

## NEWPORT u3a NEWSLETTER - JULY 2023

The end of term always brings a flurry of activities from our groups and here's what's been happening recently.

### A DAY OF CONTRASTS

Members of our Gardening & Wildlife Group went on a day trip to Cotswold Lavender and the National Trust's Hidcote. It was a day of sharp contrasts; the (barely in bloom) lavender fields were shrouded in mizzle, the facilities were poor and the staff unsympathetic.



Consequently we travelled on from the lavender fields with heavy hearts wondering what Hidcote had in store for us. But what a contrast. By the time we had arrived the sun had come out, there was an amazing welcome awaiting our group, and the gardens were magnificent.

Hidcote is one of the best known and most influential Arts & Crafts inspired gardens in the country and is set in the rolling Cotswold hills. The gardens were created by Major Lawrence Johnston and many of the colourful plants that we saw were collected by him on his plant-hunting expeditions. We enjoyed exploring the maze of narrow pathways that intricately linked secret gardens, ponds, greenhouses and magnificent vistas.

We all came home with plenty of gardening ideas and plants

### 30th AGM

100 members attended the 30th AGM at which our Chairman, Stephen Berry, announced that he had completed his term of office which had been very extraordinary. He had overseen the Covid storm; the restructuring of the timetable to comply with legislation when we resumed indoors; negotiations with the management of the Dolman Theatre when we were told that Shaftesbury was to be sold; and helped with the removals and upgrade of our new accommodation!

However he was really pleased how successful this last year has been. Stephen then handed over the reins to his successor, Julie Kennedy, who had been the Business Secretary. Stephen is taking over that roll, so it just remained for them to swap badges and seats! Julie gave her address and we all enjoyed socialising over free refreshments. A Huge Thank You to Stephen and Best Wishes to Julie.



## CHOIR CONCERT

Our Choir gave a performance to the of Willowbrook Care Home at Bettws. The programme included light-hearted melodies, jazz, pop and songs from the musicals. Julie Davies conducted; Carol Brown and Pam Linton accompanied on the piano; soloist Alastair Steadman sang 'Galway Bay;' Ian Lumley and Steve Bissex-Williams duetted with 'The Impossible Dream;' and Chris Bissex-Williams narrated the words of 'The Nightmare Song' from Iolanthe, which was all the more hilarious as we could understand the lyrics!



If you would like some entertainment for an event or at a relative's care home, please contact Stephen Berry at [stephenberry249@gmail.com](mailto:stephenberry249@gmail.com) with some brief details of the venue.

## ART EXHIBITION

There was a great deal of interest shown by our members at the Art Group's display of their work on their last day of term.

Beginners are most welcome to join the group as well as those with more experience. They appreciate the tuition from the Convenor in the use of a range of media and have quickly managed to produce some worthy samples - as was evident at this End of Year Exhibition.



## ART IN NATURE

Check out the u3a Trust's May/June web page at [u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programme/found-in-nature](http://u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programme/found-in-nature), for some amazing photos from u3a members. Here's one that I submitted of a sandstone rock

formation with fractured Liesegang rings that I discovered at Widemouth Bay near Bude - I couldn't believe it was natural, it reminds me of a 1960's wot-not wall display unit.



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