their Open days are below and it is hope that as many people as possible will take the opportunity to visit.

The Cae Bach, Hermon, (SA36 0DS) NGS Open Garden dates are:-

1st Open Day - **Sunday, 23rd June 2024** - 11.00am - 5.00pm

2nd Open Day - **Sunday, 18th August 2024** - 11.00am - 5.00pm

The Garden is open by arrangement for groups of 5 or more from Sunday, 16th June 2024 - Sunday, 21st July 2024 and is well worth a visit.

Teas, coffee and homemade cakes can be enjoyed and there will be plants for sale also. **All proceeds go to National Garden Scheme (NGS) Charities.**

If any of the new members would also like to voice their opinion concerning these social gatherings, then their comments would be very welcome.



CREATIVE WRITING



You may have read the tribute to Jean Thomas in the previous newsletter, who has sadly passed away. She once led the Creative Writing group and we miss her writing skills and her beautiful way of reading out loud.

Below is a touching poem by Emyr (Oernant) Jones that was read out at her funeral and a piece titled "Curlews" written by her partner Colin.

CARDIGAN GRASSLAND REUNION

I remember our first meeting
When we turned up nice and clean
Where we made the resolution
To grow grass that's always green.

We were bound by one ambition
(We were all then young and keen)
To till the fields of Ceredigion
Where the grass is always green.

Gilfach Chwith was our Mecca
Mr Evans was so keen
He pioneered with ambition
And his grass was always green.

We also tied a bond of friendship
Where no foe could come between
To discolour our ambitions
For our grass was always green.

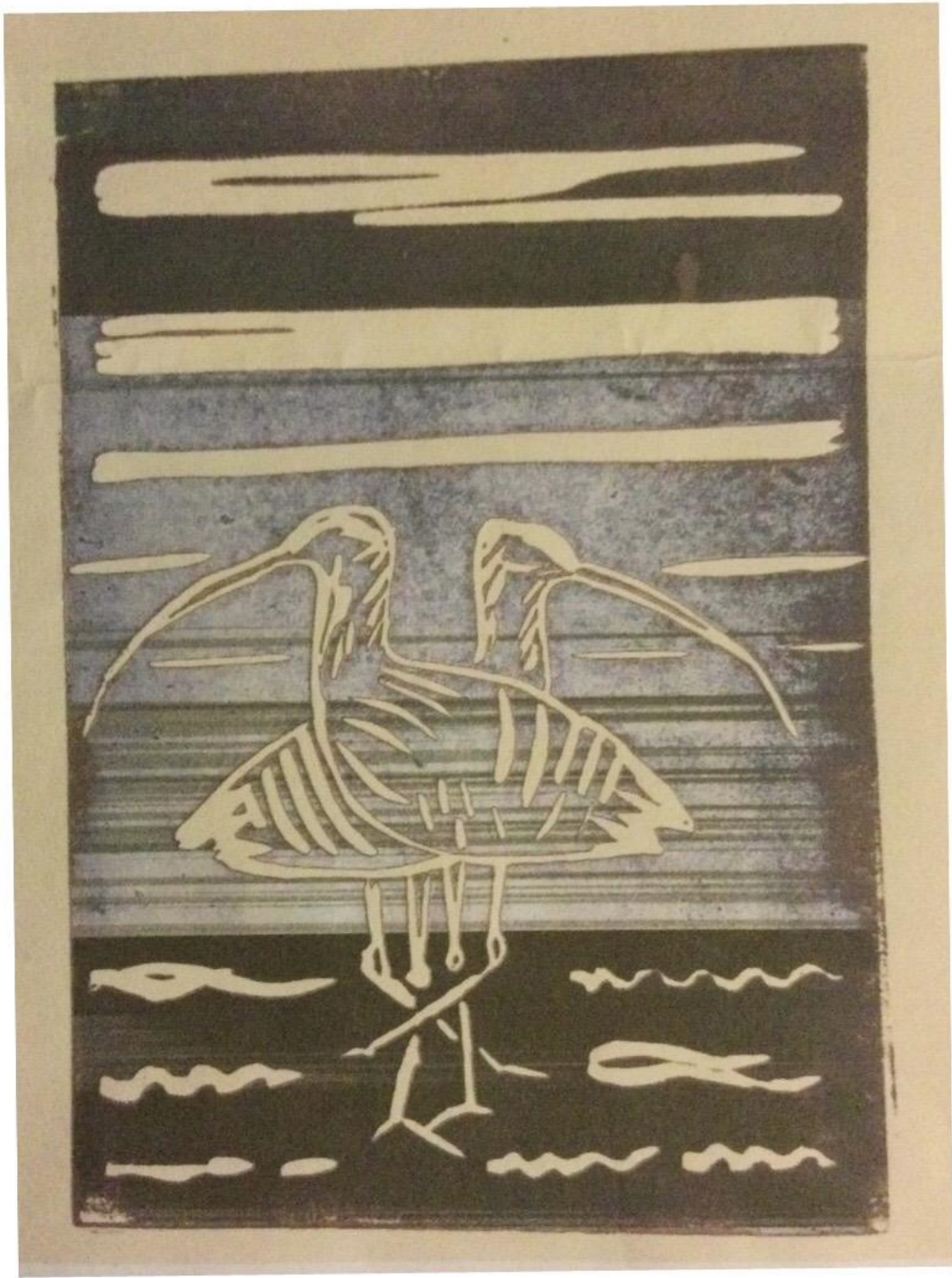
We discussed on feeding methods
Carbohydrates and protein
But could find no better fodder
Than the grass that's always green.

Let us all enjoy our union
And discuss events we've seen
And be happy in the knowledge
That our grass is always green.

Let's now hand the baton forward
While we amble so serene
To graze our twilight years
On the grass that's always green.

When we reach our final headland
Over ridges and ravine
We shall rest our tired bodies
Under grass that's always green.

Emyr (Oernant) Jones.



CURLEWS

There have always been curlews at Old Castle Farm. Coming here in 1969 was the first time that I heard curlews consistently calling. It is a distinctive sound which carries clearly. I saw them as passing migrants, singly or in small groups until all the winter residents arrived towards the end of September. Immature birds might stay for the summer too. They were on the estuary and on the farm land. They would fly over the house occasionally.

I had seen them in the north of Ireland when walking in the hills as a boy. They are very shy, wary birds. They won't let you get near and lift up if you approach. Their behaviour is quite different from their smaller cousin the whimbrel, which will allow you closer. The curlew is a big bird and a good meal for a predator who doesn't want to catch small prey if something larger is available. The curlew has very precise requirements at their breeding sites. They require an open moor for nesting. Where power cables are erected across the moors, or trees are planted, this gives their predators an advantage. This extra pressure on the birds, combined with wider loss of habitat, has caused numbers to plummet. The curlew's caution could not save them and they are almost on the red list of endangered bird species. Numbers at Old Castle Farm are much reduced now.

I always thought of my cows as the Curlew herd but I didn't register the name with the Friesian Holstein Breed Society until the early 1980s. I think the first calf I registered was called Curlew Mystic. The herd name, which is always used as a prefix, is like a surname for the herd. But it actually belongs to the breeder and could only be given to cattle that I bred after I had registered the herd name. In total, I registered 560 pedigree females. When I sold the herd and stopped farming, the Curlew prefix could not be given to new calves.

People thought Curlew an unusual name for a pedigree herd. Most use their farm name, such as Tregibby which is one of the most well-known UK herds, farming locally. But the curlew is part of the sound and land of Old Castle Farm and I could think of no better name to choose.

Colin Evans



Digital Photography

Homework for the last meeting was 'light trails/light painting photographs' or 'something of interest photographs'. Group members were encouraged to think about light trails, using car head and tail lights, the stars, etc., and with light painting, getting creative with a torch or some coloured/Christmas lights. We can achieve light trails by setting our camera to ISO 100, an aperture f/20 and a shutter speed of 15 seconds to 30 seconds (or even longer) and using a tripod and cable release/wireless remote, which are essential for these types of photos - There's a bit more to it really,

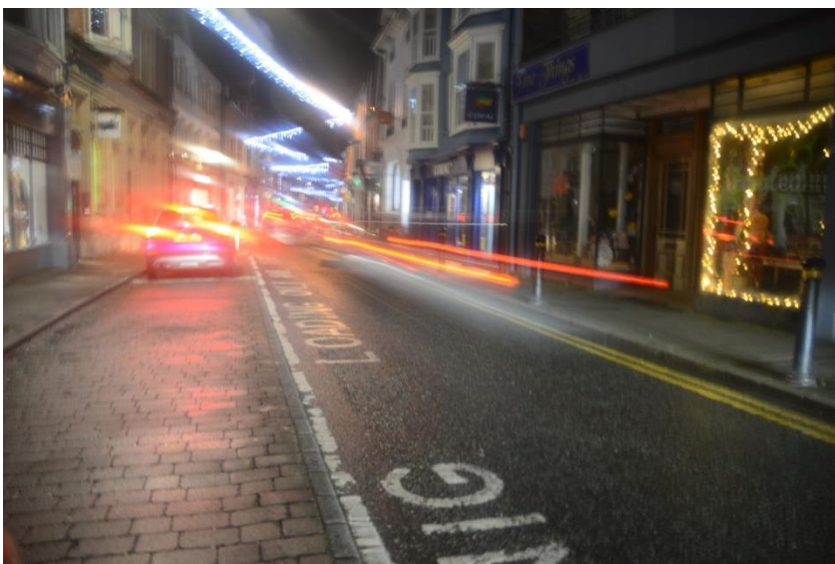
because numerous combinations of settings can be used, but this is a good starting point.



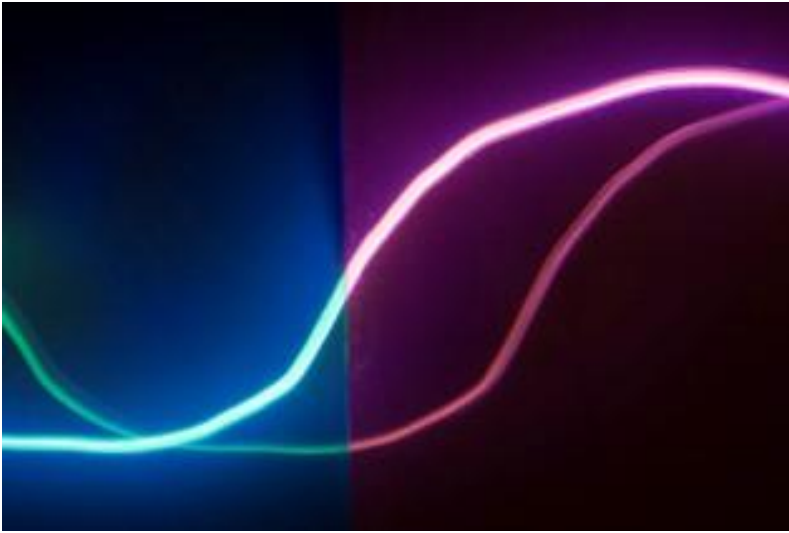
Colin Luker



John Leigh



Margaret Evans



Nigel Maynard



Margaret Taylor



Dave Thomas

Each month group members are set a specific homework topic, but can choose to take something of interest photographs or do a mixture of both. At the following months meeting, homework is reviewed and critiqued by the members, with tips and advice provided as necessary. So, if you would like to join us, we welcome beginners, intermediates and advanced digital photographers. It doesn't matter what camera equipment or level of experience you have, so what's stopping you joining us at our **next meeting on Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 2.30 pm in Coracle Hall, Llechryd!**

For more information, please email Dave at davejthomas66@gmail.com with your name and contact number. You will then receive a welcome email with information to aid you with the months homework to help you get started straight away.

Kind Regards / Cofion Cynnes

Dave

Mobile 07974 590946



Astronomy

The Cardigan and Newcastle Emlyn u3a Astronomy group met as usual on the 3rd Wednesday in February, i.e. Feb 21st.

We started off with our regular check on which planetary and stellar objects are currently easily seen. For February and March, Jupiter, which is still the brightest object in the sky apart from the Moon, is very obvious in the SW sky between dusk and midnight – but it is the only planet we can see at the moment. Just to the left or east of Jupiter, Orion and the Winter Hexagon of bright stars still dominate the southern part of the sky.

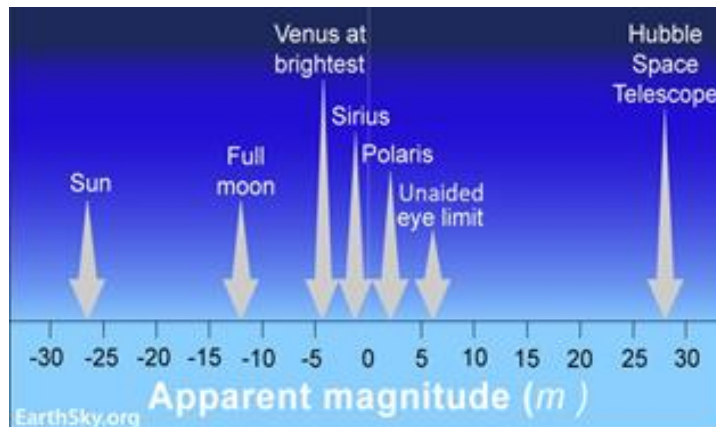


The pic shows the Winter Hexagon, with Betelgeuse and Rigel and the other Orion stars within the hexagon in the 5 o'clock quarter.

Jon then gave another excellent demonstration of the planetarium program, Stellarium, homing in on Jupiter to demonstrate its potential.

We then had a look at the rash of recent successful launches of Elon Musk's SpaceX rockets. It's currently around two per week, sometimes two on the same day. The Falcon 9 rocket has made more than 300 launches, and with most take-offs returning the main 1st-stage to the launch pad, more than three-quarters of launches have been with previously-used rockets. The busiest ones have made 18 and 19 launches each – and transformed the cost of rocket launches.

We looked quickly through some of the best images returned by the James Webb space telescope in its first two years of operation, and then had an explanation of the system we now use to classify the brightness of any stellar object we see in the sky. This is called the Apparent Magnitude of a star, because this is how it appears to us on Earth (rather than how bright it is intrinsically).



Adrian went through the development of this scale which, as the diagram shows, rather oddly ranks brighter stars and other objects with negative values and the very dimmest ones with positive values. This arose through early attempts to rank visible stars as 1st-magnitude, 2nd-magnitude, etc, by Hipparchus in about 150 BC and then again by Ptolemy in about 150 AD. 1st-magnitude stars were the brightest 20 they could see, and the 6th-magnitude ones being the last of the 1000 or so stars that could still, just, be seen with the naked eye.

In those flat-Earth, non-heliocentric, days there was no knowledge of stars like size or distance away from Earth. They were essentially lights of different intensities in the sky, which kept regular timetables as each year passed – and this didn't really change for about 1400 years, so the Hipparchus/Ptolemy 6-stage magnitude scale continued until Galileo and others saw stars which were even less bright than 6th-magnitude. 7th and higher magnitudes were then able to be seen as telescopes became more powerful.

By the mid-1900s, with the invention of photometers, etc, astronomers decided they had to make the magnitude definitions more mathematical, so they fixed on a logarithmic formula which fixed the difference for a span of 5x magnitudes as being a brightness ratio of 100 to one. So each whole magnitude turns out to be 2.512x the brightness of the one below it – but the scale then had to extend upwards to 0-magnitude for some “1st-magnitude” stars and negative magnitudes for the brightest like Sirius (plus planets Venus, Jupiter and Mars).

So we had a scale from Ancient Greece which was backwards and had negative magnitudes for the brightest stars, and a numerical improvement that has turned out not to be ideal, but was usable. And then photography arrived – and B&W images didn’t always agree with eye-sight assessment of which star was the brighter. It was a mess - but it was too late to change.

In fact, the initial photographic problems were a blessing in disguise as they showed us that the stars are all different colours because of size, composition, temperature and development through ageing, etc, and so they radiate in different parts of the visible, UV and infra-red spectra. This has allowed us to define the Apparent Magnitudes in terms of a few standard filters for each of the spectrum bands – so we still continue to this day to use the 2000 year-old, intuitively backwards, visual system started by Hipparchus.

Our next meeting will be on Wed, 20 March at 2pm in Llechryd’s Coracle Hall. Please come and join us if you are interested, or ring 0777-167 4578 if you want more information.

- Galileo



CASTLE BAGGING

Further to our visit to Cardigan Castle last year and with regards to the castle bagging group, it is not really suitable to visit castles during the winter months. Sharon Swift, organised a Sunday visit to Scolton Manor, which is within a 60 acre country park in Bethlehem, near Haverfordwest and is an inside venue until spring.

The guided tour of the manor which took place this last Sunday was easily one of the best historical tours that I have ever been on. Congratulations must go to both Sharon- for the organisation of this visit with approximately 14 people from u3a attending- and also to the brilliant tour guide –Kath.

Once inside the manor, it was almost as though you had stepped back in time to the Victorian era.

This house was built in 1840 and although they were in another residence at the time of building, the family moved into this beautiful building and made it their family home for many generations. The owner of this beautiful manor-James Higgins- employed a local builder to do the work and the first amazing fact about it is that it

was not built of stone but of brick with cement rendering. It was also the first building of its kind to have the most up to date indoor toilet facilities!

Many generations of the family have lived in this beautiful Victorian manor over a long period of time and it has been kept in the way that the Victorians lived. Many of the sons of the family sadly perished in various wars. One very important lady – Edith- kept the manor going throughout WW1, before eventually dying in 1937.



After passing through the main door visitors come to the outer hall. One of the many items that visitors see are not only the beautifully painted portraits of the many generations that have lived here over a period of time, but also photographs that are abundant in all of the rooms and are a wonderful reminder of how the family lived.

Visiting guests would then pass from the outer into the inner hall which featured an incredible cantilevered winding staircase- meaning that there was no support from any pillars underneath the winding staircase.

The drawing room- where the ladies would withdraw after a meal- contained gilded mirrors and pelmets and a stunning crystal chandelier. Apparently one of the relations, many generations down the line, visited fairly recently with a van containing some loose crystals from this chandelier plus other items of priceless furniture!!! These items are now also on display and add to the mystery of how they vanished in the first place!!



Every room was just as grand. The dining room was set out as it would have been for a grand dinner party in Victorian times- with the table laid as though waiting for the guests to sit: the library with a beautiful collection of books, comfortable chairs and a writing desk plus weighing scales for letters so that the writer knew which stamp to put on a particular letter. The servants' quarters were basic, functional but quite cosy and you got the impression that they were well looked after.



Lastly the children's nursery was full of amazing toys - not only of that era but also the 60's, 70's and 80's which brought back many memories to our group of varying ages!! There was a large emphasis on dolls' houses, board games and rocking horses and the arrangement of each room was impeccable and so well thought out.



Some pieces throughout the manor have been donated by the museum in Haverfordwest but they have added to the grandeur of this beautiful manor and have not taken away the memories that appear to still linger in every room.

It was well worth the visit and I will be going again in the summer when the outside gardens can also be enjoyed. There is also a café where we were able to visit before being guided round this lovely manor by the very welcoming, knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide.

Thank you again Sharon for organising this. A Sunday afternoon well spent!



The last three pictures show us assembled in the inner hall. This also shows part of the staircase and portraits of two family members.

Also is a photo of the beautiful wallpaper- sideways on for which I apologise- unable to turn it round so just lie on your side and admire!!!! Lastly a picture of one of the beautiful grandfather clocks!!!!

Shirley

Just to give you the next event I've got organised will be with:

Emyr Phillips, on Quarries of Cilgerran, incorporating Fynnonau Mansion. This will take place on Tuesday 12th March, at 2pm at the Coracle Hall, Llechrhyd. There is a fee of £5pp to cover Emyr & hall, as well as refreshments.

I have been told that there will be bowls on the big hall, at the same time, unfortunately, but hopefully shouldn't be a problem. Another little snag will be the parking if they are using the hall too!! Let us hope some might not turn up, more room for us.

I am also in correspondence with Glen Johnson, Cardigan Castle historian, to give us a talk- together with photos about manor houses of Cardigan, or Cardigan greenhouse. This will be confirmed for April and more details will follow.

As we approach spring, we can look to getting back to castle bagging.

If you are interested in any of these events, please let her know either by email- sharonjswifty82@gmail.com, or 01994 419010.

Sharon Swift

MATTERS OF INTEREST

Making a Will

I appreciate that most Cardigan u3a members will have already made a will. However, for those that have not done so, or who wish to make a new will in the light of changed circumstances, do be aware that free will writing services are available from certain solicitors.

Free Wills Month (FWM) takes place every October and March and involves several major charities: **<https://freewillsmoth.org.uk/>**

Only those aged 55 or over can use the FWM service.

In addition, the Cancer Research UK (CRUK) Free Will service is available throughout the year to anyone over the age of 18 at Welch & Co in Cardigan:

<https://www.welchlaw.co.uk/en>

Cancer Research UK (CRUK) Free Will service

NB There is no need to make any upfront payment with either of the above schemes. You simply leave a legacy of any amount to the particular charity in your will.

Computers request

Over the years I have converted many older desktop PCs and laptops from Windows to Linux, firstly for Clynyfw Care Farm (CCF) and more recently for Age Cymru Dyfed (ACD).

The CCF ones were shipped to a charity in South Africa and the ACD ones were distributed to local people. Unfortunately, ACD has closed its Cardigan office and is no longer accepting any modified computers.

I am hoping to carry on this work with another local community group, so I am asking whether any of you (or your friends, relatives, neighbours, basically anybody) have any surplus W7, W8, W10 (not older) PCs or laptops (including mains adapters), please?

NB All drives are securely wiped with specialist software and then a fresh installation of Linux Mint is made.

If you have something suitable, please contact our chairman, Howard Lillyman via email on: chair@cardiganu3a.org.uk

Many thanks for anything suitable you can supply.

Godfrey Green

Crafters group

The Crafters Group meet fortnightly on Wednesday mornings at my house, although this arrangement may not occur every fortnight owing to vacation absences.

The existing group members have agreed that the next three 2-hour gatherings will be at **10am on Wednesday 28th Feb, Wednesday 6th March and Wednesday 27th March.**

Any new members who might be interested in joining us should ring me on 07436-900 223 or email me on susan.m.milner@btinternet.com for more information.

Singers' News

At the beginning of this month we had a visit from Gareth who has just started a singing group with Newcastle Emlyn u3a. He was interested to see the sort of thing we do. He amused us by performing a Morecambe and Wise dance across the room to lead us in Bring Me Sunshine. On a more serious note, we agreed that both groups would try to meet later in the year to sing Hallelujah together.

More recently, to celebrate Valentine's Day we have been singing some of our favourite love songs. We also tried a (new to us!) seventeenth century round:

'Go to Joan Glover, And tell her I love her.

And at the mid of the Moon, I will go to her'.

We were doing ok until someone said that he was up to no good visiting at the 'mid of the Moon'!!

We would like to gain some more voices -so please join us if you can. We sing for fun and everyone is welcome. There are no auditions and due to the fact that Jan cannot drive, we meet every Monday in Maes Mwldan. For more information about our group just ring Adrienne on 01239 612460 or just turn up to one of the practices. New members would be very welcome.



Book Group

Book group 2 The Lion House by Christopher de Bellaigue

Our book choice for January was The Lion House. This history book, written like a novel in the present tense is an account of the rise of Suleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman sultan and the Ottoman dynasty in the fifteenth/sixteenth century. It is divided into five acts, rather than chapters and each concentrates on one aspect of the story and helps to define the characters and their place in the story. This certainly helps in the reading of it as it is a very dense book, rich in description. The scope of the book is as magnificent as Suleyman himself, reaching as it does from Turkey to Spain, Hungary, the Middle East, North Africa and to the edge of Russia. The city state of Venice, the information gatherer of the world has learnt that the vastly rich Ottoman sultan, Suleyman has his sights set on Rome and is willing to wage war with his vast army to conquer it. With Christendom divided and the rise of Muslim power the leaders of the Christian and Muslim worlds have their parts in the story and we meet Charles V of Spain and his brother Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, Francis 1 of France and Janos, king of Hungary. Even Henry V appears. Those close to Suleyman, his consorts, his sons and his mother all appear in the story and life in the court is vividly described. Undoubtedly the most significant character is Ibrahim Pasha, the Frank. He has risen from very humble origins to be appointed Grand Vizier, and a powerful "friend" of Suleyman. The relationship is never clearly defined. His power is extraordinary, almost an equal with Suleyman who seems to succumb to Ibrahim's every wish. Other notable characters are Alvise Gritti, son of the Doge of Venice and Hayreddin, a pirate, the king of Algiers, better known as Barbarossa, The book is very detailed, for example in describing Venice as the world's information gatherer, the story is told how when King Charles of France died in Amboise on the eve of Palm Sunday 1498 the news reached Venice before St Marks bells chimed for Eastertide, thirteen horses having been ridden to death in the bringing of it. The book

has been compared to Wolf Hall in the way it has been written, history as a novel. The details of the comings and goings in the Porte brings it to life and the detailed descriptions of the clothes that were worn and the gifts given to Suleyman and the manner in which they were received all add to the picture. The details of battles fought, the beheadings that took place, the buildings, the clothes, the jewels and the enormous power Suleyman had over his subjects is clearly described. I found it an amazing story especially in the re-reading of it. Some things jarred. Occasionally the writer expresses things in a very modern way, "What's said in the Collegio doesn't necessarily stay in the Collegio" but I found it a fascinating although at times a difficult read. The book paints a vivid picture of life in the court of Suleyman and the situation in a fractured and divided Europe and was an immensely detailed account of a fascinating period but well worth the effort of reading it.

Our book group meets on the second Thursday of the month in the morning and if you would like to join us we have vacancies for two new members. We all contribute ideas for book choices and our reading varies from the classics to new books of all genres. Our meetings are relaxed and informal so do come and join us.

Marie Everett



Ukulele

Our group is a mixture of both seasoned and new players but there is always such a brilliant atmosphere. New people who join – and our numbers are growing – often comment on the friendly and totally inclusive atmosphere of the group. We have a good selection of music to play to our varied audiences and with our tutorial sessions becoming a firm favourite, we are now able to play different styles of music. The 'blues' appears to be the firm favourite at the moment!

We were invited to play at the village hall in Clunderwen to celebrate the centenary of the Womens Institute. We played our usual variety of both new and older well-known songs. It was difficult, however, having to follow a group of little children from the local Junior school who sang beautifully – and also looked so angelic!! During our renditions of our various upbeat songs, many of the children whirled enthusiastically around the hall – their enthusiasm was somewhat off-putting – but we soldiered on!!! We were treated to refreshments after so perhaps it was not too bad!!

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 Tuesday Walkers

Unfortunately there is no report for this month. All walks start at 10.00 am unless otherwise stated.

Walks organised by u3a automatically have public liability insurance cover, provided the walkers are u3a members. However, this is not a personal accident insurance and all members should be aware that they walk at their own risk. For further guidance on Health and Safety issues please read [Health and Safety on U3A Walks](#). Participants should also read the group's Risk Assessment, which details the procedures to be taken to ensure general risks are mitigated and the overall activity is managed in a coronavirus secure way.

Chris Edwards - programme organiser



BEE- KEEPING

Howard has briefly touched on the subject of our monthly talk which this month was given by an extremely enthusiastic gentleman known as Rob –or 'Bee-man'. From showing an interest in these wonderful creatures as a young boy to then becoming a watercress farmer in Hampshire and then returning to his main interest and becoming an avid bee- keeper later on in his life, was the subject of the talk.

Whilst he was in Hampshire, Rob went on a bee- keepers' course studying a module for beginners. He helped some local bee- keepers with their hives. Just in Great Britain there are thousands of bee- keepers- many of whom have up to ten hives.

In the UK there are 250 types of bees but 230 of this number are solitary. Worldwide there are 20,000 different types of segmented insects such as wasps and ants. Bees have been in existence since the last ice –age, spreading from Africa through to Europe. The earliest recorded keepers have been traced back 5,000 years, cave paintings have been found dating back 10,000 years and fossils have been found dating back millions of years.

Although honey bees are important pollinators they are not the specialists. This grand title falls to the Bumble bees, together with some moths and other insects that have adapted their behaviour to cope with the seasonal weather dips.

There are eight types of honey bees and it is the main type that produces honey. The decline of these creatures has reached 75%- due mainly to climate change, pesticides, intensive farming and loss of habitat. Farms are tidier now and do not generally have unproductive areas on their farms. Traditional grass meadows have declined by 97% and there has been a dramatic loss of hedgerows. This has all added to the general sad demise of these wonderful insects.

Modern bee- keeping, as it is known today, began in 1870 when the removable frame was invented. Up until then, the nectar was collected from swarms in the wild. The removable frame means that there is less interference to the honeycomb because the whole frame can be lifted from the hive leaving the honeycomb intact. If a comb is

looked at closely, you can only marvel at the fantastic engineering design:- from each hexagonal compartment where the eggs are laid: to the way that there is a little cap over the top of each compartment to protect the eggs inside: the way that the bees can regulate the temperature inside the hive and how each type of bee –from workers to drones to the Queen have their own role to play. From the wax, candles are made that are used in places of worship as well as our homes.

A SWARM that can be regularly seen by the naked eye, evokes fear into many people. Swarming happens as a result of overcrowding. The old queen is 'encouraged' to leave the hive by older bees that have already started the process of replacing her with a younger 'model'.

There has been a great deal of conversation recently about a very aggressive Asian bee that is prolific at the moment. Our native bees are able to recognise these bees as being a pest and will uncap the place where the Asian bees have deposited eggs and destroy the nest.

Manuka honey and wild flower honey was discussed. Honey in general has many healing and beneficial qualities and many years ago it was the only available sweetener. Wild flower honey is just as beneficial as the more expensive brands that can be bought.

A massive 'thank you' to Rob for such an enlightening and informative talk – I did not realise how amazing these creatures are. Although Rob's talk was mainly about keeping bees, the plight and sad demise of insects in general also featured heavily. Let us hope that people wake up to this fact and realise how important insects are before it is too late ----- if it isn't already!

A Message from the Chairman

It is time for another newsletter this month, where does it go? I know February is shorter than all the others but it is Leap year this month and we are thankfully heading towards Spring.

We had an excellent talk yesterday by a very knowledgeable Bee keeper on his hobby and interest in bees. He really knew his stuff. I've dabbled with keeping bees but it is difficult getting and keeping the conditions right in the hive but he certainly has reignited my interest again. Who knows-a beekeeping interest group starting up?

Your committee would like to see more groups starting up. If any of you have an interest that you would like to pursue further, how about mentioning it in the newsletter or drop me an email and I can ask members to join you. Every walk starts with one step and the enthusiasm to do it.

The u3a post-Christmas meal was a great success earlier this month we had 43 sat down in the golf club bar area and an excellent fair was served up, thanks to Linda Miles for her sterling work in organising again.

We are running a coach outing to St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life on Thursday June 13th. The coach ticket will be £12 and it will start from Cardigan and head out to Newcastle Emlyn and onwards. It is a free entry into St Fagans. Watch out for further information and when to book your seat.

Don't forget membership subs are due April 1st and our AGM is at the end of April on Thursday 25th, we do need some more help coming forward. That is all from me, thanks again to Shirley for editing this newsletter and reminding me about my report.

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!!

DATES OF THURSDAY MEETINGS

Meeting Date	Event	Speaker	Location
March 28 th 2024	List of Historic Place names	Dr. James January-McCann	Guildhall
April 25 th 2024	AGM	None	Guildhall
May 23 rd 2024	Panto!	Shirley Cole	Guildhall
June 27 th	Open Day	None	Guildhall



PANTOMIME

As people may know the writing of the panto is finished and the cast is enthusiastically waiting for their time to rehearse. **The date for this extravaganza is the 23rd May at the Guild Hall. Please make a note and try to keep the date free.**

Excuses for not coming to watch such as-

'What – watch a panto- you're having a laugh aren't you?'

'The Mwldan was showing a production of 'All of Shakespeare's works in 12 hours' so I watched that instead'.

are NOT allowed!

Rehearsals have started in various venues dotted around the area- the next one will be for the group of 'vertically challenged' people on **Tuesday 27th** of next week-after ukulele practice.

It will not be a long panto- but it should be funny – although not always intentionally!!!

I hope though that the pantomime will be well supported by our wonderful u3a members.

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