

CARDIFF

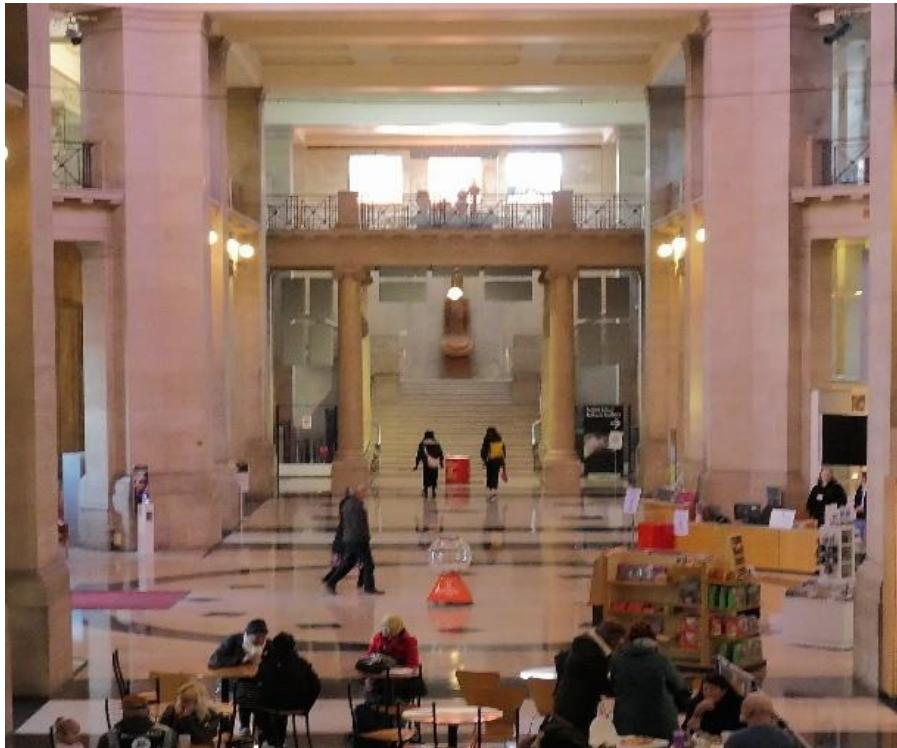
P 3 O

U 3 A

Dysgu, Chwerthin, Byw

Learn, Laugh, Live

MAGAZINE



March 2023

Welcome to the 2023 edition of the Cardiff u3a Magazine.

As Editor, may I thank everyone both Convenors and Members who contributed to this edition of the Magazine. There is once more a variety of articles within its pages as well as information which should be of use to many. I hope that everyone will enjoy reading the Magazine; perhaps you will be motivated to send in material for the next edition!



We are repeating the method of delivery, via a pdf file, for the vast majority of readers. Of course there will be printed copies for those who are not on email and they will be looked after by the Paper Advocate Rosemary Griffiths. Printed copies are also available for giving to prospective members and a supply is now being kept in the office of City URC church. May I take the opportunity to thank City and its staff and Elders for the support they have given and continue to provide, to both Cardiff Committee and u3a members. This support has made a positive difference to the running of Cardiff u3a.

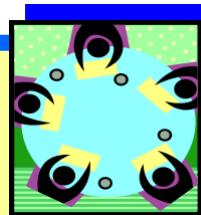
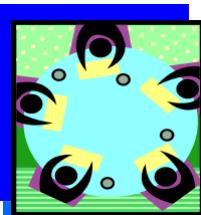
There are a number of 'start - up' groups in the pipeline. More information about them will appear over the coming months so please keep an eye on the Cardiff u3a website as well as emails from the Group Coordinator.

Enjoy!

Mario Greening Magazine Editor

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022/2023

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| CHAIR | chair@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Mario Greening |
| SECRETARY | secretary@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Nonn Vaughan |
| TREASURER | treasurer@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Alison Firth |
| MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY | memsec@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Jane Evans |
| TALKS & OPEN MEETINGS ORGANISER | talks@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Mario Greening |
| GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR | groups@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Margaret Richards |
| BEACON AND WEBSITE | beacon@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Owen Parry Paul Perera |
| COMMITTEE MEMBER Rosemary Griffiths Paper Advocate | COMMITTEE MEMBER Frank McLean | |
| COMMITTEE MEMBER Susan Thomas | COMMITTEE MEMBER Julie Waller | |

POST HOLDERS

| | | |
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| MAGAZINE EDITOR | magazine@cardiffu3a.org.uk | Mario Greening |
| SOCIAL MEDIA | Non Committee post | Ted Richards |
| LIAISON OFFICER | Non Committee post | Linda Price |



The effect of Covid on the Cardiff u3a finances – and why I am not in the South of France.

The pandemic affected business and personal finances in a variety of ways. Some prospered under the new demands for masks and ventilators, whilst others lost their jobs and had their household income drastically cut. Cardiff u3a financial year runs from 1st September to 31st August, so we were mid year when lockdown hit. Some of the questions on how Cardiff u3a was affected, what happened in this time and how expenditure is safeguarded are addressed here.

In August 2019, the end of the financial year prior to the pandemic, our bank balance was £14,767; about the 'right' amount for what we should be holding in reserve*. This followed two years of planned deficit, with the membership subscription not being raised and some groups receiving money for our charitable purpose i.e. related to education. At that point, to avoid further deficit and reach breakeven, the subscription was to be raised from £12 to £15 per year in September 2020.

March 2020 and meetings were cancelled, we heard of something called 'Zoom' and what now seems a somewhat surreal time started. Meetings in car parks to hand over cheques, daring to detour on the way back from the supermarket to put a cheque through a door for second signature, just a couple of factors that led to online banking and apps to photograph cheques to avoid paying in at the bank....remember those long queues.

From the financial perspective, expenditure dropped. The monthly, open, meetings were cancelled (saving £872 in the second half of the year); the August Cardiff u3a Magazine was not produced (usual cost with postage £850); the Convenors' Day and lunch were cancelled (budget £900); committee meetings went onto zoom and no newmembers' meetings were held. Our main income, subscriptions, was up due to the ever-increasing membership numbers of past days (about £2,000). We were quids in. Surplus for 2019-2020: £2,385.

Members obviously lost out with the reduction in activities and in the first instance the membership year was extended by 6 months from September 2020 to March 2021 (the financial year remains the same). March 2021, came along and still nothing much was happening. The committee were conscious of the planned subscription rise and negated this by offering a £5 reduction for prompt renewals. By August 2021, we had had some low activity, but none of the main events or publications. Surplus for 2020- 2021: £852. Prior to the pandemic two main changes had been under discussion which could now be taken forward. It was decided to put the Cardiff u3a Magazine on the website, with only a few copies printed for recruitment purposes and our members who do not access the internet. Another venue for the monthly, open, meeting was to be tried. How-

ever, with the uncertainty of attendances as face to face meetings resumed, we moved to a venue with a more reasonable cost. With these changes, the cost of prompt renewals was again offered at £10. A very much scaled down Convenor event added to the savings. Surplus 2021-2022: £1,870.

We are again in a position, alike to when my term as treasurer started, of asking groups to consider proposals for expenditure to help recruitment or learning within their group. New groups usually need some support. Money has been spent on publicity events in hubs / libraries, but further expenditure may be needed on recruitment efforts. We are still recovering from the drop in membership and, at time of writing, are around 100 down on membership numbers compared with pre-pandemic.

The money sits in the bank, £12,000 of it in a deposit account to attract some interest. In August 2022 we moved our bank account to avoid the charges to charities introduced by our previous bank.

Our constitution states that dual authorisation is necessary for any expenditure. This means two signatures on any cheque and a second signatory approving any bank transfer that is set up by the treasurer, or another signatory. So once, the travel restrictions eased, and the bank balance was increasing, I debated on utilising the funds to fly away (well one does hear of it happening). However, no signatory would authorise it online, so I am still here, in my sixth and final year on the committee.

Cardiff u3a was amongst those who prospered financially in lockdown due to inactivity. It was a different time for the committee administratively, but we have come out of it with more robust procedures and money to support the recovery and further developments within Cardiff u3a.

**Alison Firth
Treasurer**

*The [financial policy](#) includes the calculation of reserves necessary to meet financial commitments should closure occur. A small contingency fund is also held.



MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT

As of 29th January 2023 there were 689 current members, 70% female, 30% male. The majority of these paid via the website (82%), but 18% paid via cheque or cash, filling in a paper form.

Presently, members paying via the website receive an email confirming their registration and payment, with their membership number, and a 'card' which they can print out or not.

Members paying via paper with cheque or cash, are emailed their number by the membership secretary. If they provide a SAE, the membership secretary provides a plasticised print-out of the card. **Current membership fees are £10 for an individual member if renewed between 1st and 28th March. After that date the renewal fee will be £15.**

Jane Evans



PAPER ADVOCATE

Rosemary volunteered to be on the committee at the recent AGM and has since taken on the role of Paper Advocate. Post - pandemic all Cardiff u3a communication, including newsletters, now takes place through the website and email. Her role is to support those members **who do not use the internet and email** and ensure they are kept up to date with what is happening in Cardiff u3a. This process is evolving but so far Rosemary has posted details of all current groups, membership of the committee and forthcoming Open Meetings.



She is also the telephone point of contact for 'paper' members. If you are such a member you now have her photograph so do please come and introduce yourself if you spot Rosemary at a u3a event!

Rosemary Griffiths



BEACON ADMINISTRATOR

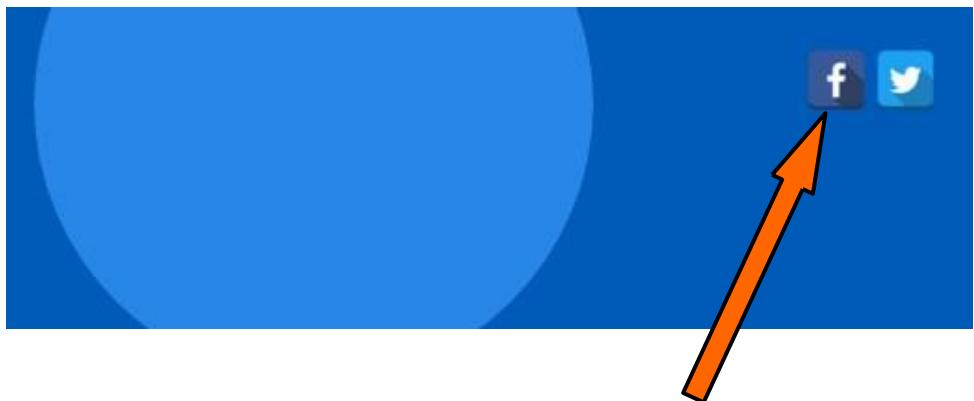
Paul Perera has joined with Owen Parry on the production of the Cardiff u3a website as well as ensuring Beacon; our administrative system, is kept running smoothly.

Many thanks to Paul for accepting the invitation!!



SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE CARDIFF U3A WEBSITE

Look for the top right- hand side of the Cardiff u3a Home Page



Facebook

Social Media can be a bit like Marmite - you either love it or you don't. When used nicely it can have many uses. It can be informative and help spread the news

The easiest way to find the Cardiff u3a page is by going to the top right of our home-page at cardiffu3a.org and clicking on the Facebook icon.

We encourage you to give us a 'Like' and a 'Follow'. You may become aware of a new Interest Group you may like to join.

We are often asked about the best way to advertise Cardiff u3a and bring in new members. There's no doubting that word-of-mouth is probably the surest method of achieving that but social media can help spread the word. It's fairly effortless and you never know where it may lead.

Thanks for your consideration



Ted Richards has been tasked to look after Social Media for our website.



2022

u3a
40th Anniversary

Margaret Richards shows the way

Cardiff u3a went to the Cardiff libraries in 2022. We also joined forces with Sully u3a to promote the movement in Penarth.

More than 90 members of Cardiff u3a volunteered to spend up to a day at a library sharing what is available through u3a and promoting continued learning in the Third Age. They worked closely with library staff and members of the public in **21 libraries**



Tony Baines and two Sully members

across Cardiff and Penarth to familiarise them with all that u3a has to offer. Resources have been left with library staff who will continue to promote the organisation. Many members also placed publicity materials in other venues.

The profile of u3a has been raised and the publicity materials used are prompting questions and interest with an increase in email and Beacon

enquiries. There was a large turnout for the Cardiff Meet the Groups event where the atmosphere was vibrant and the enthusiasm contagious. New groups are already in place and more are being planned.

In addition to attracting new members, the library events enabled the volunteers to meet people from other groups, find new interests, and sow seeds for some of the new group ideas.

In particular, the joint event between Cardiff and Sully u3a in Penarth Library was fruitful in terms of shared ideas and new contacts



Owen Pryce and Susan Wass

As we move into a new u3a year, if you know of a venue or group outside of u3a who would be interested in finding out more about us, contact me and leaflets are available for distribution at City URC.

Margaret



Left to right, member of the public, Pam Griffiths, Iola Wilson, member of the public, Hilary Ryley



**CURRENT CARDIFF u3a INTEREST (Activity) GROUPS
AND
CONVENOR CONTACT DETAILS**

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| All Things Welsh | Myfanwy Roberts | atw@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Art Appreciation | Nonn Vaughan | art.apprec@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Book Group | Mark Donovan | book.group@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Bridge | Marjolein Whittaker | bridge@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Bus Pass Thursday | Mario Greening | bpt@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Canasta | Valerie A. Maidment | canasta@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Change & Transition | Philip Champness | change@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Circle Dance | Pat Adams | circle.dance@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Coffee Morning | Marion Poyner | coffee@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Computer | David Harrison | computer@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Craft & Card-Making | Margaret Richards | craft.card@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Current Affairs Discussion | Margaret Richards | discussion@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Cycling | Robert Morris | cycling@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Events & Outings | Margaret Richards | events@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Film | Angela Perrett | film@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Folk Singing | Michael Tynen | folk.singing@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| French Conversation | Jackie Farrow | french@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Gardening | Margaret Richards | gardening@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| German Conversation | Deborah Jones | german@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| History | Philip Stewart | history@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| The Inquirers | Michael Young | inquirers@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Italian Conversation | Pauline Bezodis | italian@cardiffu3a.org.uk |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Lightroom Pantry | David Harrison | lightroom@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Literature Through the Ages | Hilary Ryley | literature@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Local History | Stuart Swinburne | local.history@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Mahjong & Card Games | Margaret Richards | mahjong@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Music Appreciation | Lynne Plummer | music.apprec@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Painting for Pleasure | Margaret Richards | painting@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Philosophy | David Marsland | philosophy@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Photography | Jim Bartlett | photography@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Practical Photography | Andrew Rees | Photography2@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Prose and Poetry | Nigel Lyn Smith | prose.and.poetry@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Recorder | Marion Thomas | recorders@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Enjoying Science | Margaret Richards | science@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Singing for Pleasure | Lynne Stewart | singing@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Slow Train Coming | Ted Richards | slowtrain@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Spanish Conversation | Margaret Richards | spanish@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Sunday Lunch | Shelagh Passey | sunday.lunch@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Tabletop Games | Martin Benton | tabletopgames@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Ukulele | Margaret Richards | ukulele@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Walking | Mary Allen | walks@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Welsh Students | Robert Morris | welsh3@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Wordsmiths | Peter Grehan | writers2@cardiffu3a.org.uk |
| Writers Enjoying Words | Noelle Bryant | writers@cardiffu3a.org.uk |

Reports from the Groups

BRIDGE GROUP

Convenor: Elizabeth Perkins



Cardiff u3a Bridgegroup,

like all the groups after the disruption of lock-downs, found 2022 a trying year. Of the original 25 listed members at the beginning of the year we often had eight or less attend. There was still fear of catching Covid,

there was the awful public transport problem & people had found other Monday morning activities.

We did manage, by word of mouth to get a few new players and I hope they felt welcome. One or two of the group had health issues that prevented them joining us and we wish them better health in the future. Sadly, one of our very dear members, Roger Jones, passed away. He was an excellent player, an absolute gentleman and is sadly missed by us all. Marjolein who had convened the group, brilliantly, for several years decided she wanted to hand over the job and that's when I stepped in. I'm the administrator & Margaret O'Callaghan, thankfully, ticks the boxes and takes the fees. Marjolein is a hard act to follow, but we're delighted that she is continuing to join us to enjoy the Bridge games & company.

Last Autumn we had a table at the Meet The Groups afternoon and managed to talk to a lot of people about the group. When I joined a few years ago I was very much a lapsed player, lacking expertise and confidence, so I could empathise with those who told the same story. Also, there were people who said "I've wanted to play Bridge but don't know how to start." In a feedback discussion with Margaret Richards, the Group Coordinator,



Beginners table with helpers





I suggested a Bridge Taster session and we arranged the first one for late last November. It was advertised through Beacon and I had 24 people respond with interest. There were 12 on the first Monday and I was helped by several of our Monday morning players. I made it clear that I'm not a teacher or expert but I love the game and

was happy to just go through the basics with beginners, while my more experienced colleagues played with the revisers. It was a lovely relaxed hour & the endeavour was to not deter anyone from having a go. I asked for feedback emails and got positive replies, but "an hour wasn't enough" and they would "appreciate more sessions". The outcome was that we had two more sessions (12.30 -2pm) leading up to Christmas and despite how busy people are, they were also popular. We have had two well attended sessions since then and they have been brilliant, with lots of enthusiasm and laughter. Who said Bridge isn't fun? I am so grateful to the people who helped me and they were greatly appreciated by the new players. You know who you are. Thank you. My special thanks go to Margaret Richards for organising the room bookings, finances and helping the beginners, but mainly for her encouragement and support. Onwards into 2023. The Bridge group takes place every Monday 10am-noon.

The taster/beginner/reviser sessions will continue on an ad hoc basis.

Please contact me if you are interested- bridge@cardiffu3a.org.uk



Patrizia Donovan

BUS PASS THURSDAY

Convenor: Mario Greening

bpt@cardiff3a.org.uk

Most Cardiff u3a members qualify for a bus pass and are therefore eligible to join Bus Pass Thursday. As you may guess, we use our passes to travel on local authority buses to many destinations in south Wales. We have a BPT trip once a month, as you guessed on a Thursday! There is no group meeting fee just the cost of coffee and lunch, though sometimes we need to pay for entry to places such as the BBC Wales studios or Llanciaich Fawr Manor.



Each BPT trip starts in central Cardiff and we may use one or two buses to get to our destination. Once there we have coffee at a comfortable establishment before visiting an attraction such as the castles in Chepstow, Raglan and Caerphilly. As



an educational body we have free entry to CADW sites. Recent BPT visits have included Monmouth, Caerleon, Usk as well as Brecon, Cowbridge and Merthyr.

Future BPT Thursday trips hope to include the Brecon Mountain Railway, Porthcawl and Llandaff cathedral.



You never know who you might meet on a BPT Thursday trip!

CIRCLE DANCE GROUP

Convenor: Pat Adams

How quickly we forget! I had to check in my dance calendar when the pandemic restrictions were eased to let us hold u3a meetings again in person. After over a year, the Circle Dance group is only now returning to 'normal' dancing where we hold hands in a circle. This means that we can again begin to do partner dances, and those with turns that need a good sense of balance. But it also means we have to learn how to be more attentive to dancers on either side of us, not squash their hand in a tight or tense grip, remember the different hand holds, and open out our shoulders to see the dancer behind even as we dance clockwise or anticlockwise around the room.



We are dancing the Seal Dance here

Suddenly, there are a lot more dances in the repertoire that I can choose. The last Tuesday in January was the day before Burns Night so I gave the programme a Scottish feel. Two were 'story' dances, choreographies with a different energy. Calum's Road celebrates the dogged determination of Calum MacLeod, who lived on Raasay, off the east coast of Skye, and almost single-handedly built two miles of road to his croft since

the Council had refused to do so. It took him ten years but it's still there to drive on (or dance along!) nearly sixty years later. If you look on Google Earth you will see it marked.

The other is the story of the legendary Selkie, a seal woman who left her seal sisters to come ashore and live as wife and mother until the call of her sisters in the wild was too strong and she had to return to them at sea. In this Seal Dance, to the song An Diran Dan Solde, we come together in an open circle linked close to each other with basket-weave arms while we mimic the movement of the waves on the shore with a steady

pattern of six simple steps. Haunting and very beautiful. We lost a lot of that feeling of movement when dancing unjoined for this one!

And finally, for Burns Night, we had Rabbie Burns' song My Love is a Red, Red Rose, slow and lyrical, to which we danced a gentle stepping dance of Gratitude – perhaps, especially, for the delight of dancing more closely together again!

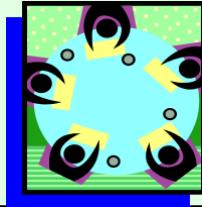
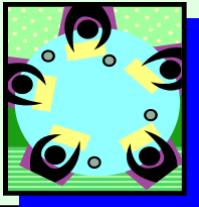
As I write this, the next time we meet will be 14th February. There are no prizes for guessing what the theme for the programme will be on that day!

The Circle Dance group is a friendly group that meets from 11am to 12 noon on every second and fourth Tuesday in the month at Tabernacl in The Hayes. Newcomers are always made welcome.

CARDIFF u3a NEEDS YOU!!

COULD YOU SPARE A FEW HOURS TO
SIT ON THE CARDIFF u3a COMMITTEE?

[Interested? Contact the Chair](#)



CRAFT AND CARD MAKING

Convenor: Margaret Richards

A diverse and enthusiastic group of crafters met at the end of January for an Inaugural meeting of the Craft and Card-Making Group. The time flew by just sharing ideas, showing examples of things they had done and planning for learning new skills from each other. Craft that is suitable for carrying on a bus is a must but that could include card-making, needle felting, ribbon embroidery, embroidery, crochet, needle painting, knitting and much more; time together will bring lots of ideas.

Members of the group will supply their own materials but there is likely to be some swapping of items over time and certainly the idea of 'Here, try some of this!' was popular. There will be some showcasing of skills and an opportunity to build new ideas into your work or to start something completely new; if you don't know what that might be, come along and see what is going on.

It is hoped that there will also be advice on garment alteration, or help with sewing items already started (no sewing machines, just friendly help and advice); you might



come along just once but end up with the crafting bug!





ENJOYING SCIENCE

Convenor: Margaret Richards

science@cardiffu3a.org.uk

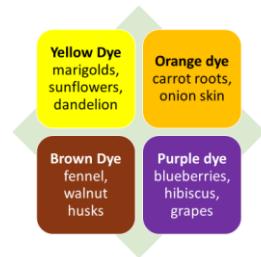


The Enjoying Science Group was so named to highlight the suitability of meeting content to both scientists and non-scientists.

We aim to explain the scientific background of topics but also to include new ideas and some challenging concepts. Our meetings are sometimes led by members, but also include outside speakers many of whom come to us from **Cardiff University**.

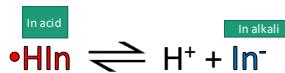
Whoever the lead, members contribute

their knowledge of the subject, sometimes drawing from their own background but also by bringing information they have researched to the meeting. This enables much discussion to follow the talks and frequently to interrupt the talks! We have covered topics such as 3D printing, Vaccination, Colour, and Climate Change.



Indicators

- An acid-base indicator is a weak acid, often represented as HIn.
- An indicator has one color in its acid form (HIn) and a different color in its conjugate base form (In⁻)
- For litmus, HIn is red and In⁻ is blue:



How does your body defend itself against disease?

1. Skin
2. Blood clotting(done by platelets)
3. White Blood cells (phagocytes) – ingest (eat) bacteria
4. White Blood cells (lymphocytes) –making antibodies

Topics still to come include DNA Fingerprinting and Forensics, International Development, and Dog Genetics and Disease.

LOCAL HISTORY

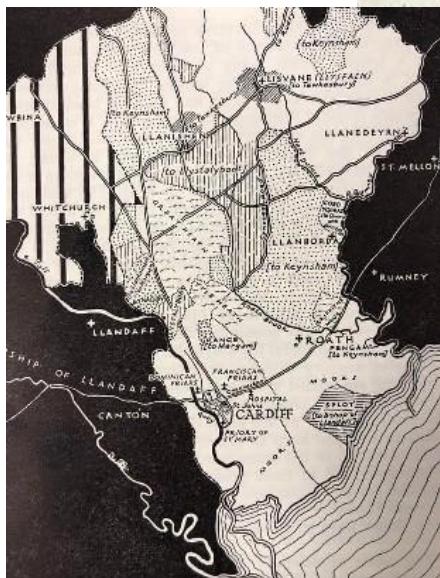
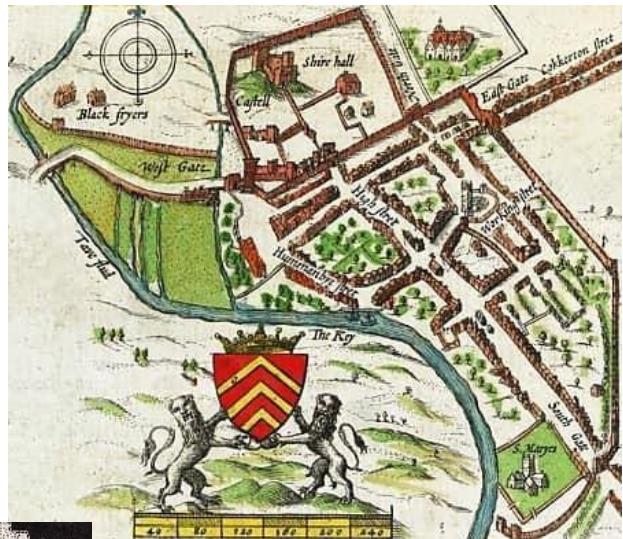
Convenor: Stuart Swinburne

It was with some trepidation that I volunteered to convene the Local History Group as I was aware of the very high esteem that the previous convenor, the late Eric Hurley, was held in by the group. So, I must thank the group for their warm welcome into their numbers and the support they have given me on my first foray into a new schedule of meetings. Eric set the bar high and I will endeavour to rise to it. We had an inaugural meeting at URC in December 2022 where we bounced around ideas on how we could approach Local History going forward. It is clear when you look into it that there is a huge scope for looking at the history of Cardiff dating right back to pre-Roman (even Palaeolithic) times, through the last 2 Millennia, the time when Cardiff was a small town so beautifully captured in **John Speed's wonderful painted map of 1610** and other



highly informative maps of the time to the point we find ourselves now in our sprawling metropolis that is Cardiff City.

And that scope includes looking at the history through the eyes of local ethnic communities; the history of the many “dynastic” families who have shaped Cardiff to



what we know it as now; the iconic infrastructure we see either in its current grandeur or in the ruins and clues left by its former existence in both the modern city and the Bay; the famous people spawned from Cardiff that have impacted the world across many aspects of our lives; the home and history of commercial, philanthropic and social entities that have shaped our modern existence in Cardiff, and the cultural heritage that is so rich and needing all the help in understanding that it can get.

We have refreshed our purpose:

To develop & enrich our collective knowledge of the history of our home city – Cardiff – and its environs

- To select key focal points of Cardiff history; gain and share knowledge and work together to fill in the gaps
- To be better informed through knowledge of our history to contribute as individuals to the wider debate on Cardiff's future

- To support each other's wellbeing while having fun And we will work closely with other groups as history is so pervasive it crops up repeatedly and we want to ensure our activities are complimentary.

We are in the process of pulling our 2023 program together. Our meetings are at Sightlife in Womanby Street we started this year with a very enjoyable and interactive meeting on Jan 20 sharing our knowledge of the history of Womanby Street – one of Cardiff's oldest streets, and Westgate Street, one of Cardiff's newest. The meeting set the scene for some really enjoyable and interactive meetings to come – a great tribute to the Local History group that I inherited and the new members who came along.

Meetings; this year will include, among many others-

Hidden Cardiff by Tony Court ("Diffloomat") Cardiff Old Town Part 2. The environs of High/St Mary Street.

Cardiff "Dynastic Families" part 1: Francis Shand and the Cardiff Institute for the Blind.

Cardiff "Dynastic Families" part 2: The Insoles. (possibly at Insole Court)

Cardiff Waterways part 1

Cardiff Waterways part 2: Story of how the Glamorganshire Canal helped Industry – the Nantgarw China Works. (possibly at the Nantgarw China Works)

Cardiff Libraries by Susanna Tee (Friends of Rhydypennau Library)

"Dynastic Families" part 3: The Morgans and Cardiff (possibly at Tredegar House, Newport)

The History of Ethnic Groups in Cardiff Part 1: The Irish

History surrounding the **Temple of Peace and Health**

Cathays Cemetery

These talks will be mixtures of inputs from local experts and group members sharing their knowledge, along with some site visits. As well as increasing our own knowledge for the pleasure of it, we will seek to tease out any lessons our modern day lives can benefit from So, please continue to look for updates on the Cardiff u3a web-site and I look forward to the coming year's "knowledge-fest" hoping to meet you as part of it

HISTORY GROUP

Convenor: Philip Stewart

What we learn from History

Throughout lockdown, the History Group continued meetings on Zoom, but it was exciting to meet again at URC as soon as we were able. We did try to have hybrid meetings for a short while, but technically these proved difficult and were soon dropped. This was unfortunate for those members of the Group who felt unable to attend in person.

The essence of the History Group is that at each meeting, Group members present talks and although initially we chose a different century each year, once we started meetings on Zoom, I felt that it would be easier for presenters to have a free reign and chose to speak on any historical subject they wished. This proved popular and we continued with this approach when we resumed face-to-face meetings.



For those of us who present talks, we find that the preparation of a talk is the most enjoyable part of the process. All of us are strictly amateurs with an interest in History, and usually have just a passing interest in the topics we have chosen, so preparing a talk from books or information

'The Birth of the RAF', given by Peter Donovan

from the internet gives us a much greater understanding of our chosen topic.



I appreciate not all members of the Group wish to prepare and give a talk and are quite content just to sit



'The Cotton Trade in North West England: my family and other workers' given by Sarah Boyce

The Battle of the Boyne, from 'The Early History of Ireland' given by Philip Stewart

and listen, and maybe ask a question or make a comment at the end; we do of course need an audience.

Our talks over the past year have been on wide-ranging subjects over more than two millennia, on occasions touching on prehistoric times. It has been interesting that we have had talks recently which have almost brought us up to modern times. History doesn't have to be centuries old, so we have heard talks on 'The Battle of CableStreet' in 1930s London, the Normandy landings on D day and the dropping of the atomic bombs which ended the war with Japan. At the other end of the spectrum, we have looked at Roman history, the Trojan War and Cleopatra, and of course the centuries in between.

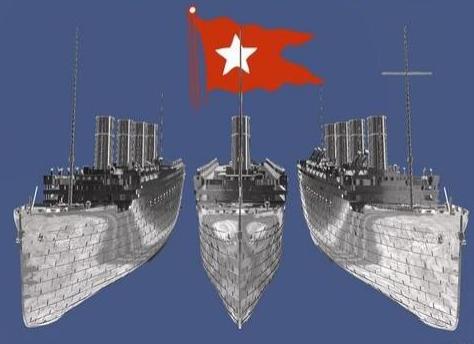
Norman Biggs
Death by poison: An unfortunate end to a Welsh sporting legend

The talk looks at the Biggs family of Penylan, Cardiff, in particular Norman, who played rugby for Wales before entering the military.

As well as looking at Norman's sporting and military history the talk also gives an interesting insight into the social history of the rapidly expanding town of Cardiff in the late 19th century.

'Norman Biggs - Death by Poison - An unfortunate end to a Welsh Sporting Legend', given by Ted Richards

THE WHITE STAR SISTERS OLYMPIC - TITANIC - BRITANNIC



The enigmatically titled 'Violet and the Three Sisters' given by Mario Greening

history@cardiffu3a.org.uk

OPEN MEETINGS

Talks and Open Meetings Organiser: Mario Greening

Open Meetings? ?

Unlike any of the interest groups, this is a meeting which is open to all members of Cardiff u3a hence 'Open' and which you do not have to 'join'. These are held on the second Tuesday afternoon of most months unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

There are a variety of talks and presentations which hopefully cater for all interests. Many presentations are illustrated with slides and sometimes music. A good number are presentations by u3a Members drawn from Cardiff and across south Wales. If you feel that you have a presentation which you would like to give, please contact me via the email address below.

At the end of each meeting there is ample time for questions and then refreshments follow. There is a standard charge for the meeting and refreshments which is currently £2 a member.

Recent presentations have included - What the Romans did for us, Gunpowder, Treason and Plot, a film about Roald Dahl, The History of Venice. Presentations coming up include Hypnotherapy, Newport Transporter Bridge, The Science of Happiness, Avoiding Cyber Scams and H G Wells and the Daleks.

I am always open to suggestions for topics, the names of speakers and indeed contributions from our own Cardiff u3a members.

Talks@cardiffu3a.org.uk

Patrizia Donovan



PAINTING FOR PLEASURE

Convenor: Margaret Richards



We are a newly formed group that meets once a month to enjoy painting/sketching together; some have experience, others are complete beginners, but we all enjoy watching an image grow and sharing what we are doing.



Members decide what medium they wish to use and in these early stages this has ranged from pencil sketching, to charcoal, to watercolours and acrylics; some members bring along new ideas to try, the most recent was a powdered

ink.



Work is often started in the meeting which lasts for one hour, thirty minutes, and finished at home or the next meeting. There is no formal teaching, but

members discuss their approaches and techniques, giving ideas and advice where needed.



Here you can see a snapshot of one morning's work; some





finished, some not...but all worth viewing.

Interested in joining us, then please contact me at

painting@cardiffu3a.org.uk



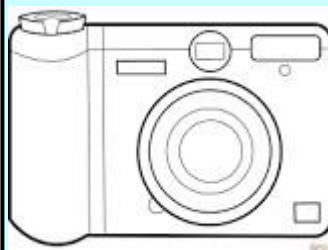
PRACTICAL PHOTOGRAPHY

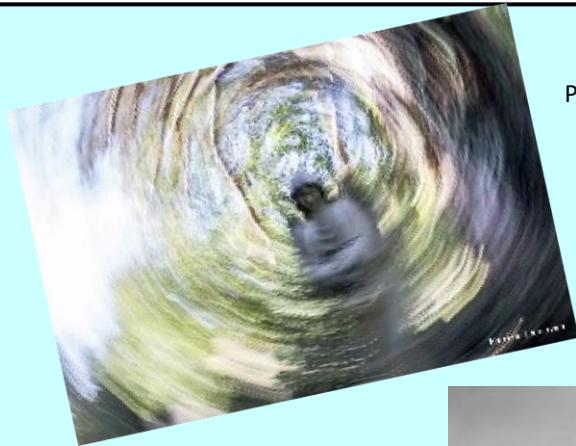
**Convenors: Andrew Rees
and Michael Barnes**



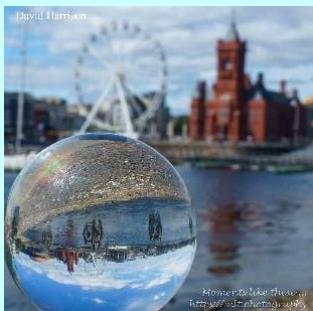
The Cardiff U3A Practical Photography Group is one of two Photography Groups that run under the auspices of the Cardiff U3A. The group is open to anyone that has an interest in photography (including beginners) irrespective of the type of camera they use. You would be most welcome to join us whether you have a DSLR, mirrorless, compact camera, smart phone or iPad or tablet. We usually have two meetings a month; the first is usually a photoshoot on the first Wednesday of the month. We have had photo shoots at, Bute Park, Cosmeston Lakes, Cardiff Bay, City Centre, Cathays Park, Llandaff City, Rhondda Heritage Centre, Roath Park, and St Fagans and were invited to Cardiff School of Biosciences Horticultural Unit. During the winter months we sometimes meet at the URC on both Wednesdays (depending upon the weather). The second Wednesdays of the month are usually held in the meeting room of the United Reform Church in Windsor Place at 14:00, where we have a Show and Tell Slideshow of members' photographs taken from the previous meeting followed by either a talk by members of the group with expertise in usually the next months' theme or a practical exercise, practical exercises that have happened are Black and White Conversions using various Software, Macro (Flowers and Plants) and Toy/Model Photography. On months where there are five weeks, we are planning to visit sites a bit further afield to have a photo shoot and possibly a social lunch. Something to look forward to... The Cardiff u3a photography groups are busy planning an exhibition of member's photography. The exhibition will take place later in this year, probably in October and last for six weeks. It will be held in The Hearth Gallery at Llandough Hospital. Both groups are looking forward to an opportunity to show case images that they have photographed and are particularly appreciative of Llandough Hospital for making this possible. Further information will be provided once the dates have been confirmed. It is hoped that each group member will be able to enter at least one image into the exhibition. If you would like yours to be included then why not join the Afternoon Photography group which still has a few vacancies. For further information contact Andrew

on 029 20371548





Patrizia Donovan



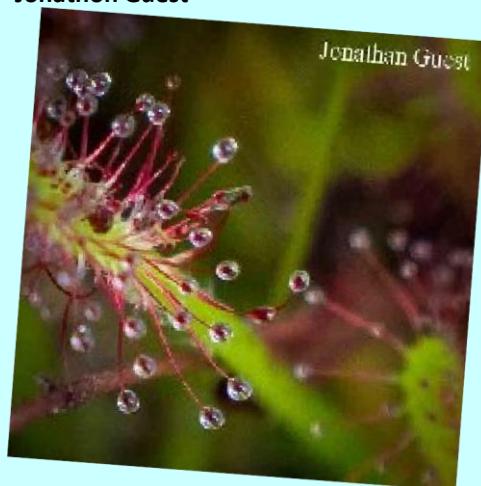
David Harrison

Monochrome thumbnail



Michael Barnes

Jonathon Guest

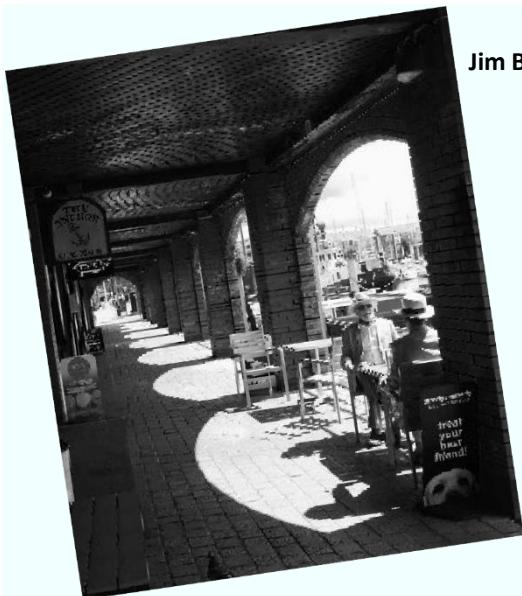


Jonathon Guest

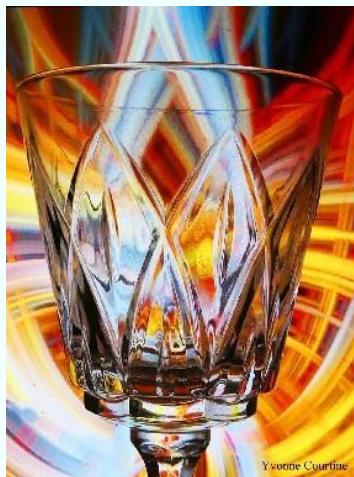


A 'hands-on' session at the URC

Photographs from the
Practical Photography Group



Jim Bartlett



Yvonne Courtine



**Photographs from the
Practical Photography
Group**

Philip Stewart

Photography2@cardiffu3a.org.uk



Peter Donovan

SLOW TRAIN COMING

Convenor: Ted Richards

DESTINATIONS



This new group had its inaugural trip in February. The idea of the group is to have a day out by train exploring a town or area, mainly in the South Wales area. It will involve a walk and will investigate the local history of the area, maybe a visit to a museum, gallery or exhibition. We will take in statues, sculptures and blue plaques and architecture. People would be encouraged to maybe do a bit of homework before a trip and bring some nuggets of wisdom with them. Walking distances and terrain would vary from a couple of miles up to around six.



The first trip was to Caerphilly where stops included the **Tommy Cooper statue**, the outside of the castle and **Morgan Jones Park**. Those that still had sufficient energy left by the afternoon walked up to **Van mansion** and were lucky enough to have a chance encounter with the owner who generously gave us 20 minutes of his time telling us about the history and renovation of the building. It is a Grade II listed Tudor mansion with a history going back to 1529 and was owned by the wealthy Lewis family. The house became part of the Earl of Plymouth's estate at St Fagan's when one of the Lewis family married into that family. Over time the house diminished in importance and became derelict until it was renovated by the present owner in recent years.





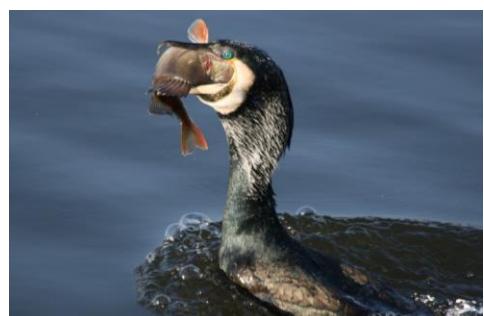
The trips are on the first Thursday of the month and start from either Cardiff Queen Street or Cardiff Central stations, though people can join the train wherever they wish. There is no booking necessary for the trips and people buy their own tickets. Lunch is up to the individual, bring your own sandwiches or rely on chancing finding a cafe or pub.

In March the Slow Train Running group is planning on going to Rhymney and in April hopefully to Llantwit Major.



All aboard please.

John Silk



Patrizia Donovan

SPANISH CONVERSATION

Convenor: Margaret Richards

The Spanish Conversation group was relaunched in September 2022, with an enthusiastic group of current and new members looking for an opportunity to chat in Spanish. We started with a plan which was quickly modified by group

members to make the level of conversation appropriate to the varied experience in the group; some are beginners while others have an extensive vocabulary. Sharing topics such as 'A dreadful holiday' and 'My favourite book/film' has made us laugh and ask each other lots of questions, always taking the time to discuss new words and improve

pronunciation. Everyone has a go because we prepare what to say in advance and read from our notes unless very confident. Using actions and the odd word in English all helps the understanding and learning. *¿Quién soy?* is a great activity to finish off some meetings or sometimes the more fluent speakers adjourn to chat over a coffee.

You can contact me at

spanish@cardiffu3a.org.uk

if you are considering joining us or want more information about the group



Marilyn Guest



UKULELE

Convenor: Margaret Richards

ukulele@cardiffu3a.org.uk

Cardiff u3a has a **new Ukulele group**. An enthusiastic group of members and potential new members met to discuss how the group might work. Some were quite nervous as they had never played before and thought it would be an exciting new skill to try out. Those who had played before helped formulate a plan and shared lots of good ideas and strategies.



We met to play some music for the first time in February, using the activity room in the Sight Life offices on Womanby Street. Experienced players will have a go at strumming together and there will be help for the inexperienced, although this is not a class; lots of help and advice is available to support everyone to build up their skills and have a good time.

Members provide their own ukuleles but are advised to wait until after the first meeting before acquiring one as advice will be given.



The most obvious difference between the guitar and ukulele is **their size**. The ukulele often resembles a small classical guitar, with a much smaller body and only four nylon strings. The ukulele is tuned differently than a guitar with fewer notes and a much smaller sonic range.

Walks are organised on the first and third Tuesday of each month and usually end up with a pub lunch. Members meet at the starting point of each walk, usually at 10.30. Information is sent out regularly to each member of the walking group via Beacon, and members are asked to register for each walk and provide a telephone number. The length and terrain of each walk is explained in the description section.

Walking holidays are now being arranged again following the relaxing of the restrictions on movement. Past holidays included visits to Guernsey, the Isles of Scilly, Anglesey and Mid and West Wales. This May's holiday will be based in St David's with opportunities to walk on the Pembrokeshire coastal path.

It is essential that suitable footwear and clothing is worn for the walks, and members are asked to decide for themselves if they are fit enough to walk with the group.

NEWPORT TRANSPORTER BRIDGE In April 2022 fifteen members of the Walking Group plus one guest and one "gate-crasher" ventured out to undertake a very different expedition to our usual 2 hour walk ending with a pub lunch.

This time we were going to walk vertically in what was termed "an up and over". We gathered under clear blue skies on the east side of the River Usk in Newport, where we were given a brief history of the bridge by Gavin Jones, the Community Engagement Officer for the Newport Transporter Bridge Project. Opened in 1906, the Grade 1 listed



structure is the longest remaining one of only eight survivors in the world of this form of river crossing. It is currently closed for restoration and for the construction of a new visitor centre. It will be reopening as a major tourist attraction, joining the medieval boat currently also under restoration in Newport. We climbed the 278 open treadmetal steps of the north-east pylon leg emerging at the top onto the metal walkways that connect the pylons on opposite sides of the River Usk. The perfectly calm and clear weather provided fabulous views extending from the Severn Bridges to the east along to the Principality Stadium in Cardiff to the west. Over half an hour was spent wandering along the walkways and picking out features of both the landscape and the bridge structure itself. It was a strange feeling to be **looking down through the grid of the walkway** to see birds flying through beneath us. Then it was a descent down the steps on the west side before returning on the beautiful gondola to the starting point. Finally we were treated to a guided tour of the control room and a demonstration of how to “drive” the gondola. The walk leader was allowed to drive the empty gondola for a return trip. Our “gate-crasher” was a young man undertaking the Wales Coast Path and only a couple of days before completing his walk in Chepstow. He happened to be in Newport on the right day otherwise he would have had to make a long, not very pleasant, detour by road. What a great piece of timing to be able to join us on such a perfect day

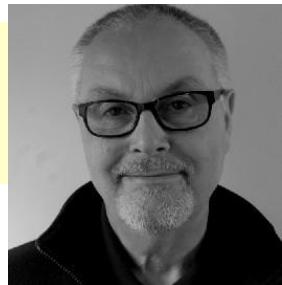




WORDSMITHS

Convenors: Wendy Barkess and Peter Grehan

writers2@cardiffu3a.org.uk



The Wordsmiths u3a group formed as the offspring of the Writers Enjoying Words group. Rather like a pond amoeba once the original reached its maximum sustainable size it split into two with the new fraction departing to begin a life of its own. Fate hasn't been kind to us. Just as we were starting to get established along came Covid 19 along with lockdown and all the associated complications, not least of these were the members who endured the infection and are still suffering the aftereffects. Add to this several meeting locations and day changes and we have been struggling with attendance.

Luckily we have been getting some sterling support from the Cardiff u3a committee and in particular from Groups Coordinator, Margaret Richards who has helped to reinvigorate our outlook. In addition to the usual readings of members' work, we hope to include occasional presentations related to our activities. As an example, we recently hosted a demonstration of Microsoft Word, probably the most widely used word processor, illustrating some of the potential benefits to writers. There are also some excellent and free word processor apps available and we might consider highlighting the advantages of one of them called LibreOffice in the not-too-distant future.

Of course, Wordsmiths is about writing and the group has been very active in this regard. These have included poems, prose and non-fiction. To give a flavour of the many and varied forms of writing here are a few summaries of topics covered at our meetings.

Mary's Spitfire poem was a wonderful tribute to the aircraft, the men who flew it into battle, the designer and engineers who built it, the ground crew who maintained it, the women pilots who ferried it to the squadrons and, not least, Beatrice 'Tilly' Shilling, an aeronautical engineer who came up with a device to cure a flaw in the Merlin engine's operation that disadvantaged it during combat.

Mike's enthralling supernatural spine-chiller that got the balance just right between mystery and explanation. A tale of a man's night camping in a forest that is inhabited by mocking tormentors. We all listened to it in spellbound silence.

Peter's front page of a fictional Newspaper (next page) of a Wild West town in Colorado in the 1860s. This was to publicise a tabletop Christmas game being run for young-

THE TINCUP CHRONICLER

COLORADO

DECEMBER 15th 1866

THE GREAT SANTA SLEIGH HOLD-UP!

There was outrage yesterday as news reached the town of Tincup that Santa's train, carrying his sleigh and all the presents for the kids of Colorado, had been bushwhacked by the notorious Copper Reach Gang! Luckily the elves that were travelling with Santa escaped on the reindeer travelling in the caboose car to raise the alarm. It seems the dirty curs had blocked the rails forcing Santa's train to stop and then stormed the train. Santa managed to escape and went into hiding before the bandits could nab him and hold him to ransom.

Word soon came in that a posse of Santa's security dwarves was on the way to settle with the varmints and recover Santa and the presents. Meanwhile, Tincup's Parents and Teachers Association formed themselves into a posse. "Ain't nobody gonna spoil our kids' Christmas!" said Mrs Margaret Varner who runs the General Store with her husband Bill. "Bill's being away on business means I gotta step up and do my bit just like any good American wife and mother," she added. Several of the women of the PTA joined the posse to hunt down the outlaws and rescue Santa and the presents.

But things were further complicated by the hostile Indians, wolves, bears and who knows what else lurking out in the wilds this winter. Old Joshua Soaks reckons he even saw Bigfoot and some little green men but he was probably just drunk as usual.

One thing's for sure, a lot of them critters are mighty hungry as a pair of the bandits sent to hide the loot found out when they got themselves invited to dinner by a ravenous mountain lion. So now even the outlaws have no idea where Santa's sack is!

Read tomorrow's edition for all the latest on the hunt for the robbers.



sters (of all ages) at the Penarth Library. It described the measures taken following the hold-up of Santa's train by outlaws, with posses being formed by the Parents and Teachers Association of the town and Santa's Security Dwarves.

Beverly's poem Woodland described the intricacies of shapes, sounds, smells and life during a walk through a woodland culminating in the expanded vista of Caswell Bay.

Keith's episodic novel, **Some Dance to Forget** is a police detective story that dragged us into its clutches and always left us hungry to find out what happened next in this novel.

Wendy B's illuminating poem Thermal Expansion was skilfully written about the worlds disappearing islands. Surprisingly on top of the endangered list was our own GB not because, like many, it is being overwhelmed by rising sea levels but because of the increased likelihood of a political break-up following Brexit according to the article she had read. One group of islanders who would soon physically lose their islands to the sea were to be offered their former nationality within the digital cloud.

Owen's In The Garden left us with many intriguing questions. The readers had to engage their brains and stimulate the maybes, what-ifs and was-it-because ideas. It also required some research into the meaning of the unfamiliar words, always a good thing, but the vocabulary was most impressive.

Wordsmiths will be meeting at the Monmouthshire Building Society from now on, which means we will no longer have to pay for our meeting room. We always welcome and encourage writers, experienced or otherwise to our group and look forward to hearing everyone's work. As it says on the U3A website for our group, "It may be the first thing you've written since school or it may be a chapter in a book you're writing. All get equal time and respect with us."



u3a Christmas Lunch 2022 at Leonardos: formerly the Park Hotel

Photo credit: Jim Bartlett



WRITERS ENJOYING WORDS

Convenor: Noelle Bryant



writers@cardiffu3a.org.uk



Former convenor Richard Garman

Writers Enjoying Words Lorraine Gray

We are a group with passion and flair
Who meet together with words to share
Constructive criticism never offends
As well as writers, we are also friends
Paper and pen will start the ride
On whatever subject we decide
Exploring our deep imagination
With camaraderie motivation
Inventing characters - any choice
Read aloud - any voice
We can travel the world from St.David's Hall
Create danger, but never fall
If you write to unblock your mind
You'd be surprised what you will
find



© Lorraine Gray



MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

A big **thank you** to all those members who
rose to the challenges and contributed to this section
of the Magazine, your Magazine.



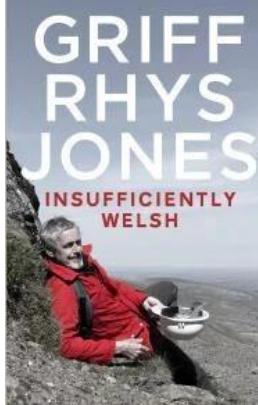
Patrizia Donovan

AM I WELSH?

by Mike Tynen



Some of you may have read Gri(u)ff Rhys Jones' book "Insufficiently Welsh",



or seen the associated TV series. In it, he laments the fact that, despite having a soundly Welsh name and Welsh-born parents, and having himself been born in Wales, he was deemed "insufficiently Welsh" to front an S4C production. His problem, of course, was that he was moved at an early age to south east England, where he imbibed the local accent. And he certainly didn't speak Welsh. I have all Gruff's disqualifications, and a few more. On the plus side, I was born in Pontllanffraith, in the Sirhowy Valley, down the road from Blackwood. Blackwood, of course was the location of Nye Bevan's embryonic manifestation of the NHS. My Aunt Amy told me that my Granddad, Jack Marsden, taught Nye Bevan in Sunday school. Jack himself was

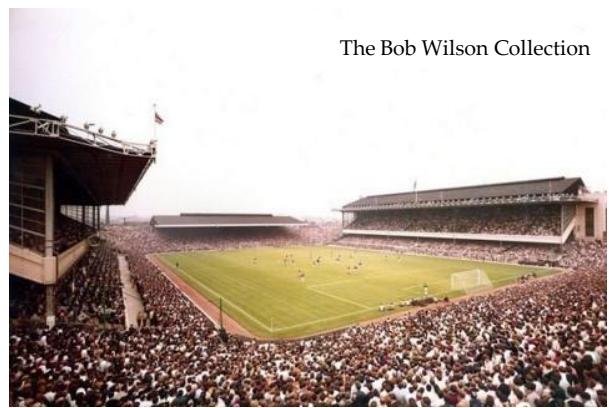
from Tredegar; he sired ten children, one of whom, my mother, was born at Cwmfelinfach, down the valley from Pontllanffraith. Jack apparently took a leading role in the 1935 "stay-down" strike at the Nine Mile Point colliery. He stood, unsuccessfully, for vice-president of the Fed (the South Wales Miners Federation). So far, so good. However, all the above-mentioned places are located in Monmouthshire, and as Gruff points out in his first chapter, Monmouth-

nmrs.org.uk/



shire was not officially recognised as part of Wales until 1974, by which time I was 34 years old. Can one be retrospectively Welsh? It gets worse. Those of you of a mathematical bent will have worked out that I was born in 1940; to be exact, in the immediate aftermath of the Dunkirk evacuation. I had always supposed that my parents, who were living in London at that time, decided I should be born in Wales for fear of air attack. (Though, in point of fact, there is no evidence of the Luftwaffe having intelligence regarding my imminent arrival; but, then, not all Bletchley Park files have been declassified.) But, I suspect the decision was made long before the Panzers rolled into northern France, and probably revolved around the support, or lack of it, which my father was likely to afford to a woman in labour. In other words, she needed to be with her sisters (her mother having sadly died the previous February). The abovementioned Aunt Amy

assured me that only married women were allowed to be present for the delivery. All of which is a preliminary to revealing that, having perforce been born in possibly-not-Welsh Monmouthshire, I didn't stay there long, being soon whisked back to London to face the onslaught of the aforementioned Luftwaffe. And London was where I spent the bulk of the next 18 years, in Highbury, within earshot of the roar from the then Arsenal stadium. And, of course, Norff Lundun was where I acquired my diction. During these 18 years, we visited relatives in South Wales (well, Monmouthshire), and even had a week in Porthcawl. And, as a sixth former (as we used to say), I went on a field course to Dale Fort in Pembrokeshire. In 1958, by a stroke of fate (i.e., Bristol and Nottingham unis. rejected me out of hand) I went up to



The Bob Wilson Collection

Bangor, to study Zoology. I lived there for six years. You can't get Welsher than that (without going to Aberystwyth, perhaps). I suppose I might have made an attempt to learn Welsh at this time, but what little time and energy I could salvage from my studies was spent in the (largely unsuccessful) pursuit of girls and (more successfully) beer. I did briefly date two Welsh girls (no, not simultaneously; Bangor was a



small town). After a brief and chequered career as a professional zoologist, I ended up teaching in a Further Education college in Hampshire. I stayed there for 22 years. In the first ten years, money was freely available for taking students on week-long residential field courses, and on most occasions I favoured a field centre on the Castlemartin peninsula, and, once or twice, Dale Fort, also in Pembrokeshire. This part of Pembrokeshire is not notable for a profusion of Welsh place names, of course, but, unlike Monmouthshire, it has always been indubitably Wales. And so to what may be the decisive consideration. I make a point of watching any rugby internationals in which Wales are/is involved. I am cheered by Welsh success and mourn the occasional defeat. I try to sing along in a sub-Redwoodian fashion. Butas a spectacle, I really don't rate rugby. I much prefer soccer (or "football" as it is called nearly everywhere outside anglophone North America). I have an Arsenal scarf which has red and white stripes and can thus be



repurposed for Wales-supporting purposesand there is a resurgence of interest in the Welsh round ball game. And now I live, very contentedly, in the 'Diff. Am I Welsh? I like to think so.....but I suspect not; not 100%, anyway

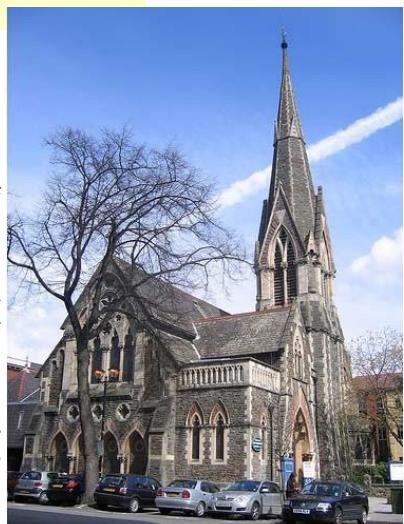
Cymru am byth. Yma o Hyd

(Wales forever. Still hereed)

CITY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Most members of Cardiff u3a will be familiar with the church building having entered in order to take part in an Interest Group meeting or an Open Meeting. **Alison Tansom** outlines the history of this Grade 2 listed building.

The Church was founded by Scottish Presbyterians who came to Cardiff following the Marquis of Bute. They worshipped at Charles Street Congregational Church until they had sufficient funds to build their own Church. **The plot of land in Windsor Place was acquired from Viscount Tredegar in 1865.** From 8 sets of plans Architect Fredrick Thomas Pilkington's plan was selected. **A contract was signed with Messers. James and Price for £3,246** and the foundation stone was laid on 15th February 1866 with the building completed within a year. **Viscount Tredegar** assisted by setting up a further fund and the **total cost of the building was £4,750.** In 1873 a Hall was built at the rear of the church and the church back wall itself was extended 8ft to accommodate an organ. The work was carried out under a local man, Architect Col. Bruce Vaughan.



In 1910 the Church burned to the ground and Col Vaughan was contracted to rebuild in his own style and the hammer-beam roof and

pulpit canopy both of particular note were built. In 1981 the Architect Wyn Thomas provided plans for the new building on the side and incorporated the North Porch into the design, the original finial of which is displayed on the new staircase. Windsor Place Presbyterian joined with Charles Street and Wood Street Congregational Churches when the United Reformed Church was formed in 1972 and has been the home of Car- diff Christian Adult Education Centre running extramural classes for Cardiff University, an SPCK Bookshop, **funded the Light Ship**, founded Asylum Justice and is currently the home of Hoops and Loops a LGBT+ Asylum Seekers drop in centre, many U3A groups, Trinity College Music Exams and many other charities, choirs and organisations. The Church is planning the setting up of a branch of Cardiff Foodbank which it is hoped will open this year.

**Alison Tansom: City URC
Church Secretary and u3a
member**



Do you know of a location which would be willing to take some of these Cardiff u3a leaflets - apart from libraries? If so please contact us at

groups@cardiffu3a.org.uk

MARTIN BENTON

Cardiff's u3a 'Masterchef' of Wales

making pastry with her when I was 5! In my teens, I would get cook books from my local library. In my 20s, it started to become a serious hobby. It never occurred to me that I might be at a standard to cook in competitions.

Then, one day, I went into my local Spar and they had a pile of leaflets advertising a competition called "All Wales Top Cook".

I picked one up, threw some

recipes together and submitted an entry. Much to my surprise, I won the South Wales heat and ended up in the final.

That was back in 1989. For the next 20 years or so, I've

I've enjoyed cooking all my life.

My Mum would tell me I was

The Masterchef Competition 1990



A publicity photograph for Masterchef with Sally Clarke, Edwina Currie and Loyd Grossman.



I won at the Royal Welsh Show in 1994

entered, and had some success, in many competitions. I was BBC Masterchef of Wales and semi-finalist in the very first series back in 1990.

I've reached the final of all the major newspaper competitions (Sunday Times, Independent, Observer). I've ended up on TV a few times, besides Masterchef. I've

won many prizes including a fitted kitchen, trips to the US and Italy, lots of cooking equipment and kitchen & tableware. **My last competition was on ITV's Britain's Best Dish in 2010 where I got through to the regional final.**

I don't do competitions any more but I still set some time aside, every day, to cook myself an interesting evening meal. Life's too short for boring food!

Martin on a cooking holiday in Sicily



2016 making, appropriately, cannoli.

Three recipes from Martin that would make up a nice late spring-early summer dinner party.

SMOKED SALMON WITH CREAMED ROCKET (Serves 4)

Surprise your guests with this interesting combination of tastes and textures.

INGREDIENTS

8 Slices of Smoked Salmon (about 250g)
1/2 Onion
60g Unsalted Butter
200g Rocket (ready to eat)
100ml Double Cream
1/4 Cucumber
4 Spring Onions
1 Salt; black pepper

METHOD

Dice the onion. Deseed the cucumber and dice. Slice the spring onions. Deseed and finely chop the chilli.

In a frying pan, sweat the onions in 20g of the butter without colouring. When the onion is soft, add the rocket and cream. Cook until the rocket wilts and the mixture thickens. Season and set aside.

Melt 40g of the butter in wok or frying pan and stir fry the cucumber, spring onions and chilli for a couple of minutes without colouring. Season and set aside.

When ready to serve, reheat the rocket and vegetables. Spoon mounds of the creamed rocket in the centre of four warmed plates. Cover with two slices of smoked salmon. Spoon the vegetables and their butter over the smoked salmon.

.....

LAMB WITH RED PEPPER CHUTNEY (Serves 4)

Something lighter to do with new season Welsh lamb other than a traditional roast



INGREDIENTS

2 Best-end Fillets of New Season Welsh Lamb
2tbsp Olive Oil
10 Basil leaves
4 Red Peppers
60ml Olive Oil
2tsp Honey
2tbsp Light Brown Sugar
3tbsp White Wine Vinegar
1 Red Onion
1 Garlic Clove
80ml Extra Virgin Olive Oil
200ml Chicken Stock
150g Couscous
Chicken Stock or Water
4 Spring Onions
2 Bottled, preserved lemons
Salt; black pepper

METHOD

Shred the basil leaves. Seed and slice the peppers. Peel and dice the red onion. Finely chop the garlic. Finely slice the spring onions. Discard the pulp of the lemons and finely slice the peel.

In a large saute pan, sear the peppers, in 60ml olive oil, for about 3 minutes. Don't worry if they take a little colour. Add the honey, sugar, vinegar, red onion and garlic. Turn the heat down to medium and cook for about 10 minutes or until the peppers soften. Add the extra virgin olive oil and stock. Season and set aside.

Put the couscous in a heat-proof bowl. Boil an appropriate amount of stock or water according to the instructions on the packet. Pour over the couscous. Cover the bowl and leave in a warming oven for 5 minutes. Fluff up the couscous and add the spring onions, lemon peel and seasonings. Cover and return to the oven.

Heat 2tbsp olive oil in a frying pan. Season the lamb fillets and fry for 2-5 minutes on each side depending on how well-done you like your lamb. Turn the heat off under the pan, lightly cover the fillets with foil and leave to rest for about 5 minutes.

Re-heat the lamb and red peppers. Carve each lamb fillet into 6 slices. Put a pile of couscous in the middle of 4 serving plates. Spoon some red peppers on top. Arrange 3 slices of lamb on top of the peppers and sprinkle over the basil.



BERRIES WITH WHITE CHOCOLATE SAUCE (Serves 4)

A very simple dessert that is, nevertheless, delicious

INGREDIENTS

175g Good Quality White Chocolate

170ml Double Cream

500g Mixed Summer Berries
(strawberries, raspberries, cherries,
redcurrants, blackcurrants)



METHOD

Hull the strawberries. Stone the cherries. Strip the currants off their sprigs. Mix all the fruit together in a bowl.

Break the chocolate into pieces and put in a heatproof bowl. Add the cream. Put the bowl over simmering water and stir until the chocolate has melted. Pour into a serving jug and leave to cool.

Share the berries between four dessert bowls. Let everyone pour their own sauce because it is quite rich.

ENJOY!



Marilyn Guest

Susan (Sue) Biggin: a poem for you

In a Spin

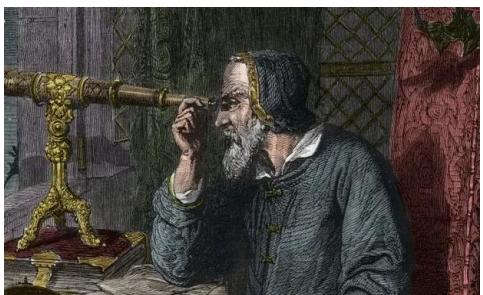


The universe dawned.
No-one knows why.
We first found stars lodged in the sky:
Those fanciful constellations
Dreamt up by the ancients.
Sun and Moon set apart,
While some wandering 'stars'
Like Venus and Mars
Whirled on a plate

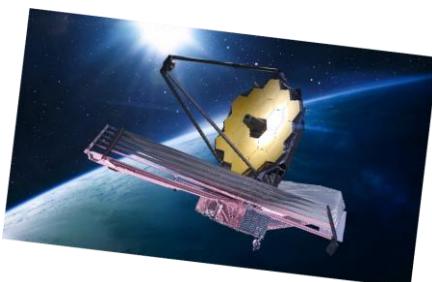
Around the Earth of course,
they thought.
Except for some clever rogue Greeks
who thought otherwise.

And that was it.

Till Galileo and his 'spy-glass'
threw Donne's net on the heavens,
And made them his own,
Jovian moons drawn into view,
And ... oops, just who's circling who?
Uproar, arrest, and a very vexed Vatican.
(They forgave him three centuries later.)



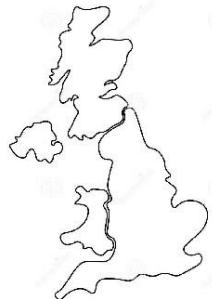
Our scopes peer out deeper,
Tracking far back in time,
To black holes, strings and swirls,
Spiral galaxies, other worlds. It's so vast, this place space.
No-one knows why.
There's just always been
That circling sky, aloft in a spin.



Cosmology is a subject I follow pretty closely.
James Webb (the space telescope) has been in
place about a year now and is seeing marvels,
way back to 13.8 billion years ago it's thought,
reconstructing the universe. Just fantastic.

Thermal Expansion!

WENDY BARKESS



Where have all the islands gone?

If you do a google search to find countries likely to survive

It'll blow your mind.

First on the black list is our own GB (including Northern Ireland)

While exotic island nations are sinking to the sea

We are expected to split from side to side.

Scotland's awa, Ireland's too far, But Wales is standing strong.

We're all of us Brits, but since that Brexit, we don't think we'll stay very long.

Divided we stand, united we fall,

We really don't know what to make of it all.

In the island nations of Oceania thermal expansion is calling the shots

It causes the sea to warm, swell and flood those idyllic foreign plots.

Rising sea levels threaten atolls and remote raised Banaba

Where Gilbertese is spoken In Kiribati's Tarawa.



In Tuvalu the same conditions threaten its 101 islands

The sea water warming and drowning the land

While Palau offers its people digital nationality

The world wide web in place of geography.

A HYMN written by JEAN SILVAN EVANS

In a land that was parched and baked dry
by sun,
In its hard heart nothing would grow,
A dam was built because somebody cared
And the water began to flow.

A man stood up and tilled his
crops
And his babies soon stopped their weeping,
I looked again at that new-life man
And I saw Jesus reaping.

*In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,
In so much as you do it to these,
In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,
You do it to me.*

In a land where the men go away to work
And the women are left to cope,
A kitchen, built because somebody cared,
Lifted them to new heart and hope.

A wife stood up and learnt to tend

In a land that was parched and baked dry by sun,
In its hard heart nothing would grow,
A dam was built because somebody cared
And the water began to flow.

A man stood up and tilled his crops
And his babies soon stopped their weeping,
I looked again at that new-life man
And I saw Jesus reaping.

*In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,
In so much as you do it to these,
In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,
You do it to me.*

In a land where the men go away to work
And the women are left to cope,
A kitchen, built because somebody cared,
Lifted them to new heart and hope.

A wife stood up and learnt to tend
And her babies grew better looking,
I looked again at that new-life wife



And I saw Jesus cooking.
In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,

In a land where children couldn't read or write,
In today's world they had no part,
A school was built because somebody cared
And the learning for life could start.

A girl stood up and read her book
And those children new tales were hearing,
I looked again at that new-life girl
And I saw Jesus learning.

In so much as you do it to these, said the Lord,

In a land that was torn with the noise of war
And the children had swollen bellies,
The world looked on as if nobody cared
And the hell played out on our tellies.

A boy too weak to stand just hunched
And the babies were past their crying.
I looked again at that old-life boy

TUNE NAME (11.8.10.8.8.9.9.7, and chorus)

Sue Gilmurray (1950–)

Sheet music for "The Old Rugged Cross" with lyrics and chords. The music is in common time, with a key signature of four sharps. The lyrics are as follows:

In a land that was parched and baked dry by sun – in its hard heart no-thing would grow – a dam was built be-cause some - bo - dy cared and the wa - ter be - gan to flow. A man stood up and tilled his crops and his ba - bies soon stopped their weep - ing. I looked a - gain at that new - life man and I saw Je - sus reap - ing.

In so much as you do it to these, – said the Lord, in so much as you do it to these, – in so much as you do it to these, – said the Lord, you do it to me, – you do it to me, –

My Resolution on Independence -

The Bridge Player: Sue Biggin

There was a creaking in my back all night
The aches came harshly as midnight chimed.
And though the Moon bewitched with silvery light
My mind dwelt fast on the passing time,
Oh covert Morpheus, gentle anodyne,
Come hypnotise me to your dreamland realm.
And so I slept till birdsong broke the spell.

All things that love the sun are out of doors,
While I'm already playing bridge (or still in bed).
I need to change - an early swim, a bracing walk,
And fish my bike out from the garden shed,
Perhaps a run and even count my steps?
Or worse! The gym I fear is my conclusion,
Reluctant but essential resolution.



Patrizia Donovan

Irene Lock of the "Writers enjoying words" group has crafted the poem below. The poem is written as an **Acrostic poem**. Those of you 'in the know' will realise that this is a poem in which certain letters of each line combine to spell out a word, name, or phrase when read vertically.

Now what do those letters spell out?

A Cornish Reverie

Cornish history, my heritage, calls out to me

Has my grandmother infused me with her blood?

A challenge to remember white sands and the emerald sea

Lost, in memories of places where she stood

Legends and myths swirl round in a dream-like cloud

Enveloping me in Catherine's Celtic past

Now I see a cottage of sun-lit stone, a crowd

Gathering to weep a farewell to their Cornish lass

Ending too soon, the virtual vision of my Gran's girlhood.

We traced an ancestor of Catherine to the 17th century - Mark Trewartha !!

30 Years of Tai chi

Melanie Hall writes -

I discovered Tai Chi, the beautiful, gentle form of exercise in my mid-twenties. Now 30 years on, although I am absolutely still very much a student of this moving, meditative discipline, I can say from experience that the older you get the more it helps. I guess that is the good news for all us at the U3A!



When I tell people I practice Tai chi, I heave a heavy inward sigh, as I know that the next question will invariably be, what is that? Or, is that a type of Karate or Kung fu?

The trouble is, trying to explain briefly what Tai Chi is, just does not do it justice. It is a multi-layered discipline originating in China, and is considered to be one of the branches of Chinese medicine alongside acupuncture and herbal medicine. It can be described variously as a set of movements (called a 'Form'), a Mind-Body practice, 'meditation in motion', rather like a slow, purposeful dance or a low impact exercise regime. And by the time I have said some of this, I can see eyes beginning to glaze over, so I usually then add, but the only real way to appreciate tai chi is to have a go at it!

There are significant health benefits from the circular, flowing pattern of movements that comprise the Tai Chi form and they can be easily adapted for any age or mobility. There is growing evidence for using Tai chi as a supportive treatment for the prevention and rehabilitation of many of the common age-related conditions. It helps lower blood pressure and improve heart health, and in a very gentle way improves upper and lower body strength.



When practiced regularly, tai chi can be comparable to resistance training and brisk walking. The Hand/Eye/Foot coordination you develop through learning the set of movements also helps to improve your balance, helping to reduce falls and improve agility. Was it coincidence that during lock-down when our class switched to meditating via Zoom rather than doing physical Tai chi together, that three of our class suffered significant falls and associated injuries?

For me, Tai Chi is much more than just a physical exercise. What it actually does is stop the "Chattering Monkeys" in my head, bringing a sense of calm, serenity and massively improved concentration. Our class joke is that my memory is shockingly poor for names, yet after practicing our communal Tai chi form together, when we put named people

into a healing meditation, I can remember strings of names without any effort. The fun thing about Tai chi is that the movements have, to our western sensibilities, rather quirky names, for the most part based on animal movements. So in a Tai chi class you could hear and see an instructor demonstrating an elegant, expansive arm movement “White crane spreads its wings”, a “step back repulse monkey”, or “punch the tiger’s ears”!



If we start our class feeling down hearted, heavy and stressed by the end of our 90 minutes together our spirits are lighter, we feel less stressed and there is always a smile on our faces going home. Is that because twenty years on, in the same class of ladies, we are now a community of friends as much tai chi practitioners? All I know is that the weeks when we practice our Tai chi together, I have more energy, less aches and pains, my concentration is better and my week goes more smoothly.



And after all this time I am still awed by the powerful energy that performing the Tai Chi movements brings, you cannot see the energy, but you can certainly feel it.

White crane spreads its wings - the Tai Chi move is based on the bird's movements. The class demonstrating the single whip posture.

Oh and incidentally, for those who interested, there are many different styles of Tai chi, the five main styles are Chen, Yang, Wu, Sun and Hao, with variations including the style I practice, Cheng Man-Ching. There is a long form (typically about 108 movements) and the more commonly taught short form (typically 24 movements). Equally there are many different styles of instructors, so it is important to find a style and an instructor with which you are comfortable. Some classes like my own are more meditation focused, while others are taught more from the martial arts perspective. Neither one is better, the best Tai chi class is the one where you feel comfortable. So why not give Tai chi a go? Your mind and body will thank you for it!

For more information and how to find instructors, check out the Tai chi Union for Great Britain at <https://www.taichiunion.com>

Melanie Hall

Ann Lewins shares a holiday 'find'.

Whilst staying with my son and daughter-in-law in Rabat, Morocco we visited Les Jardens Exotiques.



The gardens were created by the French Horticultural Engineer Marcel Francois (1900-1999) who purchased the land of some four and a half hectares in 1949. He built his home on this land, which has now become a Museum. He undertook the creation of the gardens alongside the production of exotic plants intended to develop into a scenography for educational and ecological purposes; a dream that became reality for this engineer who loved Morocco since his youth. The gardens opened to the public in 1961. In 1973 the gardens came under the ownership of the Moroccan State. Marcel Francois remained the Manager. In 1981 he lost control of the site which led him to leave Morocco definitively in 1984. The gardens then entered a period of abandonment. In 2002 the BMCE Foundation for Education, chaired by Princess Lalla Hasnaa, daughter of King Hassan II, undertook the rehabilitating of the gardens which reopened to the public in 2005. The garden is laid out in paths that twist and turn around rocks and pools and many diverse spaces. There are wooden huts placed at intervals for rest and enjoyment of the surrounding water and plants.



The ‘Nature Gardens’ are inspired by various regions of the Globe. There is an Aviary, a Vivarium (reptiles) and a Maze.

The Museum in Marcel’s house presents the history of the site from creation to recent renovation.



Barafundle Bay West Wales

Bev Morris

The sun blazing,
in the Blue of a Cloudless Sky;
Pink shorts and tee shirt
over our swim suits and
blanco white daps and
ankle white socks.
Legs and arms browned
by the sun of an already
one week holidaying by the sea.

Today we caught a bus

to Stackpole Quay via Bosherston -

from our base in Tenby

Our aim is to walk across the
Cliff top to Barafundle Bay –
the path was well trodden and
the sea pinks bobbing slightly

as they hug the ground,

Blue Hairbell flowers and bees
foraging and highly active
in the full sun.

On our left the blue,

Blueness of a flat calm sea and
above white seagulls gliding
on gentle thermals.



We were walking in anticipation

of what we would find,

as suddenly ahead we could see

the Western headland

of Barafundle Bay.

Then as we approached,

in front of us and below the

cut out steps down the cliff's edge.

The view was stunning,

The blue blueness of the sea,

An epic film set?

(continued)

I had never seen such a beautiful scene.
Below us was a white glistening sandy bay,
not a cove but slightly bigger,
you could see the rocks under the sea.
The salty water, crystal clear, coming ashore,
the shoreline edged with shells,
conical in shape and others
wrapped around themselves,
shades of pink and palest milky
coffee and of course mother of pearl,
there were razor shells as well.
The bay flowed eventually into a
Valley of grass and shrub land with
Just one or two tents and a small
Sail ship anchored off the bay;
It needed nothing else, idyllic,
It really was a 'paradise in Wales'.

Bmm © 13.7.2022



Barafundle Bay was discovered by the family on holidaying in West Wales, we often went there as children, it has changed slightly with the rebuild of the retaining walls to the cliff descent to the bay. We had many wonderful hours at this Bay.

THE RECENT FLOODS AT PETERSTON-SUPER-ELY



Floods at Peterston-super-Ely, with the Sportsman's Rest pub submerged up to window level, several cars stranded and someone kayaking downstream where the road should be, made the village the centre of a brief media blitz in January. Dramatic pictures of waist-high water were all over social media and it was featured on BBC national news.

I live in Peterston and concerned family from the Midlands were soon on the phone to see how we were faring in face of the deluge. So were nearer friends from Cardiff, who have visited the flooded Sportsman's with me. Our editor Mario spied my house in the corner of the screen in the BBC coverage and asked me to tell u3a readers all about it.

But the floods were not the same surprise for the people of Peterston. The River Ely, to which the village is super,



is prone to flooding at this point. Floods have been a regular – though not frequent – part of Peterston life for all of the almost-40 years I've lived here. Every couple of years the river floods and makes a lake from the river across the road into a field and the pub.

The pub is always victim to the flooding and suffers enormous disruption. This is the side of the river I live. But I am usually able to drive out towards Cardiff – as I did this time – al-

though sometimes there can be flooded dips in the road further along. The greater hazard for Peterston people is when the road on the other side of the river floods, too. As it did this time.

That road leads to Wyndham Park – and is the only way in and out for the many people living there. So, they are marooned! When only my side is flooded, they can get out in the opposite direction, through the lanes up to the A48. Anticipating this, the higher road on my side was lined with Wyndham Park cars ready for getting to work, as it was

still possible to walk out over the footbridge – even if it meant wearing wellies!

My daughter and her husband live on the other side of the river. The floods meant I couldn't make it to them for supper on the Saturday but I did on the Sunday when the river had gone back to its proper place. Floods vary in length and disruption and this was among the worst. So, nice it generated such concern and coverage. But no doubt it will happen again ...

Jean Silvan Evans



Marilyn Guest

Sea horse

My head is shaped like a horse
I move slowly and clumsily through
the seaweed; I have a tail
and I do have a small pair of fins
and gills to filter air.



If I were your pet then I would recognise you and
I would hold onto your fingers by coiling my tail
gently around them; but in the wild I would
probably swim away and hopefully I would
not be pursued.

I am gentle and I pair for life, which if I am
tiny I may live a year, and if I am larger I may
live 3 to 5 years reproducing once a year;
being the male I would carry the fertilised eggs
until they hatch.



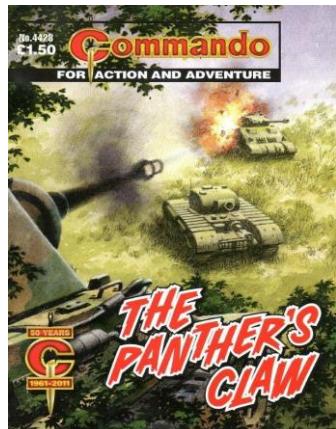
During and prior to the pregnancy of the female,
I would dance with her every morning,
as we hold each others tail; and as your pet
I would dance to greet you each morning and
live among the seaweed.

If I were the smallest Seahorse
then I would only be 14mm in size;
my body armour is made of sturdy
platelets; and I enjoy hitching a ride
to compensate for being slow and clumsy.

Just How Many Ways Are There to Spell, Aargh!? The first piece of writing I ever sold was a Commando script to DC Thomson, the Dundee-based publishers who, amongst other publications, also produce The Beano and The People's Friend. I had sent several potential script outlines (this was before email submissions had become the norm) all of which had been rejected. The then editor, George M. Low increasingly took the trouble to give me some constructive feedback. This was a sure sign that my ideas were getting closer to what they were looking for. Many of my earlier rejections had been because the basic idea had been done too often already, the curse of reading comics as a boy, and because I had put action above character. George Low explained that what they were looking for was an interpersonal conflict between characters on the same side. The story that finally got accepted was inspired by a dream. It's quite a while ago now, but I recall dreaming of a, somewhat confusing, scene of a raid by armed mercenaries intent on an assassination. This became the starting point for my story, the interpersonal conflict being provided by the mistrust between a British special forces officer and an American FDA agent on the hunt for a ruthless gang of drug smugglers based somewhere in the Caribbean. In August of 1998, I posted my completed script which I entitled 'Team Players'. On the 1st of September 2001, it was finally published as Commando: No. 3466 and titled Pete's Private War. My main character had started off being called Ken, but at some point, I started writing his name as Pete. I'm sure there is some Freudian reason for that, but I was very careful to avoid that mistake in the future and the publishers seemed to cope with the anomaly. So now I felt I had cracked it, I sent off my next idea, which was promptly rejected. Several further attempts were rejected and I began to think that maybe writing Commando scripts wasn't really for me after all. I'm not sure where the next idea that got published came from. The story itself had its roots in the Imperial British Afghan wars of the Victorian era, though it was set in North Africa during World War 2. A young British officer is humiliated when a senior officer, the regi-

mental historian, reveals to him in front of his colleagues that an ancestor of his he had always thought of as a hero was far from that. Circumstances then force the officer to re-enact what he always believed his ancestor had achieved. Perhaps the story that is most significant to me was the one published on September

1st, 2011, **The Panther's Claw.** This concerned the adventures of a young corporal of Royal Engineers commanding a Churchill AVRE tank armed with a petard mortar. These were intended to 'knock out' German concrete defensive positions, but other duties these Churchills performed included laying





bridges over anti-tank ditches or dropping Fascines into them under fire. The character was inspired by **my father** who was a commander of such a tank. His trade in the RE was that of an electrician and it was in relation to this that one of his anecdotes found its way into the script. All the action elements of the story were made up and he rarely touched on those nor would I want to include them. I learnt a great deal about writing from Com-mando stories, the importance of character and how that drives conflict between people, and how to develop stories based on the ambitions and de-



sires of the characters in the story. I also learnt that writing a graphic novel is very hard work. You have to describe the picture that the artist will draw, write any captions needed to explain what is happening and have dialogue that will be spoken in the speech bubbles. The captions and callouts (bubbles) can't be too wordy because of the limited space. For a Comanmdo graphic novel there are around 135

The speech bubbles you see in comics and graphic novels pictures to describe and

populate with captions and dialogue. An important point to realise is that the script-writer cannot rely on the artist reading the captions and dialogue to understand what the picture needs to convey. This is because the artist employed to illustrate the story is often based abroad and is not an English speaker. Therefore they have to pay for the script to be translated into their mother tongue and they save money by only paying for the picture descriptions to be translated. Even this can be fraught with difficulties depending on the words used by the writer. English can be a very ambiguous language and the subtle difference and conventions between British and American English can cause problems, especially as many of the artists are based in South America. The second editor of Commando I worked with, Calum Laird, illustrated this with a couple of examples. The first was when a writer stated that a group of soldiers were exploring a cave using torches. The artwork came back showing the soldiers holding flaming torches. When I had some soldiers examine the contents of their Sherman Tank's fuel tank I made sure I described them holding a flashlight! The second was even more bizarre. A writer described how a group of Chindits were travelling through the jungle with their mule train. The picture that came back showed a railway train with flatbed wagons, each of which had a mule standing on it! And finally, anyone who has ever read a war comic will realise that there is a tradition, if not a convention, that whenever a character is killed or injured he usually expresses his discomfort in a cry of some sort. **This is usually in the form of, 'Aargh!' but it can be 'Urgh!' or numerous variations thereof.** Considering the number of casualties in a Typical Commando story there is quite a lot of pressure to come up with variations. After all, no two people ever scream the same way.

The End.



Marilyn Guest

WHAT IS THE u3a?

Founded in 1982 the u3a is a UK-wide movement which brings together people in their 'third age' to develop their interests and continue their learning in a friendly and informal environment. If you're wondering what we mean by the third age - it is a time after you have finished working full-time or raising your family and have time to pursue your interests or just try something new. Members explore new ideas, skills and activities together. There are over a thousand u3as - of which Cardiff is one - with nearly 400,000 members worldwide.

Here is a helpful telephone number that some potential U3A members may wish to use as an alternative to emailing or using the website. Standard call charges apply.

07544 289434

Please leave a name and contact number and your call will be returned.

The Cardiff u3a website can be found at

<https://cardiffu3a.org/>

Mail can be sent to

City URC Church, Windsor Place, Cardiff CF10