



## COMMITTEE NEWS

Since our last Newsletter in December we have held a very successful Christmas Party with Entertainment and Dancing. Thank you to all who brought plates of Savouries. We had plenty of food.

We have also just organised an AGM (details of this elsewhere in this newsletter). We hope to see you all there.

The Committee is now working on events for this year. The first of which will be in May and be a celebration for the coronation of King Charles 111. Further details will be advised to you when they have been finalised.

There is always room for more members on the Committee and also for Members who would like to help with certain projects e.g. Newsletter, Facebook, Website, Recruitment of Members, etc. Any Member can help with any of the projects we work on without becoming a member of the Committee. If you have an interest in any area of Caldicot and District u3a that you would like to help with please talk to one of the Committee or your Convenor.

Here's to another successful year for Caldicot and District u3a.

**Your Committee**

## A.G.M. THURSDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 10.00.A.M. CALDICOT METHODIST CHURCH

If you have not completed your ballot form for the above you can still do so at the AGM meeting. If you have completed your ballot thank you but please still attend the meeting.

We will be entertained by Lorna Pearson a talented comedienne and Poet Pedlar. She has just finished a successful run at the Dolman Theatre in Newport and currently rehearsing for Dylan Thomas' "Under Milkwood".

After her performance Tea/Coffee and Biscuits will be served free of charge in the Coffee Room.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORMS

Can every member please complete a Membership Application Form and return either to your Convenor or a member of the Committee. We have not checked our records since the Covid Pandemic and it is important that we have up-to-date information on each Member in order to keep in touch with you.

**Thank You**

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

The Membership Subscription of £10 is due on 1<sup>st</sup> April and should be paid by 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2023. Please give either to your Convenor or a Member of the Committee. If you are a member of another u3a then your Membership fee will be £5,

## Chairs Report for March 2023.

Time flies and in a very short time Caldicot u3a will have completed another year in its long history.

Looking back over my previous Chairs Reports it is clear that this has been a year of gradual progress and consolidation. I have reported that our interest groups are in the main thriving and that has been due to the hard work and commitment of our Convenors and Treasurers. Guest Speakers, bus trips and holidays have been organized and members have told us that they have enjoyed them. Also the committee organised events at the Methodist Church and Choir Hall were free of charge and showcased the skills of our Drama, Ukulele and Rock Roll and Stroll dance groups. Similarly our new monthly Coffee Morning has been a great initiative not only financially, but from the fact that members and potential members have been able to meet and chat together over a cuppa and biscuit.

I recall that following the horrendous period of lockdown this all seemed very uncertain and we did not know what our future and membership would be. Our aims at the time were moderate and focussed upon at least giving our members value for money and I believe that aim has been achieved and more especially for £5 per year in 2021/22.

The upcoming AGM and proposals therein offer us the opportunity to move forward as a committee and organization. So please complete the appropriate paperwork and the

membership form. I say this because in doing so you will almost certainly ensure that we have a u3a in 2023/24 and beyond. It also means that if we retain our 400 members we can plan new initiatives for our members and in getting new members.

I stand down from the position of Chair not sadly, but with a sense of optimism about the future. This u3a has an experienced committee, hardworking convenors & treasurers and very good relationships with our venue providers. So please support us into a future where I think our u3a will be needed more than ever.

Many thanks to you all for your support.

**Rob Harry**



## HOME COMFORTS

*Story by Robert Taylor-Heard*

'Come on Grandad, let's go camping.'  
My seven year old grandson's idea of camping is either a bivouac on Mount Everest or sleeping under a canopy of gigantic leaves cut from some exotic plant in the South American rain forest. I must confess, at sixty seven, my idea of camping is a luxury caravan in the Yorkshire Dales. But --- my loveable little one persuaded me. We settled for a quiet night in a tent on on my pristine lawn.

Pristine --- that's a word I'll not be able to use again to describe my lawn. While

Desmond slept soundly, I tossed and turned trying to get comfortable. Wriggling out of my sleeping bag, I peeled back the ground sheet and cut a divot out of the grass to

accommodate my arthritic hip, then another for my elbow and yet another again for my ankle. By the time I had settled down, my precious lawn looked more like a miniature

putting green. At about five a.m. I was just dropping off to sleep when young Desmond

woke up. Shaking me violently, he said.

'Come on Grandad, lets cook some eggs and bacon on a camp fire.' Camp fire?--- on my lawn? I nearly died just thinking about it. 'Listen sonny,' I said, already planning my getaway, 'let's go inside, I'll cook you some on the gas stove.'

'That's no fun Grandad.'

Before I could stop him, the little devil was outside and making a circle with the stones

from my rockery. In sheer panic, I dived out of the tent wearing just my pyjama bottoms.

Now I must tell you, even in mid July--- at five o'clock in the morning it's bloody cold.

It's no fun either when your bare foot hits the dewy grass, and it's even worse still when

there's a big fat slug in it.

'Come on Grandad, let's have a shower with the garden hose.'

The little sod, he's turned the tap full on. The hose leaped into life. Rearing up its head, it waived around in the air like a demented cobra spraying everything in sight.

Cold, wet and shivering I managed to escape from my imbecile tormentor and staggered into the house. I was greeted by the sound and smell of eggs and bacon sizzling in the pan.

There in the kitchen, was the most beautiful woman in the world.

Her dark grey eyes looked lovingly at me as they drooped over her pasty white cheeks, the circular marks of the cucumber rings still visible around their sockets.

Her silver hair radiated the morning light, contrasting the multi-coloured curlers, that cascaded down her head like miniature beer barrels.

As she smiled at me I was struck by the sheer beauty of her smooth, toothless gums.

Her pink candlewick dressing gown, open slightly at the top exposing her crinkly,

brown freckled cleavage, hung grotesquely down to her calves, leaving a few inches of tantalising varicose flesh above her ankles, setting my senses reeling.

Her size nine feet were resplendent in rolled down black stockings that gently caressed

the nylon fur of her threadbare slippers, creating little sparks, like tiny traffic lights on a road map of purple veins.

Ah me---- the joys of home comforts.

Desmond is not here now --- I buried the buggger under the lawn --- Anyone want a tent?

## HISTORY GROUP

The October meeting of the History Group had a talk from Peter Strong on 'Wentwood Reservoir – Saviour or Muddle Puddle?'

From the beginning of life on Earth, plants and animals have depended on a supply of water for survival. As the numbers of creatures increases, so the demand for water increases. This appetite for 'Adam's ale' is no less true of Newport.

In 1800, the population of Newport was about 1,000; people collected water from wherever they could – rainwater, streams, rivers, lakes, pools, and wells. However some of these sources were intermittent, especially in a dry season. People could wait hours in a queue of 'water carriers'; such people, usually servants, could spend hours each day fetching enough water for the needs of the household. It is estimated that in the mid nineteenth century, the average family used about twelve gallons a day. Residents who could not carry their own water would rely on 'watermen' who roamed the streets with a cart filled with containers of water. Such was the value of water that none was thrown away before it had been used several times, toilet purposes and washing of clothes being the last.

By the 1840s, the population had risen to 14,000, meaning that provision of a reliable water supply was becoming more urgent. However, no-one wanted to pay for it, even though a majority wanted change.

By 1893, plans were prepared for a reservoir in Wentwood containing 300 million gallons, and preparations began. The principles seemed quite straightforward, but within a year problems emerged, namely a severe leak.

Initially the whole project was abandoned, with the senior engineering staff tendering their resignation. Eventually, Newport Council took over the scheme, arguing that the time and money already spent should not be wasted; the rocks underneath the site were mostly fissured limestone, a possible reason for the leak. The planned reservoir was expanded and deepened, with concrete and clay laid to provide a seal.

The extent of the work certainly impressed a visiting reporter from the *South Wales Argus*, who wrote, "It is impossible to note the lines of the railway, the busy locomotives, the steam cranes, the stationary engines of various kinds, the driving, pumping and also compressed machinery, and the busy scene on the spot whereby the concrete mixer and attendant sprites are at work, a vast scheme is being pressed forward."

The reservoir lake was completed, and pipes laid to transport the water to Newport. Wentwood Reservoir was officially opened in 1904 by the mayor, who declared that it would supply Newport's water for 50 years.

**Dave Edwards**





Stragglers walk at the Newport Wetlands

### CARDS SENT

#### **Get Well**

Mr Robert Bennet  
Mrs Gladys Williams

*Best Wishes for a speedy recover*

#### **Sympathy**

Mr Graham Lockley  
Mrs I Graham

*Our thoughts are with you at this time*

#### **80 years**

Mrs Susan Steele  
*Congratulations*

#### **Thinking of you**

Mrs Olive Jeanes  
*Best Wishes*

#### **Retirement**

Mrs Mary Richards  
*All good wishes  
and Happy Retirement*

1. Wife of the ruler of Morocco perhaps
2. Len Goodmans favourite film
3. He was to clever for his own good
4. Stuart Pearce
5. Firebird get airbourne
6. Out on his own on the cricket field
7. Keep going in Pakistan
8. Sweets for my sweet by
9. Miss Asher is a disaster
10. Shard on Fire

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Holiday to Chatsworth House and High Peaks.

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 (4 nights) cost £414 per person

Highlights: Executive Coach Travel  
4 nights, Dinner, Bed and Breakfast at Hollin House Hotel, nr. Macclesfield

Entrance to Chatsworth House and Gardens

Visit to Bakewell famous for its Tart  
Scenic Steam Railway journey on Peaks Railway, explore charming Matlock Bath

Discover the Northern Peaks as you travel over Snake Pass

Visit to historic village of Eyam

If you are interested I will need your deposits £60 when you put your name forward and cheques should be made out to Edwards |Holidays please but sent to me. I am only allocated 6 singles, three of which are already taken.

**Pam Caines,  
Special Events Convenor**

Thank you all for paying your deposits for our trip to Chatsworth House and Peaks on the 24th JULY. Can I please ask that the balances are paid before the end of May. Just a reminder the price is £414pp less your deposit of £60pp leaving a balance of £354 each. Thank you all once again and I look forward to seeing you all on the day.

## DRAMA

I'm pleased to say rehearsals for the Murder Mystery which Drama are putting on at the Recreational Hall Portskewett on the 24th March, are continuing.

If you are unable to purchase tickets, which are £5 each, then you will be able to pay at the door. We are offering an afternoon of entertainment, fun and a quiz. Come along and see if you can solve who the culprits are while you partake of a cuppa and biscuits and cake, which is all included in the price.

The actual show will start at exactly 2pm so please make sure you take your seats before then.

We look forward to seeing you and know you will enjoy an afternoon of fun.

**Cheers Pam Caines**

U3A produces a National Newsletter which is free to every member.

To obtain the Newsletter you need to go to U3A website, click on "News" then double click on Newsletter. Follow the instructions and you will receive the newsletter each month directly to your Email address. This is free and is very informative and interesting..

Any member of Caldicot & District U3a can submit articles to our Newsletter for publication.

So if you would like something published please send to:  
[iesccc46@talktalk.net](mailto:iesccc46@talktalk.net))



## COMPUTER GROUP

We started the New Year on 6<sup>th</sup> with You Tube introduction and examples. 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month is digital image competition good fun, we spoke on the photos that were displayed and pleased that people were a bit critical on how we took the photos, We are not perfect, but we learn by our mistakes.

Another week the subject was TABLETS for those who owned one they were asked to bring their tablet with them as some members were having difficulty with certain work on them, ALL SORTED.

Pastor Jonathon gave a talk on his recent trip to Nsobe Community School in Zambia, a very interesting talk about his 10 days there he visited the very poor area and showed us how they lived and (worked) though they are poor they were happy and always singing, Jonathon showed us how many young children had Laptops (all donated). They are being taught by the teachers and are keen to learn. Well done to those who donated

the laptops. We spoke about the use of stylus' for touch screens and costs, cheap and expensive (or use a pencil with foil on the end if you are poor, We discussed the fibre network cables being installed in the area and the difference it will make. Ann Taylor Heard held a session with some of our members who have Apple I Pads.

We continue to learn more and more of the life of computers and we welcome all to join us.

**Best Wishes J M**  
Happy Easter

## MUSIC APPRECIATION

The first "at home" meeting of the group took place on 25th January. A total of six were present and we enjoyed catching up on news and exchanged Christmas/New year experiences, followed by discussion on what we want to do in the future with the flexibility that meeting at home provides. There was not much music at this meeting but nevertheless everyone had a good afternoon. It was decided to continue with 2.00 - 4.00 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month at present. We have plenty of room for any new members who would like to join us. If you are interested, please give me a ring on 01291 794034 or email me at [ecn-jan@hotmail.com](mailto:ecn-jan@hotmail.com)





## GARDENING GROUP

I expect many of you are enjoying the first signs of Spring with the arrival of Snowdrops, Crocus, Helibores and looking forward to the many Narcissi, Tulips and Iris springing into life in the following months. I know I am.. Springtime, when everything in the garden wakes up and breaks out gradually in colour. Something to look forward to as we come to the end of our indoor u3a Gardening Meetings.

Thursday, 9th March 2023  
Speaker - Marc Carlon "Pollinators"

Thursday, 13th April 2023  
Speaker - Steven Morgan, Head Gardener of Tredegar House

Thursday, 12th October 2023  
indoor meetings resume.

We look forward to the following Gardening Group Trips:-

Thursday, 23rd February 2023  
Colesbourne Garden for the Snowdrops

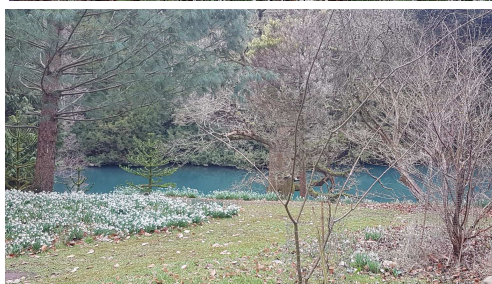
Thursday, 11th May 2023  
The Botanical Garden of Wales, Carmarthenshire.

Thursday, 13th July 2023  
Tyntesfield House and Gardens

Happy Gardening, **Pauline Marx**

Our visit to Colesbourne Gardens  
near

Cheltenham on 23rd February.  
We all enjoyed a very interesting tour to see the many varieties of Snowdrops.



**Have you spotted the Mouse**

**COFFEE MORNINGS START AGAIN ON THE 4TH MARCH**

**The Methodist Church Hall 10-12**

## SHORT MAT BOWLS

Monmouthshire Short Mat Bowls league tournament restarted in November 2022 after a break of two years. Our first match in November was postponed due to COVID! but eventually after some rescheduling we got going and have now played 8 matches - another 6 to go. The league season ends at the beginning of June, when the results will be published.

Whilst all this is going on the Monmouthshire Triples will be played in March over two Saturdays at various venues, none of which unfortunately have space for spectators.

Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2023

Home to Magor – 7.00 p.m. start

Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2023

Away to Mathern – 7.00 p.m. start

Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2023

Home to Caerwent -c7.00 p.m. start

Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2023

Away to Devauden – 7.00 p.m. start

Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2023

Home to Usk – 7.00 p.m. start

Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2023

Away to Little Mill – 7.30 p.m. start

(Please note when home and away matches fall on a Friday there will be no group meeting)

**Helen Wormald**

Short Mat Bowls Convenor

1. The African Queen
2. The Magnificent Seven
3. The man who new to much
4. Psycho
5. The flight of the phoenix
6. The third man
7. Carry on up the Ktyber
8. The Searchers
9. Calamity Jane
10. The Towering Inferno

## Time has passed and I have grown

When I was young and I was free  
I used to wonder what I would be  
As time has passed and I have  
learned

That what I wanted I had to earn  
I've had a life good of times and bad  
All experience of which I am glad  
I've learned that things don't come  
with ease

Sometimes there are things that are  
just a tease

I look back with fondness of times  
that have passed.

And I know now, sometimes things  
don't last

People you meet come and go  
Family changes, families grow  
Children grow up and leave the nest  
The cycle goes on, hopefully for the  
best.

They also learn the lessons that I  
have learned

And realise some things have to be  
earned

As time changes and old ways re-  
cede

Modernisation is the thing that  
pleases

I now take a step back, take a rest

Let the young ones take over.

I think that's the best.

**Betty Waite**

## HANDICRAFT

The Handicraft Group has been meeting regularly on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month in the Methodist Church Hall, Caldicot from 10a.m-12.00 noon. The group does a variety of crafts and we are always willing to try new things which may have been suggested by the members.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> December, the last meeting of 2022, was mince pies

### *Handicraft cont*

and coffee and a "Secret Santa " when everyone attending brought a handmade gift or a gift costing no more than £5.00, we had a good laugh and lots of excitement waiting to find out which present we had received!!

We started back after Christmas on the 4<sup>th</sup> January, ready to go with several projects in mind, one being to make bonnets etc for premature babies, and we hope to have a lady come to talk to us about a Prem baby unit and charities involved.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 we held a belated New Year lunch in 'Papi's' Restaurant in Caldicot, which we all enjoyed, so much so, that no one took any photos !! Too busy chatting!! Which we're all really good at!!  
Jill Greenhalgh (Convenor)



### **My Psychiatrist told me to make more friends. So I did**



## ACTIVITY GROUPS

### **A Little bit of Welsh**

Convenors: Ann Holloway 07443 224894,  
Lindy Calvin Thomas 07784 634567,  
Alt Wed 10.30-11.30, Ladybird Craft Centre

### **Art**

Convenor: Mary Richards 01291 329236  
Wed 1.30-4pm Portskewett Rec Hall

### **Bridge**

Face to face every Mon. 2-4pm,  
Caldicot Library.

### **Computing**

Convenor: John Mills 01291 420045  
Fri 9.30-12.30 Bethany Baptist Church

### **Drama**

Convenors: Pam Caines,  
Dianne Payne 01291 431864.  
Fri 2-4pm Portskewett Rec.Hall

### **Gardening**

Convenor: Pauline Marx 07544 671870  
2.15 pm. 2nd Thursday of the month  
Caldicot Methodist Church Hall

### **Handicraft**

Convenor: Jill Greenhaigh  
01633 548968 1st & 3rd Wed 10-12pm  
Caldicot Methodist Church Hall.

### **History**

Convenor: Dave Edwards 01291 422303  
3rd Wed in month, 2.00pm - 4.00pm Council  
Day Centre

### **Music Appreciation**

Convenors: Jan Potter 01291 794034,  
Adrian Dallow 01291 422925  
4th Wed of month 2 - 4pm  
Home of Jan Potter

### **Rock Roll Stroll**

Convenor: Lynne Howells 01291 423395.  
alternate Thurs 8pm St Marys Church Hall

### **Science & Natural History**

Not meeting at the moment

### **Scrabble**

Convenor: Lyn Mitchell 01291 421567.  
2 - 4, 2nd & 4th Fri of month, Bethany Baptist  
Church Hall

### **Short Mat Bowls**

Convenor: Helen Wormald 01291 423765  
Wed 2-4 & Fri 7-9, Scout Hall.

### **Spanish**

Convenor: Julian Wood 01291 421095.  
Mon 10.45-12. Various venues.

### **Special Events**

Convenor: Pam Caines,  
01291 420750. Various Short Holidays.

### **Table Tennis**

Convenor: Les Mitchell 07367 064322  
Mon 2-4 Scout Hall.

### **Ukulele**

Convenor: Chris Spiller 01291 424694  
Tue 2-4, Portskewett Recreation Hall

### **Walking Groups**

Every Tuesdays, am.  
Various Locations & Starting Points

### **Stragglers, 3-4 mls**

Convenor: Brian Hopkins 01291 422387

### **Amblers,4-5mls**

Convenor: Jenny & Stan Griffiths  
01633 880578

### **Strollers, 4.5-6mls**

Convenor: Bill Bewg 01633 880165.

### **Striders 5-7mls**

Convenor: Richard Harding 01291 420305