



WOODSIDE U3A NEWSLETTER FOR JUNE 2021
MEETING ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodside>

Charity Reg.: 1182140



Hi Everyone

Welcome to our June newsletter.

I hope you are starting to mix with family and friends now that the lockdown restrictions have eased. The wheels of Woodside u3a are now starting to turn as more interest groups have re-launched. Badminton and table tennis are meeting as are numerous other groups. I suggest you get in touch with your group contact to see if your interest group is up and running yet.

Our May General Meeting via Zoom featured poetry recited by Andy Smith. It was called Wartime and Romance and was very entertaining.

Your committee has continued to log in to u3a meetings on your behalf. This month the topic was IT Support and Issues arranged by the East of England Region.

Our Open Day on Wednesday 2 June was a great success - thank you to everyone who joined us. It was a good opportunity to inform the public about u3a and encourage people to become members. The plan is to hold an Open Day every year.

This month, our group project takes us to Ireland. Next month will feature Portugal. Please send a paragraph about the country to Val May who is co-ordinating this group project.

Finally, if you are on Facebook, why not join the Woodside u3a page. Set up for you to read and contribute to it.

Take care and enjoy the sunshine.

Barbara Elman
Chair

General Meeting

Woodside u3a will be holding their next General meeting via Zoom on Tuesday 15th June at 10.00am. Our speaker will be Chris Thorne from Ayletts Garden Centre in St Albans. His topic is 'Sustainable Gardening'. He will answer as many questions about gardening as he can so please have your questions ready. As always you can access the meeting by clicking on the link in Lesley's email (sent Saturday morning) or go to zoom and enter the following: Meeting ID: 958 8685 7667 Passcode: 143552

National u3a Open Day

On the hottest day on record this year members of the committee and group members ventured onto the streets of Abbots Langley and Garston to promote awareness and recruit new members for Woodside u3a on the National u3a Open Day. Armed with their leaflets and a friendly face they approached mature members of the public to inform them of our group activities and to explain the purpose of the u3a. The local hairdresser, interested in what we were doing, asked for some leaflets to give to her clients - many of which she thought would benefit from joining our local group.

We were out on the streets in Abbots Langley and Garston on National u3a day to raise awareness of the movement and hope to increase the membership. Likely candidates were greeted with a smile, told about the movement and given leaflets.

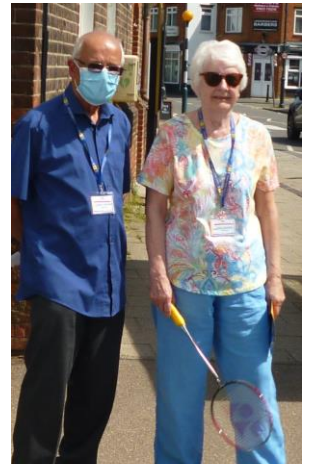
'A small but beautiful group dressed in blue and yellow took Abbots Langley High Street by storm on the morning of Wed 2nd June.'



Heather explains why u3a is such a good organisation to join to a passerby.

'.....we approached the local community like little rays of sunshine in our yellow tops and introduced the brilliance of u3a!!'

Special thanks to those who came to help and those who came to show their support. This will now be an annual event.



Marcus and Sue from the Badminton Group were on hand to give out promotional leaflets.

u3a Click and Save

u3a Click and Save is a scheme which offers a rebate for members when shopping with selected retailers, including big brands such as Sainsbury's, M&S and Costa Coffee.

Members will receive a unique personal number from their u3as. When the scheme goes live, members will be able to access the "u3a Click and Save" portal and use those details to register and get a savings account.

This will give members access to the list of retailers and suppliers that offer rebates on purchases through the scheme.

Welcome to Ireland and all that it offers.

We are sure it's a country everyone is eager to read about, and enjoy all the contributions submitted.

It's been lovely to have new contributors and this proves how collaborative Woodside is as it continues to support its members during these on going constrained times.

Ok let's start our journey- watch out for the leprechauns, enjoy a pint of the dark stuff and a happy search for that mysterious and elusive four leaf clover.

The Aran Sweater - Mary O'Hara, Weekenders Group

The Aran Islands - Inishmore, Inishmaan and Inisheer, are three islands situated in the Atlantic sea, off the west coast of Ireland. They are basically limestone rock, the same limestone that is found on the Burren, the part of the Irish mainland nearest the islands. Consequently the soil is very poor. The native Aran islanders used the abundance of rocks to create sheltered small spaces and filled them with a mixture of seaweed and sand to create soil on which to grow basic crops. Traditionally the main source of food was fish. Fishing is quite perilous in the usually very rough Atlantic waters. Although the climate is reasonably mild - it hardly ever snows on the islands - it frequently rains heavily and the wind is very, very strong, especially in winter.

The Aran sweater or *gheansai* originated on the islands, knitted with untreated sheep's wool which retains its oil (or lanolin). This renders the garments water resistant which makes them very suitable for wearing in harsh weather. Incidentally the lanolin in this wool keeps the hands of the knitter beautifully soft. There are several different stitch patterns used in the making of the Aran Sweater. There is an urban myth that families had their own distinctive combinations of these patterns which allowed drowned fishermen to be identified. This in fact is not the case but was used for dramatic effect in J.M. Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* which was set on Inishmore. The Clancy Brothers who contributed greatly to the revival of folk music in the 1960s wore these sweaters and made them very popular. Nowadays the sweaters are widely manufactured and are made not only from wool but more modern yarns as well.

Walking Book group - Libby

The Walking Book Club meet once a month on the third Wednesday at various venues with a good cafe, we take a walk for about an hour and then stop at the cafe to discuss that month's books. We like to encourage everyone to read so here are some recommended Irish Writers:

Oscar Wilde if you enjoy comedy, his most famous play 'The Importance of being Ernest' still performed today and televised most memorably with Dame Edith Evans playing Lady Bracknell. Another great story is 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'

Bram Stoker If you enjoy a thriller you might like to read 'Dracula'.

Maeve Binchy If you like a comfortable family drama set in or around Dublin then try 'Circle of Friends' or 'Scarlet Feather'.

C.S. Lewis If you are looking for books to read or give to your Grandchildren then forever captivating 'The Chronicles of Narnia', you can't go wrong!

Iris Murdoch whose books were admired for their intelligence, wit, and high seriousness. One of her finest is 'The Bell' written in 1958

George Bernard Shaw Probably his most well known play is 'Pygmalion' his directions in the play are very precise, as if he wanted control of how it was presented. I wonder what he would have thought of the musical version 'My Fair Lady'.

Marianne Keyes A contemporary writer whose books appeal mainly to women. Although many of her novels are comedies, they often explore dark themes such as domestic violence, drug abuse, mental illness and divorce.

Language - Barbara, chair

The term 'boycott' comes from Captain Charles Boycott (1832-1897), the land agent of an absentee landlord from Ulster. In 1880, after refusing to reduce the rents of his employer's tenants, the Irish Land League decided to stop dealing with him. The whole community began to ostracise him to the point where even shops refused to serve him. The Times of London quickly came to use his name as a term for organized isolation, and the word entered the English language.

Flowers - Linda M Garden Group

Flowers of Ireland, Bog Rosemary is a native wildflower and found in central Ireland, Sheep's bit is a popular flower found in and around Cliff of Moher.

Quiz group - Sue B

Best of luck with a touch of the Blarney

Irish Quiz from Sue at the Quiz Group. Answers at the end of the rainbow along with the leprechaun's pot of gold.

1. Which currency is used in the Republic of Ireland?
2. How many counties are there in the island of Ireland?
3. Which Irish city was nicknamed Linenopolis?
4. What is the longest river in Ireland?
5. Which county is nicknamed the Treaty County?
6. Which popular autumn celebration originated in Ireland?
7. What does "O" in Irish surnames mean?
8. What does the Irish slang word "craic" mean?
9. How many times did Ireland win the Eurovision Song Contest?
10. Which instrument can you find on both Guinness and Ryanair logos?
11. Which Irish author wrote "Ulysses" in 1922?
12. What type of race are the Galway Races?
13. Which Irish actor was the fifth actor to play James Bond?
14. Where was the Patron Saint of Ireland - St Patrick - from?

Ádh mór

Spanish Group 1

Carol, Penny, Robin, Sue and Tom decided to try their hand at Irish for their virtual visit to a country pub near Dublin.

This is how we got on -

Hello - do you serve food here?

Did duit, an bhfreastalawnn bia anseo?

Could we see the menu? Thank you.

An bhféadfaimis an roghchlar a fheiceáil? Go raibh maith agat?

Could we order a round of drinks please?

An bhféadfaimis babhta deochanna a ordu le do thoil.

What time are you open until tonight?

Cén t-am a bheidh tú oscailte go dtí anocht?

What are the places of interest near here?

Cad iad na háiteanna spéise atá gar anseo.

We all agreed that learning Spanish was a lot easier than Irish- so we would stick with that - but we hope you enjoyed our attempts.

Best Wishes - Gach dea - ghuí

Anne Bonny the Irish Pirate - Jan Roberts

Anne Bonny is one of the few female Pirates in history. She was born Anne Cormac in County Cork circa 1697. Anne was illegitimate and lived in London with her father until the age of ten when they relocated to South Carolina.

She married, aged sixteen, James Bonny, a small time Pirate. Together they moved to Nassau in the Bahamas, which was a sanctuary for Pirates. There Bonny met and fell in love with the Pirate, 'Calico Jack Rackham' and became his partner and lover. She successfully disguised herself as a man and would take full part alongside the men in any conflict. Only Jack, and another female Pirate Mary Read, who teamed up with them, knew that she was a woman, until she became pregnant.

Jack took Bobby to Cuba where she had, and then left their child, and rejoined him to continue the Pirate life. Jack, Bonny and Mary Read stole a sloop ship, which was at anchor in Nassau. They recruited a new crew and spent a couple of years in Jamaica and the surrounding area, attacking and robbing smaller ships. They were eventually attacked by a sloop captained by 'Jonathan Barnet' and were easily captured as most of the crew were too drunk to fight.

They were taken to Jamaica where they were convicted and sentenced to be hung. Bonny's last words to Jack were " " Had you fought like a man, you might not have been hang'd like a dog "

Bonny and Read were both pregnant and were given a stay of execution until they gave birth. Mary Read died in prison, most likely of a fever. Her death is registered in a church in Jamaica, it reads ' Mary Read, Pirate ' There is no certainty as to what happened to Anne Bobby. There is no record of her release, but a ledger lists the burial of an ' Ann Bonny ' in 1733 in the same town where she stood trial.

Charles Johnson writes in A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the most notorious Pirates, published in 1724. " She was continued in Prison to the time of her lying in, and afterwards reprieved from time to time, but what became of her since, we cannot tell. Only this we know, that she was not executed."

Answers to the Irish Quiz

1. Euro
2. 32 counties
3. Belfast
4. The River Shannon
5. Limerick
6. Halloween
7. Grandson of
8. Fun

9. 7 times
10. Harp
11. James Joyce
12. Horse Race
13. Pierce Brosnam
14. Wales

Well done An- mhaith

Music - Crafters - Barbara Sutton

We all know Danny Boy.

I remember listening to a fight with Barry McGuigan when his dad sang this song in the ring before the fight. Very emotional. I quite like the Eva Cassidy version.

We have Bing Crosby singing 'If you ever go across the sea to Ireland', 'When Irish eyes are smiling', 'I'll take you home again Kathleen'.

Val Doonigan singing 'Paddy McGinny's goat. Lots of fun.

Eurovision song contest won by Dana with 'All kinds of everything reminds me of you'. Jimmy Logan 'What's another year'.

How about Terry Wogan singing 'the Floral Dance'. Then there is Daniel O'Donnell - a heartthrob in his time. Gilbert O'Sullivan with his flat cap singing 'Clare'. I could probably go on but I won't. You may have your own memories.

Ireland has always been good for music.

Embroidery - Tina Photi



Mount Mellick embroidery is a type of whitework associated with the southern Irish town of Mount Mellick. It is sometimes called Mount Mellick lace, but it does not include the holes associated with bobbin or needle lace. Mount Mellick embroidery is characterised by the use of a thick, white cotton thread on a white cotton ground (often white cotton satin). The work is strongly textured, with an emphasis on flat and raised stitches (especially well padded satin stitch and French knots).

Cotton sachet with Mount Mellick whitework and bobbin lace edging

Traditionally, the motifs used reflect wildflowers and fruits found in and around Mount Mellick, especially along the Owenass River. The plants include acorns and oak leaves, blackberries, dog roses,

fern, ivy and shamrocks. By the end of the twentieth century a range of cultivated plants including daffodils, cyclamens, passion flowers, snowdrops and tiger lilies. In addition, birds, butterflies and seashells started to be included. The finished items often have a knotted fringe. This type of embroidery was mainly used for household linens such as bedspreads, mats, tray cloths and so forth.



For Traditional Celtic dance, female dancers wear blouses and long skirts while the male dancers perform with traditional shirt and kilt.

Modern Irish female dancers perform in beautiful short dresses in bright colours, mostly always with their arms fully covered.

Over the years the fabrics Irish dance dressmakers use has changed. In the early years, the dresses were made from velvet and had a lot of knotworks added to liven up the costume. In more recent years, these dressmakers have opted for lighter fabrics like silk.

Irish Ring - Frances LeHane - Weekenders Group



The Claddagh ring (Irish: fàinne Chladaigh) is a traditional Irish ring which represents love, loyalty and friendship (the hands represent friendship, the heart love and the crown loyalty). The ring, as currently known, was first produced in the 17th century. The ring has only one design as shown in the photo. It can be made in silver or gold and it is also known as an Irish Wedding Ring. The design can also be made as earrings or necklace.

If the ring is worn with the heart facing your heart it means your heart is already taken; if it faces outwards then you are looking for love (the younger folk may disagree).

Well fellow travellers here we are in Dublin departure lounge, Covid certificate and passport at the ready for the next stage of our virtual journey to Portugal. Thank you for all your wonderful contributions for our stay in Ireland, hopefully everyone has enjoyed the experience - go raibh maith agat Éire as am iontach. If you've not had a go at submitting a short piece for our travel experience then please do so- and join our exclusive travel guides. Ok! Ready for take off - Portugal here we come!!! Portugal aqui vamos nós!!!

Val

WANTED: NEWS & PHOTOGRAPHS

suitable for publication please send to The Webmaster, Andrew Cummings at andrew.cummingsu3a@btinternet.com

AND FOR THE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is available online at <https://u3asites.org.uk/woodside>

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