

## USK U3A NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016

### Chairman's Report

As I write we are promised an extension to summer (notwithstanding the heavy rain and thunder outside now!). We can only hope but autumn will soon be well and truly upon us.

All the groups are functioning well and the Friday Coffee walks will continue thanks to various volunteers acting as leaders.

There is a varied programme of events scheduled for the Culture group including some theatre trips –don't forget these are open to all members. And of course there is the Christmas Lunch to look forward to on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

For my part I intend to hold a welcome meeting for new members (probably early October) and there are plans to hold another quiz (probably during November).

Finally we are still without a Vice chairman. While this doesn't pose any problems in the short term it will eventually need addressing for the sake of continuity.

Reg Darge

### Gardening Group

The gardening group is up and flourishing. We have had 2 very successful meetings with plant swaps for funds and a visit is planned for August to a local garden with afternoon tea.

Meetings tend to be on a Wednesday but we do not have a fixed time or week of the month. The date of each meeting is decided by the group at the gathering the month before. In this way we hope to avoid any clashes with the activities of other groups.

We hope that the meetings will be a mixture of trips to gardens and nurseries, discussions on topics chosen by members, practical sessions and during the winter months talks on particular subjects of interest that are garden/ plant related.

You do not need a garden or even a window box just an interest in plants and nature.

Margaret Hatfield

### Parlons Francais

Attendance , apart from a slight hiccup earlier in the year, has been excellent with usually 8 or 10 participants. It's pleasing to see busy people coming along, particularly when the weather is fine and when the Three Gees : gardening, golf and grandchildren are possible options. The Museum continues to be an excellent and most convenient venue, very quiet during the winter months,

though a little less so when the Museum is open and visitors cross the courtyard.

Two people in our group have lived and worked in France and one has family there so is therefore a frequent visitor to the Hexagon. These three are often my prompts for colloquial French. I don't teach grammar – it's complicated and, frankly, boring, but I try to introduce new phrases, often with illustrations, and with a little bit of repetitive work hope that they will be remembered. We read and listen to CDs, analyse poetry, listen to French songs and I, too, am learning all the time.

Last summer we joined the three Chepstow U3A French groups for lunch and a boules match at the Wheatsheaf in Llanhennock. The sun shone – it was a delightful occasion and if the group is willing I hope we can do something similar this year.

As the months pass I am seeing more and more willingness among the participants to “have a go” at speaking French. Much appreciated recently by all of us were given a talk in French by Janice on her holiday in Cuba and by Reg on his trip to Marrakesh. This required a lot of preparation by both of them. We have also had a presentation by a past member of my Chepstow U3A group on “The Most Kissed Woman in France”. No, it wasn't Brigit Bardot but a poor young woman who was drowned in the Seine in the 19th century whose beauty inspired many artists and whose face serves today as the model for The Kiss of Life. We are looking forward to a short talk in French in April on a trip to a migrant camp in Calais by someone who has recently been on a trip with food and clothes for the migrants.

I don't consider myself a teacher – more a facilitator – and I don't like calling what we do “a class”. I tend to call it a “session” but if anyone can come up with a more suitable word, I'd be delighted. Our dates are 13th and 27th October, 10th and 24th November and 8th December.

Sheila Shepherd

## **Culture Group**

In July the group ended the last programme with a trip to Art in Action at Oxford. The weather was kind and there was a veritable feast of art to see.

The Theatregoers group got going with 17 of us going to see Relatively Speaking at Monmouth Savoy in May. This season we have enjoyed The Titchfield Thunderbolt at Newport Dolman.

The new programme starts in September and is on the website. There is plenty to look forward to over the coming year. You don't have to commit to coming regularly, just come to any that interest you.

Maggie Corke

Friday 30th September 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**JAPANWARE - A Talk By Local Expert, Robin Williams**

Thursday 6th October Theatrogoers Congress Theatre, Cwmbran, 7.30pm

**Aberystwyth Mon Amour,**

Friday 28th October 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**River, Mountain & Desert – A Syrian Journey. A Talk By Gill Suttle, Traveller And Author**

Friday 25th November 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**Stained Glass - A Talk By Sian Thomas, Stained Glass Artist, Who Will Be Bringing Samples Of Her Work**

Friday 25th November Theatrogoers Savoy Theatre, Monmouth, 7.30pm

**Deadly Nightcap**

December No Culture Group meeting.

Thursday, 1st December- U3A at Cwrt Bleddyn Hotel, Llangybi. 12.30pm for 1pm.

**Annual Christmas Lunch Details of cost and menu to follow.**

Friday 27th January 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**A Celebration Of Bad Verse - A Talk By Barry Morse**

Friday 24th February 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**Cocktails & Laughter - A Talk By Paul Busby, Historian And Tredegar House Expert.**

Thursday 31st March 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**Roman Mosaics - A Talk By Mark Lewis, Senior Curator, Caerleon Roman Museum**

Friday 28th April 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**Artists Of Llanthony Valley - A Talk By William Gibbs**

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2.00pm Llangybi Village Hall

**What People Wore For Their Portraits - A talk by Elizabeth Friendship, Theatre Designer and Lecturer at the Welsh College of Music & Drama**

June To Be Advised July Summer Trip Details To Be Advised

Non-members welcome. Visitors may attend three meetings before joining the U3A.

For further information about the Culture Group, please contact the Convenor, Maggie Corke,

by email [maggiecorke@btinternet.com](mailto:maggiecorke@btinternet.com) or phone: 01633 430237

## Walking Groups

### 1) Gentle Walks

This group meet on alternate Mondays at Usk main car park, near rear of Museum for a 10.00 a.m. start. Some walks are around Usk, but if we walk further afield (e.g. Llandenny, Glascoed, Llanybi, Llantrisant) we car-share. There is an annual charge of £5.00 towards driver's expenses. There are stiles and some hilly areas so stout shoes or boots and sensible clothing are essential. A walking stick(s) and small drink and snack are recommended. This group thrives and we have enjoyed many walks around our beautiful area.

Autumn Walks are scheduled for the following dates

**September 26th** – Llandenny- Leader Myra

**October 10th** - Glascoed Woods/Cwmhir Lane- Leader Myra

**October 24th** - Castle Woods – Leader Sheila

**November 7th** - Raglan/Artha – Leader Myra or Megan

**November 21st** - Goetre (new walk) – Leader Myra

**December 5th** - Little Mill – Leader Myra

**December 19th** - Mince pie and coffee walk – Llanbadoc/Pant-y-cwch/Cefn Isla - Leader Myra

All above walks, meet in Usk main car park, near rear of Museum for a 10.00 a.m. start

### 2) Coffee Walks – No Stiles, Gentle Inclines.

I have officially given up organising the coffee walks, but at a recent chat over coffee, members volunteered to organise and lead a one-off walk.

We now have a 6 month programme on trial to see how it works.

Please check starting times as out of Usk walks start from Twyn Square, when we catch the No 60 bus.

Usk walks start from the main car park at 10.00 a.m.

**October 7th Morrison's Garden Centre** – Leaders Brenda Freeman Jane Spencer

**November 4th Healthy Footsteps, Raglan** – Leaders Barbara Thomas, Judy Catch No 60 bus from Twyn Square at 9.51 a.m.

**December 2nd Christmas walk.**– Leader Rosemary Evans Catch 9.51 a.m. bus in Twyn Square to Monmouth.

Return: 12.25 from Monmouth.

January Please Note – No Walk

February 3rd Caerleon – Leaders Ann Dodd, Ann Jones Catch the 9.36 a.m. in Twyn Square to Caerleon.

Return: 12.16 bus from Caerleon.

March 3rd Pontypool Park via canal – cars needed - Leader Myra For more detail on walks

contact Myra on 01291 673377

### Bridge Group

The Bridge group continues to do well – meeting on Monday and Wednesday afternoons at the Sessions House in Usk, with between 5 and 7 tables each session. We still do not have a Convenor but have had a very good response from members volunteering to run the sessions on a Monday.

We run a very friendly “No Fears” bridge group with a relaxed atmosphere and would welcome new members – although a basic knowledge of bridge is needed there is no need for anyone thinking of joining to feel intimidated. There is no need for a partner so you could come along for a few weeks to try us out.

Recently our 3 eldest members celebrated their Birthdays :- Ken 96, Margot 95 and Dora – 94!!.



All play twice a week to a very high standard – proof that playing bridge keeps the mind young and active

## Reading Group

Reading Group 2 have continued to enjoyed our monthly meetings through the summer.

As usual at this time of year we are in the throes of choosing, in a most democratic way, an agreed choice of books to read in 2017 from a long wish list!

As we get together in each others homes we like to stay a small group, but there could be room for just one more enthusiastic reader. Please contact Rosemary on 01291 671567.