

# Borderlines

Summer 2023



## **INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITORS**

Hello and welcome to our Summer issue of Borderlines

We would like to thank the members for their contributions because without your efforts we would not be able to produce an issue of Borderlines.

If you would like to join any of the interest groups all details and contacts are on the u3a website.

You can find additional information about the u3a online and on the notice board at the back of the room during the monthly meetings

If anyone has anything they would like included in the next issue please contact us at email address [borderlines@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk](mailto:borderlines@u3a-llandrindod.org.uk).

With thanks, Margaret and Bob.

Cover picture produced by the Art Group.

## **WELCOME**

We would like to welcome the following new members who joined us since April 2023, Carol Jarrett, Alan Fisher, Brenda Claridge, Lynda Fletcher, Jackie Turner and David and Norma Williams.

We hope you all enjoy your time with u3a.

## **ART GROUP**

The u3a Art Group's initial restart meeting was held on the 10th May 2023 at Celf O Gwpas. Amazingly 23 people have signed up to join the group, many new faces and a lot of new talent.

While 19 attended the first meeting, some bringing pieces of work they were already working on, most ready to have a go at the set piece. The topic was Hares in motion or realistic poses. The medium charcoal and chalk, not the most popular medium for those who don't like to get dirty! So after a couple of warm up exercises to get the feel of the charcoal and loosen up, individuals chose what aspect they would work on. The results were excellent as shown by just a few of the examples. The Group will meet at Celf O Gwpas, the aim of this arts organisation is 'Creating social inclusion, inspiring artistic ambition and providing a resource for the wider community' so we fit in nicely. "Celf" is to become our main base for the more formal monthly meetings while the fourth Wednesday of the month, for those that can and while the weather permits, will work outside applying what we have learnt in the more formal sessions. Really looking forward to the next meeting and being with this group as we experiment, support each other and learn together.



Shean, Lakes Pump House  
Roses, 2016



## SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP 2

The Sunday Lunch Group 2 is now in full swing visiting various venues in the area. We have been to The Lakeside Café, The Golf Club, Severn Stars, The Ilanerch Inn., Neuadd Henllan and The Cattleshed. The food and company at all the venues was very good. We still have vacancies, therefore if you would like to join the group please let us know. Contact details are on the website.



## **GARDEN VISITING – BURY COURT FARM - MARCH 2023**

20 of us all had a very good day out on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March to visit Bury Court Farm, Wigmore with the very welcoming Mr and Mrs Margaret and Les Barclay. We set off from the Rugby Club car park organised with skill and tenacity by Ann Parkhouse, and met up at the Red Lion Pub, Pembridge for a very well organised and delicious lunch. It was a Proper Pub, Ye Olde Worlde and despite the dreadful weather (we are getting used to this) we had a lovely day.

We moved on to Wigmore to a delightful 1820's farmhouse and gardens which Margaret and Les had taken 25 years to perfect. The 3/4 acre gardens were grassed terraced and contained mixed borders full of spring flowers which were super, the hyacinths standing upright like soldiers (my two have drooped), tulips glorious and many more to come also standing to attention. The helebore were brightly coloured and waving in the damp breeze. Margaret and Les had built a great potting shed inside the walls and filled the greenhouse and veggie patch with delightful plants, the Magnolia was magnificent, and huge tall snowdrops were gorgeous (they are snowdrops but don't ask me to pronounce or spell their correct name, Margaret did tell me, but I don't remember it!).

The heavens opened and we sat very cosy in their conservatory filled with indoor plants and started eating again! Is this a garden visiting group or lunch club? The Barclays had organised a delicious table of tea/coffee and several cakes, some going back for second helpings, and then it was time to depart, the roads being awash and rather dodgy, but we all returned safe and sound. Thanks to Ann for her usual efficiency and determination that we all would have a lift.



## **GARDEN VISITING - MAESFRON HALL GARDENS - APRIL 2023**

In April we visited Maesfron Hall Gardens in Trewern, near Welshpool. Maesfron Hall was built c1820 by a solicitor who had toured Europe extensively so the Hall can be described as Georgian with an Italian influence. It provides spectacular views over the Long Mountain.

We were welcomed by Dr. Derek Owen and wife Monica to their 6 acre estate. Dr Owen had achieved his PhD on garden compost research and still uses his "special blend" today. They had bought the house 30 years ago and had to restore it after years of neglect.

Near the entrance in the lower garden they had planted several rare species of trees with many Japanese acers which would provide a broad spectrum of autumn colour. The gardens are mainly terraced including rose beds which Monica tended and were about 6 weeks ahead of our bushes in Llandrindod. This may well be due to Derek's compost secrets! Derek tends his large walled vegetable garden including a large greenhouse.

The garden has many interesting features including a Shell Grotto, Folly Tower and a Stone Circle accurately aligned along the compass points. The restored Victorian conservatories provided a welcome rest after the climb from the terraced gardens. We were invited to see the outbuildings which included the Housekeeper's lodge and a former coach house which now housed a snooker room - Derek was a past Shropshire Snooker Champion and his many trophies were on display and he had entertained many past and current snooker professionals.

The final highlight was a fantastic afternoon tea with enough food for about 40 people rather than the 18 who attended.

We were all left wondering how Derek and Monica manage the extensive gardens with help from just 1 gardener one day a week. When I asked Monica that question she replied sweetly "Well I don't do anything else"

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day so well organised by Wynne & Karyn and we look forward eagerly to Bodnant Gardens in June



## **GARDEN VISITING – BODNANT GARDENS - JUNE 2023**

After 3 years of waiting, the trip to Bodnant Gardens finally happened on Monday, 5 June which was originally booked exactly 3 years to the day when it was previously booked in 2020 but very disappointingly had to be cancelled due to Lockdown happening.

31 members boarded one of Celtic Travel's very comfortable high rise coaches at 8:00am at the High School picking up a further 4 in Rhayader in slightly chilly temperatures with a lot of grey clouds which thankfully very soon changed to blue skies and brilliant sunshine when continuing on the journey up to Dolgellau and the Eryri (Snowdonia) area passing Trawsfynydd Power Station and Lake with the spectacular Snowdonia range of mountains ever present. We continued travelling through to Blaenau Ffestiniog the former 'slate capital of the world' where the screes of broken slate that had tumbled down steep-sided mountains surprisingly were covered in masses of rhododendrons in bloom. Then it was Dolwyddelan and after Bettws-y-Coed was signposted we continued a very short distance to Tal-y-Cafn and entered the Coach Park at Bodnant Gardens after travelling through very spectacular scenery on a trouble free journey of 2 hours 40 minutes with no hold-ups.

A Bodnant Garden member of staff was waiting for us who very efficiently sorted out our group entry and we were soon free to enjoy the delights of Bodnant at our leisure. We were by then all ready for an early lunch at one of the three eating places which was much appreciated. The first place to visit and a must after lunch, was the famous Laburnum arch which was in full bloom and did not disappoint or fail to impress. It was spectacular!!



Then there were the 5 Edwardian Italianate rose terraces with a wonderful variety of scented English rose beds in wonderful colours, pools and pergola garden rooms which led down to the Pin Mill with a water channel and water lilies. Another old water mill (where more refreshments could be had) could be reached a short walk away on a lovely trees and plants lined river walk with waterfalls. There were numerous seats placed in strategic places in various areas throughout the garden so plenty of places to have a rest and enjoy the surroundings. There was such a variety of shrubs, plants and trees to appreciate throughout the garden of which there are 80 acres. Needless to say not all were walked!



After 5½ idyllic hours spent enjoying and exploring the different area of the gardens, last minute browsing and being tempted in the lovely plants, crafts, clothes and gift shops, it was time to board the coach to once again happily enjoy the lovely scenery on our return to Llandrindod arriving back just before 7:00pm having had a truly memorable day in a wonderful garden with good company and perfect weather. Comments were “A great and memorable day”.....It was worth waiting 3 years for!!

### **RAILRIDERS GROUP – BIRMINGHAM VISIT - Thursday 14th June 2023**

The latest adventure for the group took place on 14th June. A small group of 8 travelled from Llandrindod Railway Station to Birmingham on the Heart of Wales Line to Shrewsbury changing there for Birmingham New Street.

Nothing was pre-arranged and people were encouraged to do their own thing.

In a recent talk at one of our main meetings we learned about the back to back housing that existed in some of our industrial towns and cities.



In the industrial revolution Birmingham grew from a small town into a big city thanks to the industry that grew up there. The back to back houses were built to accommodate the workers that flooded into Birmingham. The back to back project is the only remaining and restored example in its' original position.

Another small group spent their time exploring the Jewellery Quarter. I am assured that the credit card took some punishment.

Later we all convened at The London and Northern, a Wetherspoons pub in New Street Station before we returned to Llandrindod





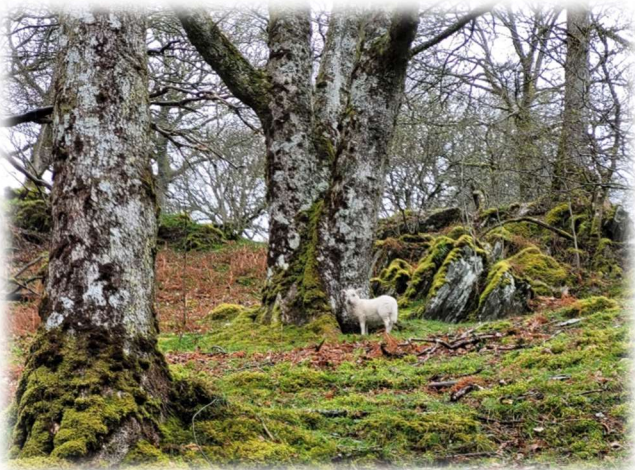
## SINGING GROUP

In June we sang at Golden Age club in Crossgates and at Howey village hall. Our first performances since lockdown. Sue played keyboard for us. We sang a mixture of songs including Delilah, Oklahoma, Barbara Ann, Cabaret, Penny Lane, Over The Rainbow, World Of Our Own, Land Of Hope and Glory and When You Are Smiling. We were rewarded with a delicious home made afternoon tea. The first 3 raffle tickets drawn belonged to me. Jane S.



## u3a WALKING GROUP - 24<sup>th</sup> April

Starting from Penbont car park in the Elan Valley, we headed towards the Penyarreg dam and climbed up to the track along the Reservoir which leads to the Craig Goch dam. We admired the mossy 'floor' beneath the trees where a lonely lamb had strayed a little distance from its mother.



For once, our usual good fortune with the weather let us down, and there was a persistent drizzle nearly all the way, but this didn't detract from the beauty around us and our enjoyment of the walk!



Reaching the Craig Goch dam at the far end of the Reservoir, we crossed over and returned to the car park along the road. We admired the contrast of the dead bracken with the dark green of trees, the sandy colours of last year's grass, the fresh green of the new grass, and the greys of the sky and the water.



**THE READERS GROUP** - Recipe for a lovely summer afternoon  
A good book, great company and a cool drink!

The Readers (Book Group) May meeting was hosted by Karyn Evans. We had a lively discussion about the chosen book, *On The Black Hill*, by Bruce Chatwin. This turned out to be one of the few books everybody liked and the local setting added to our interest.

As we relaxed in her conservatory, Karyn kept us well supplied with a refreshing Rock Shandy. She has agreed to share the recipe, and added a second for good measure. It is just the thing for this hot weather, and I feel I can speak with authority – I had three tumblers!

**Recipe 1 - Rock Shandy**

½ glass lemonade

½ glass soda water

4 or 5 dashes of Angostura Bitters.

**Recipe 2 - Malawi Shandy**

½ glass Ginger beer (non alcoholic)

½ glass Lemonade

4 or 5 dashes of Angostura Bitters.



As far as driving is concerned the shandy is non alcoholic. I quote from the Angostura Bitters website

*Although the product contains 44.7% alcohol by volume, each dash contains an insignificant amount of alcohol and therefore remains non-alcoholic.*

IF you are allergic to alcohol I suggest you take advice before making it.

Otherwise , as Karyn says, enjoy!