

USK

u3a

SUMMER
NEWSLETTER

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Usk u3a is very keen to attract new Committee members to help the organisation continue to thrive and grow. We would also like to encourage you to join our list of volunteer helpers for events. Please consider joining our small friendly group and ensure that Usk u3a continues for the next 40 years. Contact Joan Clarke jpiljoc@aol.com 01633873211 or Wendy Young wy@genesta.co.uk 07592 032426 for information.

Celebrating the 40th anniversary year of the u3a in the UK



As we mentioned in the Spring Newsletter, this year marks the 40th anniversary of the u3a organisation in the UK. Operating as a growing voluntary organisation for four decades is an accomplishment that calls for celebration. So, we would like to invite you to a **'Pimms and Strawberry event'** on Friday, 23 September 2-4pm at the Memorial Hall, Usk. Look out for more information and booking forms, which will be sent out soon.

DRAMA DAY POSTPONED

The Drama Day due to be held in July has been postponed until the Autumn. Apologies to those who were looking forward to this fun event and we will let you know the new date as soon as possible.



TRY OUR TEN QUIRKY QUIZ QUESTIONS ON USK!



Our resident Quizmaster, Reg Darge, has outdone himself this time and has set you a quirky quiz around our local town. See how well you fare in answering his questions. You will find the answers on the last page.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR LOCAL TOWN? TRY YOUR HAND AT THIS QUIRKY QUIZ



Just to challenge you, the answers could come from direct observation, your general local knowledge, need a cryptic solution or be a combination of all of these. Good luck!

- 1) Where might you Prattle?
- 2) Which structure has five faces?
- 3) Where in New Market Street might Lord Wellington have lived?
- 4) Change one letter and this building reverts to its original name.
- 5) Change one letter and this building becomes a citrus fruit
- 6) What do the Rt Honourables Steven Crabb and Carwyn Jones have in common?
- 7) Which Usk business owns Homebase by the sound of it?
- 8) Where might the Reverend Awdry's Red Engine live?
- 9) Where can you see a goddess in wood?
- 10) Why might you lift the lid on this spicy cuisine?



A FOCUS ON THE GARDENING INTEREST GROUP

In the spring newsletter we told you that all of the interest groups were now up and running and there was an exciting program of events planned for members. In this newsletter we catch up with what has been happening in the Gardening Interest Group. After a spring spent mostly in the garden shed (otherwise known as Llangbyi Village Hall), the past two months have seen members getting out and about to take inspiration from gardens across the country.

In May, the Gardening Group visited Aberglasney in Carmarthen. Aberglasney is a wonderful restored garden with the added attraction of a ninfarium. The ninfarium was completed in 2005 when a glass roof was put over the middle of the mansion. Filled with subtropical plants and exotics it is a very surprising find when you open an ordinary door inside the house.



In June, a visit was arranged to the Garden of the Wind at Middle Hunt House, Hereford. The name of the garden is inspired by its open aspect to the Black Mountains and the westerly winds that present a challenge to gardening at this altitude.



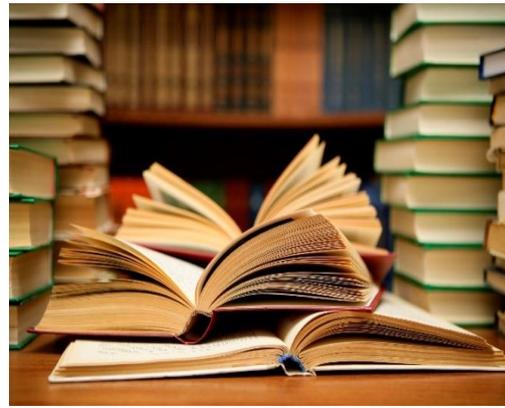
The gardens have been in development for over ten years and extend to approximately five acres with spectacular views over the Black Mountains. Members also enjoyed the garden's large collection of sculpture by British and Continental makers.

There is one more visit planned for July to a NGS garden in Llanover. Then there will be a break in August and the group will meet again in September to repeat the very successful 'Applefest' in a member's garden in Usk. After this event it is back to the garden shed for an exciting autumn programme!

For more details of the group and remaining visits, please contact the convenor via our website.

MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Since the start of the new programme in April, we have held two members' meetings, which have been well received by members. The first was provided by Matt Johnson, ex-soldier and Metropolitan Police officer and now writer of spy and crime thrillers.



Matt gave a fascinating talk about his varied and fascinating careers as well as sharing an insight into his recently published trilogy of spy and crime stories.

In June, we had an insightful talk about Newport's Medieval Ship provided by Rob Evans of the Friends of the Newport Ship. Rob gave an overview of what's been happening since the discovery and excavation of the ship in 2002/3 as well as the important work of conserving and preserving the ship.

The Friends of the Newport Ship are holding an Open Day on 30th July 2022. All Usk u3a members will be welcome and further details can be found at: www.newportship.org



We are taking a summer break now but don't forget our 40th Anniversary Event in September, a Drama Day to come in the autumn and more Members' Meetings in 2022/3.

In our last newsletter we asked members to tell us about something they were learning. A big thank you to our first member who has told us about his learning of Welsh.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

by Dr Norman Chamberlain

It was sad that my grandparents did not teach any of their 10 children to speak Welsh. Whilst in grammar school I drew a map of Monmouthshire with the Welsh names for towns and villages but never really tried to learn the language. At university in Aberystwyth and Bangor I never really made any effort although classes were readily available. After university I worked in England and in my first job three people regularly spoke Welsh together, but again I never tried to join in.



After spending about 40 years in England I returned to Wales in 2003 to where I live now, my family home. Some years later, I noticed an advert in the local paper for Welsh classes in Chepstow and I thought why not. So I joined the class with Coleg Gwent and I am still attending classes with them. By attending classes every week and joining as many activities as possible such as coffee mornings, weekend schools and summer school reading groups, I have now become reasonably fluent. Learning Welsh has allowed me to meet lots of people and it has given me a new social interest. It has been a great challenge which has kept my brain active. At the moment classes with Coleg Gwent are still on-line but hopefully this will soon be changing with some classes face to face and some still online. On-line classes/activities have allowed me to talk (in Welsh) with people in Australia, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Patagonia, USA.

Coleg Gwent classes are available through the web site [Dysgu Cymraeg.com](http://DysguCymraeg.com). There are also web based classes with Say Something in Welsh and Duolingo. Menter Iaith groups in the area also offer a range of activities. Tŷ Croeso in Chepstow is the Welsh Society centre but has reduced opening times at present and U3A Chepstow have a weekly meeting in St Arvans. There is a monthly meeting of the Usk Welsh group in the Sessions House.

There is so much available such as literature, poetry, folk songs, radio and TV so I would urge you to join in and enrich your life and be able to speak with your grandchildren in Welsh. At the same time, you will be ensuring the future of one of the oldest living languages in Europe.

We would love to hear from other members who are learning something new. Do get in touch. We are happy to write it for you or you can compose your piece. Get in touch with Joan Clarke:

jpiljoc@aol.com

ANSWERS TO THE 10 QUIRKY QUIZ QUESTIONS

1) The Mad Platter (anagram) 2) Twyn Square clock (four clocks + carving Queen Victoria) 3) Wellesley House (Wellington's family name) 4) The White Hare/Hart 5) The Grange/ Orange 6) Both planted tress at the Sessions House 7) Bunnings (Homebase is in the same group as Bunning's DIY Australia) 8) James House (Surgery). (James was the red engine in the Thomas the Tank engine series) 9) Owain Glyndŵr field – Valkyrie carving 10) Dil Indian (Dil= lid raised).