

Spring Newsletter

May 2023

u3a

Much Wenlock
and District



10 Years of Much Wenlock and District u3a

The photos above show members and guests at the anniversary tea party on 26th April celebrating 10 years of Much Wenlock u3a. The origins actually go back a little further than that and we owe a great deal to our founder and first Chairman, the late Alan Cavalier.

Alan had seen that there were successful u3a's in surrounding areas including Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury and booked Priory Hall in the autumn of 2012 to find out whether there was

enough interest in the Wenlock area. This was well attended, with a second meeting in December agreeing to form an executive committee to start the process.

In January 2013 we submitted our application to join the national organisation and held the first recruitment meeting at which 72 members signed up. 33 potential interest groups had been identified and by April we had 22 groups with a group leader, some of which had already held their first meeting.

(Continued on page 2)

Eight of those early groups (Art and Watercolour, Creative Writing, Italian, Play Reading, Political Studies, Ukulele, Walking and Wine Tasting) are still active now and long may they continue.

Membership grew rapidly over the year and by December we had 164 members, reaching 200 in 2017 and 270 in March 2020. There was a slight fall over the Covid lockdown period but we now again have 250 members with nearly 30 activity groups.

Our monthly meetings started in February 2013 and have embraced a very wide range of topics – some close to hand like Ironbridge Gorge and Attingham Park but we've also ventured to the South Pole and, last month, to Everest Base Camp.

u3a is very much a participative organisation and many members have contributed greatly to our success over the years. It's not possible to name everyone but I'd particularly like to thank here some of those we could not have done without.

After Alan Cavalier had served three years as Chair, we were lucky to find two equally able successors in Neil Lloyd and Linda Wallace. Neil told us when he was appointed that his committee meetings would be a little more business-like than Alan's whimsical approach but we soon cured him of this tendency! Linda brought us a wonderfully balanced and unflappable style and steered us very competently through the difficult lockdown period.

For several years our talks have been selected and researched by Jean Buswell who also organises the very successful Kilworth House visits. Jean's connections and intuitive understanding of what makes a good speaker have resulted in a truly excellent programme.

Michael Theobalds and Jo Jackson joined the committee early in 2013. Michael has served for several years as Treasurer and Membership Secretary and leads our Crown Green Bowling group. Jo was our Vice Chair

for many years, selected many of our early speakers and established the very successful Creative Writing group.

Another member of the first committee was Rita Denny. Rita was our Membership Secretary for the first six years. She had a wonderful warmth, sense of humour and *joie de vivre* – any doubts prospective members may have had were soon dispelled by her welcoming smile and gentle encouragement. Very sadly we lost Rita, as one of the very early victims of Covid in 2020, but we'll never forget her.

David Foster has been one of our Vice Chairs for many years, acting also as Groups Co-Ordinator for several of them and has overseen the birth of many groups, including Play Reading and Italian 3, both of which he has led. He's also a talented musician who you may remember playing with wife Lesley at our 2021 special tea.

More recently we have been blessed with two newer and very active officers. Alison Richards has been a very effective and energetic Secretary and database manager. She is set to take over from me as Chair this month and is still one of our youngest members! Glynn Emery has been our Treasurer for the last two years and in his spare time leads the Guitar group and also Ukulele for Beginners and Table Tennis. Glynn has also been active in promoting activities in Broseley, an area from which we are attracting more members and which we are proposing to include in the title of our group if this change is approved at the May AGM.

So we are well established, we have many different activity groups, well attended monthly meetings with excellent speakers and plans to develop further over the coming years. Here's to another successful ten years and beyond!

Robert Toft
Chairman

Groups News

Art Group

Catherine Downes continues to be our "Artistic Director" and since Christmas we've been painting our way through the greengrocers! Apples, onions, mushrooms, peppers, aubergines and grapes have all been tackled in all sorts of ways.

Trying to draw with the non-dominant hand was hard work. We've been using complementary colours and experimenting with different media. Tackling a still life composition as a timed team exercise was a novel approach too.

We've also worked on our own pictures too. New members have been welcomed and a new beginners group has also been set up under the leadership of Lynn Rust. All great fun.

Jo Revell



Bridge for Beginners

According to a letter in the *Daily Telegraph* "Playing the game teaches children about etiquette, patience, arithmetic, probability and statistics" - it's good for adults too!

Linda Davies

Creative Writing

On alternate Fridays, in a member's house, you will find a buzz of chatter and laughter. Excitement levels are rising and the question is on everyone's lips. 'What kind of cake will we have this week?' Boosted by sugar, we are ready to release our creative juices and expose our pieces to the careful, honest, but oh so valuable feedback of the Writing Group.

Almost everyone is involved in writing a novel. We have crime stories, historical narratives, book club fiction and a children's series. We discuss writing techniques and learn from each other's dilemmas around structure, points of view, characterisation and all the other vital components of producing novels we can be proud of. Friendship and support are valuable offshoots of the writing group.

Congratulations to Denise, our flash fiction queen, with many competition successes, and to Jessica whose delightful book was published last month. *Mia is Lost* is aimed at 7- 9 year old readers and tells the tale of a curious kitten who gets lost in the woods. She needs her friends to help her out.



With a membership of 11, we think there is room for a second writing group in Much Wenlock u3a. It could have the same or a different focus; perhaps writing poetry, prose or memoir. If anyone is interested, please let us know and we can offer help with setting it up. You too can have as much fun as we do!

NB. Look out for new books by Jo Jackson and Charlie Garratt. Both are due to be published later this year.

Jo Jackson

Italian Group 3



We meet once a week when possible and we cover the four skills of reading, writing, talking and listening at these sessions. We usually begin with 'Settimana Scorsa' when we listen and discuss events from the previous week. This is very entertaining and useful. We may have a vocabulary exercise. Sometimes we watch an Italian film.

We have a class reader: we have been reading *Otto Giorni Con Montalbano* which is pitched at the intermediate level. Our grammar learning tends to arise from our practical activities so that we have a context to language.

Occasionally people prepare special activities, such as listening and translating Italian songs. We try to vary our activities, we all have a say and we make the sessions 'divertente'.

David Foster

Italian Group 4



Eccoci! Una foto fatto del gruppo quattro di Much Wenlock U3A dopo la nostra seconda settimana alla scuola di lingua a Lucca. Ci divertiamo ma non è facile! Consigliamo questa esperienza a tutti che vogliono migliorare il loro italiano. La città di Lucca è un buon luogo di visitare, e le persone che lavorano alla scuola sono molto simpatiche e amichevole. Chi sa dove saremo l'anno prossimo!! Arrivederci. Hugh, Yvonne e Wendy.

Guitar Group - Oldies Playing Oldies!



Guitar Group, which meets at The Birchmeadow Centre in Broseley on a fortnightly basis, is now in its fifth year and going strong. The group plays a wide selection of mainly pop and folk music, and performs as a group, i.e. playing and singing together.

We have 14 members, one Bass and one Electric guitar player, and the rest are playing acoustic guitars. New acoustic guitar players are welcome, as we can overspill into a second room to form two separate groups when needed.

Throughout the year the group usually performs at a few charity events, and recently we have started to meet at *The Boat* in Jackfield every third Sunday evening of the month for a singalong and social evening. Dust off your guitar and come along and join us, or pop down to *The Boat* for a spot of entertainment. Contact the group leader glynnemery@gmail.com for further information.

Glynn Emery

Play Reading



The Play Reading Group meets at Harley Village Hall twice a month on a Thursday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm, with no meetings in August. Sometimes the first and third Thursdays and sometimes the second and fourth as we have two walkers in the group and so try not to clash with the Walking Group dates.

The plays we read are very varied. Recent ones have included:

School for Scandal – Sheridan, *Barefoot in the Park* - Neil Simon, *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* - Peter Nicholls, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* - Christopher Hampton, *Arcadia* - Tom Stoppard, *Wind in the Willows* - Alan Bennett, *The Tempest* - Shakespeare, *Waiting for Godot* - Samuel

Beckett, *The Misanthrope* - Moliere, *Boeing Boeing* - Marc Camoletti, *The Birthday Party* - Harold Pinter, *Daisy Pulls It Off* - Denise Deegan, *Macbeth* - Shakespeare

We are lucky to have David Foster as a member as he gives us great insight into history, staging and many other aspects, drawing on his experience of teaching, directing and performing drama.

There is currently one vacancy as 10 is our maximum to give everyone a chance to read and give their views. I would be happy to chat with any prospective member. There is a charge for the hall of £12 an hour so we share the cost between us and take it in turns to provide light refreshments.

Christina Gore



Out With Friends Group 1

Our group of friends remains strong and our monthly coffee mornings continue. The mornings provide a relaxed and informal way to meet up and we take turns to host. Our group began in January 2015 and the majority of friends have remained in the group. A couple have left due to house moves and sadly we lost our dear friend Brenda in December of last year. At her funeral we learned about her extraordinary career in the early days of computing and how her social conscience influenced her charity work which was to promote the plight of the under-privileged.

In August a group of friends visited Oak Farm in Ditton Priors. The farm is a charity which works with adults from south Shropshire who have learning difficulties. We were greeted with great warmth and given a fascinating tour of the animals and green houses where the hard work of the workers could be seen. The wonderful fruit, vegetables and flowers that are grown are on sale in the farm's shop. We were treated to an afternoon tea with delicious cakes made by the workers.

Our visit to RAF Cosford was fantastic. How so many fascinating machines and planes are displayed is incredible. We had a ride in the simulated jet over the Welsh Hills and we followed the visit by lunching at the Shrewsbury Arms in Albrighton.

Our planned visit to Bodenham Arboretum had to be called off due to bad weather.

A walk on New Years Day made a good start to 2023 and The Talbot served up a delicious lunch. Each year we celebrate the anniversary of the start of our group by choosing a restaurant. This year our eighth anniversary was celebrated in the Gaskell Arms in Much Wenlock.

Jean Buswell

Spanish Improvers

We are still meeting regularly and working our way through the *Pasos* Spanish course with occasional diversions into newspaper articles and other materials brought back from visits to Spain. Of course it is not all study; eating and drinking is also important!

Christmas was celebrated with a glass of bubbly and tapas, and then again in January with a meal out. Recently a session started with an hour studying direct and indirect object pronouns and ended with birthday cake....

Jane Hague



Table Tennis

A new group, Table Tennis, was formed last year. The group meets most Thursdays at the Broseley Social Club (Bank House, High Street, Broseley, TF12 5EZ) at 4pm.



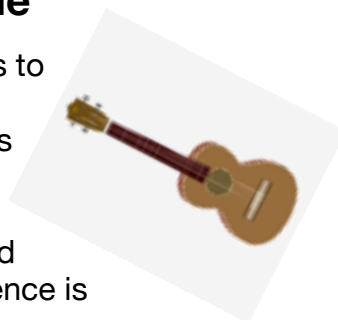
It is proving difficult to keep this group going as there is only one table and and it can be difficult to match opponents across a range of standards. At the moment there are two regular attendees.

If you would like to give it a go then please contact the group leader, Glynn Emery, on glynnemery@gmail.com

Glynn Emery

Beginners Ukulele

Ukulele group continues to meet in Broseley every Monday morning. This is a small group (3 or 4), which is aimed at complete beginners, and no prior musical experience is necessary.



There is of course the opportunity of moving on to the main Much Wenlock u3a ukulele group, Uke3a, or to join many of the ukulele clubs in the area, after learning the basics

Playing the ukulele is great fun and it's relatively easy to learn. Go on, give it a go.

Contact glynnemery@gmail.com for further information.

Glynn Emery

Walking Group

Here is a recent photograph taken on our last walk from Holdgate Church to Stanton Long on to Shipton Hall and then Wilderhope Manor returning to Holdgate Church. The photograph illustrates the popularity of the walking group which, after ten years, is regularly attracting new members, so much so, that 22 members joined us on this Spring walk. We may even have to temporarily start a waiting list.



The success of the group is entirely due to the volunteer walk leaders who have led over 200 interesting walks since the group's inception in February 2013 only interrupted by the pandemic. We are all looking forward to the next 10 years!

Bob van Mook

Uke3A

The Uke3A ukulele group is now healthier than ever with some twenty-three members. This is larger than before the pandemic. Some people have joined after completing the beginner's ukulele sessions run by Glynn Emery. His sessions give them a good foundation to start with us or any of the many local uke groups around. Other, more experienced players have seen our pages on the u3a web site and contacted us directly.



The Priory Hall has become our permanent location for the weekly group meetings. This means, even though the group is large, we can take additional members. Yes, it can be difficult to hear each other when twenty people do turn up, but we still intend to keep the group open to newcomers.

We're not doing as many gigs as we used to pre-COVID. I think this is because our regulars are mostly at places where people are classified as "vulnerable", and many do not seem to have the confidence to return to previous levels of outside entertainment for their residents. Even so, we managed four gigs over the last year:

We did two sessions in the town square on the u3a day last September, alternating with the u3a Guitar group. I'm glad to say we were blessed with both good weather and an audience.

We performed at the Corn Exchange just prior to the Christmas lights switch on in November and got a good audience there as well. We were somewhat surprised, as the High Street was deserted when we were setting up, but people just appeared from nowhere when we started playing.

The Much Wenlock Christmas Fayre is now fully back as a major event in the town, and we played our usual half-hour slot. We're already booked for next year!

After a gap of two years, the Hospice Support Group fundraising event took place last November. It's a ukulele/quiz/supper evening and we try and encourage audience participation by getting them to join in with the choruses and attempting to play the kazoo. This is an important event for us, as people are actually paying money for their evening. We make sure we are well rehearsed for the event. This year some of our newer members joined the "old hands" on stage, which was good to see. Of course, the meal was excellent, and this time was a fish & chip supper with home-made puddings. The event was a sell-out and raised just over a thousand pounds.

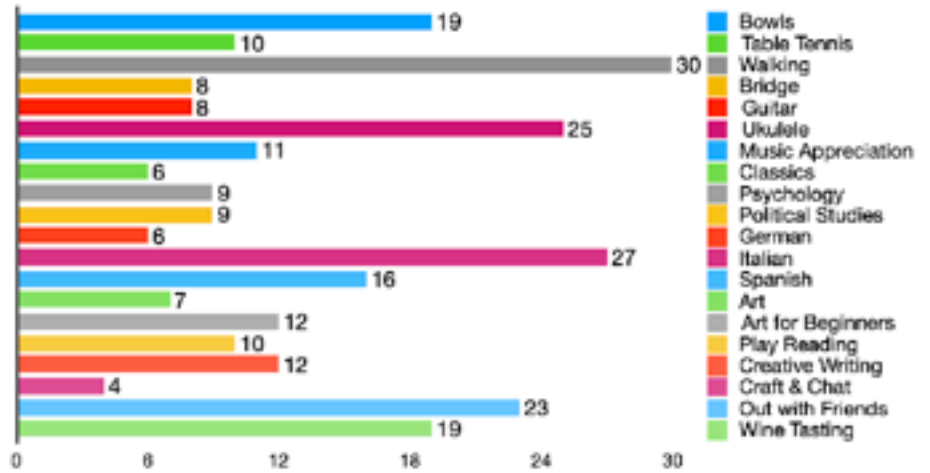
The Wednesday sessions are very informal, so if there are any uke players out there that fancy coming along, please just turn up at half-past two at the Priory Hall on Wednesdays (except on the second Wednesday of each month when there is a u3a monthly talk).

Neil Lloyd

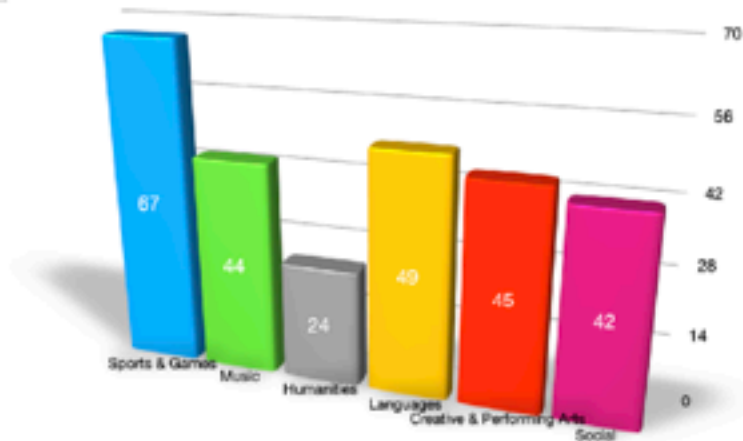
Participation in Activity Groups - Much Wenlock & District u3a April, 2023

Source: Beacon u3a System

Bowls	19
Table Tennis	10
Walking	30
Bridge	8
Guitar	8
Ukulele	25
Music Appreciation	11
Classics	6
Psychology	9
Political Studies	9
German	6
Italian	27
Spanish	16
Art	7
Art for Beginners	12
Play Reading	10
Creative Writing	12
Craft & Chat	4
Out with Friends	23
Wine Tasting	19



Faculty Total	
Sports & Games	67
Music	44
Humanities	24
Languages	49
Creative & Performing Arts	45
Social	42



Network News

Much Wenlock and District u3a is part of the Shropshire Area Network, a grouping of u3a's in Shropshire and Wolverhampton which meets to discuss items of common interest and to organise activities.

Glynis Nicholls from Wem u3a is now the Chair of the Network, having replaced the late Peter Traves who served as Chair for three years and who sadly died last summer. Sue Blundell from

Wellington u3a is the Vice Chair. Much Wenlock u3a's representative on the network is now Glynn Emery, our Treasurer, replacing Robert Toft who has been network representative since the start of our u3a.

The network is planning to hold an event later in the year for committee members across the area with the aims of raising the profile of the Network, sharing good practice and ideas and encouraging social interaction.



Kilworth House Theatre

Kilworth House Theatre offers the best of London's theatreland in the heart of rural south Leicestershire. It is situated in a beautifully wooded glade close to a lake, amidst the 38 acre estate of Kilworth House Hotel. The architecture of the theatre is stunning with two soaring sail-like canopies protecting both the stage and the auditorium from the elements.

The theatre has long been nationally recognised as one of the foremost open-air theatres in the UK, both for the standard of its productions and the quality of its facilities.

There is a special aura about an open-air theatre on a warm summer evening and this is the experience our u3a members have enjoyed

for a number of years. A coach has taken us from Much Wenlock during the afternoon, arriving at Kilworth in time either to dine in the hotel's beautiful Orangery Restaurant or picnic in the spacious grounds.

Later we have crossed the bridge twinkling with lights to find our seats in the spacious auditorium. The beautiful singing, amazing dancing and gymnastic performances have made the productions magical.

All have been multi-award winning shows and have included *South Pacific*, *Carousel*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Singing in the Rain* and many more. This year we will board our coach to see *Hair Spray*. I am sure the experience will be as magical as ever.

Jean Buswell

Meet a Committee Member

This time it's the turn of Robert Toft –
Chairman 2022/23



1. *What's your connection with this area?* My wife Cherril and I moved here in 2009. We had previously lived in London and Wakefield and took the opportunity after my early retirement to move to an area of the country we both really liked.
2. *What did you do before you retired?* I was a civil servant, working mainly on research and analysis in various Government Departments and then worked for Sheffield City Council.
3. *How did you first hear about the u3a and what attracted you to it?* I had known about it for many years but only realised that each local group was fully independent when I came to the meeting which agreed that a u3a should be set up in the Wenlock area. I was particularly attracted by the informality and the opportunity to learn in a friendly environment.
4. *Are you in any interest group(s)? Which one(s) and can you tell us something about it?* Yes – I am in the Psychology, Wine Tasting and Music Appreciation groups. Psychology is a new group where members present topics such as memory, personality and cognition. I've led the Wine Tasting group since it began and we've had many enjoyable evenings travelling the world of wine. In Music Appreciation, members take it in turn to present musical choices (on CDs or You Tube videos) on a theme of their choice.
5. *Are there any interest groups which you wish we had?* Yes – it would be good to re-establish the History

group and perhaps have more groups offering gentle physical activities.

6. *Do you have any unfulfilled ambitions?* I would like to be able to cook better and to do more writing.
7. *What do you do outside the u3a?* I read a lot and have been active in local activities in Much Wenlock including editing the Wenlock Herald and serving on the Town Council.
8. *Can you tell us an interesting fact about yourself that we might not know?* I'm a member of the Turnover Club! (I was born in Stoke-on-Trent aka The Potteries and can't resist turning over items of crockery to see if they were made there).
9. *What have been the highlights of your time in our u3a?* Undoubtedly, meeting and working with all the many wonderful people who have served on committees and taken part in groups.
10. *If you had a magic wand, what would you change about our u3a?* Not a lot really but it would be nice to see more people coming forward to lead activities and getting involved in the running of the group.

How Your Subscription is Used

And now for something really interesting - a quick look at our accounts! The committee thought it worthwhile providing a summary of our annual accounts, so here we go - don't go to sleep just yet.

This is a typical year, though the numbers are generally based on our 2023 budget:

Annual Income

Our income, with the exception of £20/£30 from visitors to our monthly talks, is entirely based on our membership subscriptions.

Our 250 members, allowing for single, joint and associate members, provides an annual income of approximately **£3,500**.

Annual Expenditure

Our expenditure falls into 3 main categories:

Payments to u3a UK £2000

For each member we make payments to the national body, covering:

General membership £4
covering head office costs, marketing, insurance, support services etc

TAM magazine £3.60
the annual subscription to Third Age Matters magazine

Beacon licence £1
licence to use a system that allows us to manage our membership, prepare the finances and maintain the website

Monthly Talks £800

This covers our payment to speakers and the Priory Hall booking fee: though many speakers do donate their fee to charity

Discretionary spend £700

Well, there's not a great lot left for the committee to ponder over. Typically, our remaining spend will cover new group support, local marketing, group dinner, general expenses, annual copyright subscription etc

Please note that full details of our annual budget and actual annual finances are copied to our web site.

*Glynn Emery
Treasurer*

National u3a News

New Regional Trustee

The West Midlands region of u3a has a new Regional Trustee following elections in March. Jean Jackson from Lichfield u3a is the new Trustee and you can read more information about her elsewhere in this newsletter. Her election allows Allan Walmsley, the former Regional Trustee, to concentrate on his role as the National Vice Chair.

Governance

The Third Age Trust (the u3a national body) is currently looking at ways of improving the way it is governed. Currently it has a single Board consenting of the 12 Regional Trustees and National Officers and is responsible for all matters including support, policy and legal issues. It is proposed that two bodies should be created - a Council which would be the representative voice of the membership with a focus on organisational, developmental and communication issues and a smaller Board with specific skills focused on legal and compliance issues. A pilot Council has been formed to explore whether this is a practical way forward.

Subject Advisers

There is a network of over 70 u3a national subject advisers, whose role is to provide subject advice on both the setting up of a group in their particular speciality and the sustainability and development of existing groups. Advisers may provide groups with new ideas, resources or a different approach and some can provide connections and networking opportunities with other groups of similar interests.

They cover a wide range of subjects from American Archaeology to Yoga, with a real mix of academic, practical and leisure activities in between. A list of subject advisers and their contact details can be found in each issue of Third Age Matters and further details can be found on the Subject Advice page of the national website

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects>



New Trustee for u3a West Midlands – Jean Jackson

As you may know, in April I became the new Trustee for the West Midlands, following Allan Walmsley, who's become Vice Chair of the organisation. For the first time in ages, we had several people from the Region interested in the post and I am grateful to those who put their trust in me.

I'm also a Trustee of the International Longevity Centre, and a former Trustee of a Multi-Academy Trust, so I have an idea of what to expect. I've been involved with u3a ever since I retired, at national, regional and local level – for Lichfield u3a, near where I live in Alrewas. I'm still a member of Art groups and am struggling to learn German. Most recently I've been part of the national team who developed a proposal for the u3a's digital strategy, which is something that I think will become vitally important to us all, in the future.

I'm an ex-Chartered Marketer and worked in technology – IT and green tech – for over 40 years. I was one of

IBM's first-ever female salespersons. Over lockdown, I had two frozen shoulders at the same time, which was incredibly disabling: I couldn't get a coat on, so couldn't go out easily, couldn't drive easily or carry anything much ...but online I met all kinds of people – some disabled, with autism, people who had difficulty hearing and seeing – who were helped immensely by being able to interact online. That's why I think a good online presence is important for u3a members, especially as we all get older.

We can manage it – who'd have foreseen "Zoom" being used so much, so many homes having a smart speaker/virtual assistant and so many people having mobile phones? In 20 years' time, we'll be accustomed to using technology – and through it, we might retain our membership of u3a and its friendships as we grow less able to attend in person.

What can your Trustee do for you?

Please contact me with queries about u3a. I may not know the answer but I should know how to find out. I will make sure that I stay in touch with all Chairs and am reviving Allan Walmsley's idea of the "Friday Fireside" – I'll be available online monthly on an ad hoc basis on Friday afternoon, to talk to any u3a Chair.

AND If you're interested in a view of **what life may be like in the future**, please sign up for my "Future Lives" Zoom talk, **2pm on Tuesday 30 May**: click on the link for details and book a place! It's not going to be too serious or technical.

I hope to see you there: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/our-impact/future-lives#events>

Jean Jackson, Regional Trustee, u3a West Midlands

Email: jean.jackson@u3a.org.uk;
Mobile: 07310 183428

Writing for Gold



Did you know that literature featured in the modern Olympic Games from 1912 to 1948? Not only that, but that the Wenlock Olympian Games has included a Creative Writing competition for the last three years?

During lockdown in 2020, there was talk of what could be done in the absence of the sporting Games to keep the Olympic spirit alive. The Wenlock Olympian Society approached the local u3a Creative Writing Group 'Writers on The Edge' and the 2020 Flash Fiction Competition was born.

All-comers over 16 years of age were invited to submit short stories of less than 1000 words on one (or more) of three themes: "Winning", "Five Rings" and "Gold is Only a Colour". Cash prizes were on offer but, perhaps more importantly, a treasured Wenlock Olympian Society medal. The u3a Creative Writing group promoted the contest, in this country and abroad, and organised a panel of readers to whittle the seventy-two entries down to a long-list. From this, three of the group selected a short-list. The gold, silver and bronze positions were judged by the Sunday Times best-selling crime author, Sharon Bolton <https://www.sharonbolton.com/sharon-bolton> .

At the time, Mac Bardsley was Chairman of the Wenlock Olympian Society <https://www.wenlock-olympian-society.org.uk/>, and said "The Society is very grateful to the 'Writers on the Edge' for taking on the task of organising this socially distant event. In doing so they have kept the Olympian flame alive through these difficult times. We are confident of the success of the

competition and look forward to it becoming a fixture in the Society's annual schedule".

Now in 2023, we are celebrating ten years of Much Wenlock and District u3a and the completion of our third Creative Writing competition. In 2021/22, we held a Short Story contest and invited submissions of up to 2,500 words. Our main judge was Char March, an award-winning writer, poet and playwright <http://www.charmarch.co.uk/>. In that our second year, we were pleased to receive ninety-one entries but this year's contest surpassed all expectations with 194 stories.

Whilst the authors have an international flavour, ranging from Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Spain and Switzerland to Australia, Canada, India, Israel, New Zealand and the USA, Emma Cooper was our locally-based judge <https://emmacooperauthor.wordpress.com/>. The winning author can claim both domestic and international status; Steven Arnold is Australian by birth and now lives on South Ronaldsay, one of the Orkney Islands. You can read his gold-medal awarded story here: <https://www.wenlock-olympian-society.org.uk/wenlock-olympian-society-arts/creative-short-story/>, along with those from the other medallists.

Michael Phelps, the most decorated Olympian in history said: "*You can't put a limit on anything. The more you dream, the farther you get,*" so perhaps you might be inspired to enter next year's WOS Creative Writing competition.

For further information on the Wenlock Olympian Society, please go to: <http://www.wenlock-olympian-society.org.uk> .

Quiz

Our quiz this time is in two parts. The first 10 questions are about events which occurred in the 10 years since Much Wenlock & District u3a began in 2013. The second 15 are each about a subject connected with one of our activity groups. The answers can be found on page 16.

Years 2013 - 2022

1. Which historical figure links 2013 with the year 1485?
2. Where were the 2014 Winter Olympics held?
3. What was introduced by supermarkets in England during October of 2015?
4. In 2016, Europe's largest biomedical research facility opened in London. What is it called?
5. Which city was the 'city of culture' in 2017?
6. Who won the Oscar for Best Actress in 2018, for her performance in *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*?
7. In August, 2019, parts of three Derbyshire towns were evacuated. Can you name any of the towns and say why they were evacuated?
8. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, there was a dramatic increase in the use of Zoom, a proprietary video telephony software programme. In 2020, how many times was the Zoom app downloaded around the world? Was it: (a) 123 million, (b) 477 million or (c) 846 million?
9. In June, 2021, a new £50 polymer banknote entered circulation. Whose face does it feature?
10. Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her Platinum Jubilee in 2022. At The Platinum Party at the Palace, a pre-recorded sketch was shown of the Queen and Paddington Bear acting together. Both of them were tapping teaspoons on their cups to a song by Queen, but which one?

Activities

11. Which Italian Art Gallery translates as 'the offices' in English.
12. Which grape variety is the main one used to make Chianti wine?
13. Which psychologist is known for developing the hierarchy of needs, a theory of human motivation?
14. The sorceress Circe lived alone on an island called Aea. She was visited once by Odysseus and his crew. Which animal did she turn them into?
15. Which Booker prize shortlisted author won the Women's Prize for Fiction (previously the Orange Prize) in 2022, and for which book?
16. In French opera houses, which job does the Souffler have?
(a) To encourage applause, (b) Prompter, (c) First Aider, (d) Dessert Chef
17. Who painted *Girl with a Pearl Earring*?
18. What are the six official languages of the United Nations?
19. What musically do the Duke of Wellington, Chuck Berry and ELO have in common?
20. Who is the current Prime Minister of Italy?
21. Ringo Starr is credited with writing which two Beatles songs?
22. Which country claims to have developed the ukulele?
23. What are the dimensions of a table tennis table?
24. What does the sign say that is located on the statue of Sherpa Tenzing in Nepal?
25. Which is the fastest spoken European language?

Monthly Meeting Talks in 2023

May 10th Roger Browne - The Great American Song Book

The fascinating stories of Gershwin, Kern, Rodgers, Berlin, Porter, Carmichael, Fats Waller and their wonderful music.

June 14th Philip Caine - From Barrow to Baghdad and Back

An entertaining description of a life lived through various 'career moves' made across a range of countries not on everyone's list of workplaces. Scattered with very colourful characters who influenced Philip's actions and moves.

July 12th Adrian Barrett - Trapped Underground

Nearly 100 years ago a poor young man set out to explore some caves with the aim of making his fortune by finding one to open as a tourist attraction. Things went badly wrong and he became trapped. The story of how his misfortune gripped a nation and he suddenly became famous.

No Meeting in August

September 13th William Reddaway - A Ride Around England

One man, one horse, 2,700 miles and 30 cathedrals! This the account of William's ride on his horse Strider as a retirement project to raise funds for two charities.

October 11th Dorothy Nicolle - Shropshire's Country Churches

The county has a wealth of wonderful churches, many of which have not changed over the centuries.

November 8th Keith Richards - Potholing

Keith invites you vicariously on an underground adventure. The talk is a light-hearted/humorous romp through the world beneath our feet. It is richly illustrated with video clips and photographs.

December 13th William Durose - Seasonal Music

Songs and carols accompanied by William's guitar with audience participation.

Quiz Answers

Years 2013-2022 1. King Richard III who was killed in battle in 1485 and whose skeleton was found buried under a car park in Leicester in 2013; 2. Sochi, Russia; 3. 5p levy on plastic carrier bags; 4. The Francis Crick Institute; 5. Kingston upon Hull; 6. Frances McDormand; 7. Whaley Bridge, Furness Vale and New Mills were evacuated, with 1,500 residents being moved as a precaution, after concrete slabs on the dam spillway of the Toddbrook Reservoir partially collapsed; 8. (b) 477 million; 9. Alan Turing; 10. We Will Rock You.

Activities 11. Uffizi (in Florence); 12. Sangiovese; 13. Abraham Maslow; 14. Pigs, although she was later persuaded to change them back; 15. Ruth Ozeki for "The Book of Form and Emptiness"; 16. Prompter; 17. Johannes Vermeer; 18. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian; 19. Beethoven (Chuck Berry wrote Roll Over Beethoven, ELO recorded a version of it and Beethoven wrote an orchestral piece called Wellington's Victory (complete with cannons and other artillery!)); 20. Giorgia Meloni; 21. *Octopus's Garden* and *Don't Pass Me By*; 22. Portugal; 23. 9' by 5'; 24) Do not climb; 25) Spanish at 7.8 syllables per second (English is 6.2).

Newsletter compiled and edited by Alison Richards and Robert Toft. With grateful thanks to all contributors and photographers, including Jo Revell, Linda Davies, Jo Jackson, David Foster, Wendy Emery, Glynn Emery, Christina Gore, Jean Buswell, Jane Hague, Bob van Mook, Sheena Taylor, Neil Lloyd, Jean Jackson, Andy Jackson and Trevor Halsey.