

 **USK NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2017** 

Usk U3A CHRISTMAS REPORT 2017

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

With the onset of Winter I always think it is the time for us to maximise our activities within the U3A. Obviously it impacts on the Walking group's activities but short of heavy rain we generally manage to carry on and cold frosty mornings are among the best times for walking. At the time of writing I am anticipating the Quiz and Lunch at the end of November. Pat Kingsley has done a sterling job organising this for several years but if this event is to continue we need to identify find someone to take ownership of it.

This year has raised some unexpected challenges for our U3A with the loss of Maggie Corke as Convenor of the culture group and the reluctance of anyone or a committee to take over the organisation. The good news is that the committee has proposed changing the format so that in future the meeting will be referred to as our Monthly meeting with the a short "business" section and a diverse range of speakers or events organised on a rota basis by the individual Groups. I hope to present a completed programme at the lunch and this will be posted on our web site, e-mailed to all our members with hard copies available for those who do not have computer facilities.

We are however still looking for someone to co-ordinate this and future programmes. Let us know if there are topics you would like covered and know of a speaker.

My seasons greeting and thanks to all convenors and those on the committee.
Reg Darge
01291673242

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge group meets on Monday and Wednesday afternoons at the Sessions

House in Usk, with between 5 and 7 tables each session.

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.

Unfortunately 2 of our oldest members passed away this year - Terry Compton and Margot Etheridge both were long standing and enthusiastic members of the club for many years and are greatly missed.

In September we celebrated the birthdays of Ken and Dora with wine and cake, and from their photo below you would never guess that their combined ages are 192. Both play very successfully twice a week and often take home the chocolate bar prizes.



SCRABBLE GROUP

As usual the Scrabble group meets on alternate Wednesday afternoons from 2 - 4 p.m. The dates for January 2018 are Wednesday 3rd and 17th and fortnightly thereafter. A charge of £1 is made to cover the cost of refreshments and chocolate prizes. Although the standard game is most popular, we do have boards available for Super Scrabble, Welsh and a large print version for anyone who has visual difficulties. Our games are played in a friendly atmosphere with an edge of competitiveness, the final decision on a questionable word is made by referring to the "Ultimate Scrabble Word List".

Please ring Rosemary on 01291 672276 for any further information. New members welcome.

PARLONS FRANÇAIS

It's very easy to repeat oneself when called upon to write another report after only 3 months. What did I say last time ? Will I bore members with the same old stuff ?

However, repetition is exactly what is needed in order for us to become familiar with new words and expressions when trying to master a foreign language. I'm a strong believer in a form of «drilling » but where to draw the line and how to treat a mixed ability group as adults, not as children ? The members of Parlons Français seem to thrive on variety rather than repetition and I aim to surprise them with new and varied material. Occasionally, when I'm stuck I resort to using material we've seen before, but I wouldn't like to do that too often.

We are now well into our third year. Over recent months we were about 7 or 8 strong ; currently we are about 9 or 10, which is still a manageable number. Christmas is approaching and the final session of the year will be, as before, « More Fun than French » when I hope I can persuade everyone to bring along jokes, games, stories etc. – all in French, of course

Sheila Shepherd

REPORT FROM THE GARDENING GROUP

After a very interesting summer visiting different gardens we settled into the Autumn with meetings on Bees and Winter Pots for indoors and outside. The meeting on bees was given by Bees Friendly and was a fascinating glimpse into huge number of different bees and their importance. The U3A meeting next year, May 2018, organised by the gardening group is going to be on Bees for Development looking at the work of this charity in many African countries

We had an excellent talk and demonstration on not only making up winter pots but how to look after them courtesy of Morris's Garden Centre.

December will find us using greenery from our gardens plus all Christmas ribbons, bows, baubles, berries and even flowers

and making table arrangements and wreaths. Mulled wine and mince pies could feature.

Our meetings are the second Friday of the month and take place either in the hall in Llangybi or in the Garden Room at Morris's Garden Centre. We meet at 2 pm. Our plan is to have a talk or demonstration for the first three months of the year and from April, weather permitting, we try to have trips out to places of horticultural interest.

I am quite happy to email people monthly with what's on if people are interested but do not want to commit to attending regularly.

Margaret Hatfield

REPORT FROM THE WALKING GROUP

Actually, nothing to report – all going well with the walks!

Dates for next future walks:

Monday December 4th Short reservoir walk from Sluvad

Monday December 18th – Mincepie walk (probably Cefn Isla)

Monday January 1st 2018 – New Years Day – No walk as I'm away.

Maybe some of you walkers will get together and plan further walks - If so let me know early and I'll send an email out to the group.

Monday January 15th, Monday January 29th, Monday February 12th,

Monday February 26th. Monday March 12th Monday March 26th

Monday April 9th. Monday April 23rd

For further information phone Myra 01291

PAINTING FOR PLEASURE

The group meets every Thursday from 10.00 - 12.30 in Llanybi Village Hall. The charge is £2.50 per session with tea and biscuits.

The group has just completed its second year but absolute beginners who may be thinking of joining need have no fear. We are going back to basics in September looking afresh at themes such as Line and Tone, Colour, Perspective, Portraits, (human and animals), Landscapes (rural and urban) and Illustration (combining words and images).

We had a successful exhibition of our work in the hall in July and we intend repeating the idea with a Christmas Show in December.

Each week's subjects are set in advance so members have plenty of time to collect their thoughts and ideas.

New members will not need much equipment. Paper, pencils and a paintbox is enough to get you started.

Convenor Sue has been teaching children and adults for many years and she is always on hand with tips, tricks and advice.

The U3A prides itself on being a shared learning experience and all members are encouraged to share their own skills, knowledge and experience at every session.

Llangybi Hall is a warm, spacious, clean environment with plenty of tables to spread work.

The group is friendly and supportive to everyone who wishes to come along.

Remember you can always sample a few sessions before committing .

Contact..... Sue Morgan (01633 450209) for more details.

Reading group I meet on the third Thursday of the month in the afternoon. If interested in joining please contact Margaret Hatfield on 01291 6529972

Reading group II meet in members houses in the morning of the first Thursday of the month. The group is now complete

Proposal for Regular Monthly Meetings for Usk U3a

At recent committee meetings there were discussions about the necessity of holding monthly meetings for all members of Usk U3A. This is one of the requirements for all U3A's, and one that we have not fully complied with in our first few years. As there was no one person ready to take charge of organising the programme of monthly meetings it was decided that each of our special interest groups would take it in turn to be responsible for arranging one month's meeting .

The meetings will be held in Llangybi Village Hall. (The keys are held by Marian Johnstone-1, St Cybi Avenue- 01633 450660 and Sue Morgan-1, St Cybi Drive-01633 450209.

Pat will be at most meetings and will open up. If not, she will let you know. The group will be responsible for bringing biscuits, milk and tea towels. Pat will ensure that there will be tea, coffee and sugar in the hall, to be used for the meeting.

The group will need to be at the Hall at 1.30pm to arrange the chairs and tables and I suggest that you arrange for two or three of your group to be there at that time to get everything ready.

I have the screen and projector- so if you need these, let me know.

Please ensure that all cups, saucers etc. are washed up and put away in the cupboards in the kitchen. There is a switch for the hot water on the right-hand wall, please ensure that this is turned off when you leave. Rubbish has to be taken home.

If you have any queries, please feel free to phone Pat on 01633 450272

Below is a draft from the committee meeting on the 23rd November(which may contain errors!), but is a programme that we hope will work out.

JANUARY- Painting Group -Talk by Monty Dart on Leslie Thomas.

FEBRUARY- Walking Group - Talk by Leslie Taylor on the history of Llangybi Castle.?

MARCH - Scrabble Group-Talk by Mr Webb of Webbs of Crickhowell on Life in the Retail Trade.

APRIL - BookGroup2-Talk by Julie McGowan.

MAY - Gardening Group- Talk by Bees for Development

JUNE - French Group - Film.

SEPTEMBER - Bridge Group- at the Sessions House with a talk.

OCTOBER - Book Group I- Antiques Roadshow

NOVEMBER - Annual Quiz.

DECEMBER - Christmas Lunch.

Usk U3A website for information - There is a comprehensive web site 'www.usku3a.org.uk' which gives details of all the U3A activities and contact numbers for group leaders and general information on the U3A and how to join.

**A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL U3A MEMBERS
AND BEST WISHES FOR 2018!**