

## **Message from the Chair**

**" Time for casting off " - +++-----**

Are you setting sail? Or completing a knitted garment?

Neither is accurate here because January is traditionally the time for New Year Resolutions. But how long might such resolve last? Not long in many cases, instead, perhaps, we should forgo those activities that do not give us pleasure. If polishing brass or silver items does not give pleasure in the final result – why do it? I hate housework, but love my shining windows, when looking out on my garden.

Many television programmes of late have focussed on families who try to auction unwanted possessions. Their relations had amassed collections of "Stuff", the removal of which would leave an almost pristine cupboard or room. So many boxes collected need new owners.

My resolution is to "cast off" the unwanted and inessential household items that clutter my cupboards. Don't need a courgette spiralizer or a waffle maker, to name but two. What habits have I acquired that really should be abandoned? that are not particularly pleasurable. Why am I polishing that table or cupboard or dusting a collection of unread tomes, by an author I dislike? These books are of a bygone age which I detest, but were left by a beloved aunt? No, it is not a pleasurable activity and I need to positively change. These items need new homes.

It is time to Learn, Laugh and Live.

What might you cast off

Enjoy your u3a membership with something new and positive every day

Best wishes for 2025

Judith

Chair of Wrexham u3a

**U3A Annual Membership Fees 1st May 2025 to 30th April 2026**  
Membership renewal £15      New Members from January £15 until April 2026  
e-mail: [memwrexu3a@outlook.com](mailto:memwrexu3a@outlook.com)

Please e-mail items for **April 2025 newsletter** to [newsrexu3a@outlook.com](mailto:newsrexu3a@outlook.com) by  
**20th March 2025.**

**Issues of the Newsletter will now be released in January (winter) April (spring)  
July (summer) and October (Autumn)**

Wrexham U3A  
Trip Schedule 2025

Each trip will cost £15 or less depending on the number of bookings. Departure times and parking arrangements will be confirmed closer to the dates

Date	Destination	Additional Information
March 1 <sup>th</sup>	Bury Market	A thriving Market that has been going for years and is bigger than The Old Beast Market.
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Dunham Massey	A return visit by popular Demand. Not too far to go, and bigger than the old Beast Market
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Chedworth	An Outstanding Roman Villa.
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	National Arboretum	Commemorating 80 years since the end of World War 2.
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	Bakewell Carnival	It's a great place with lots of traditional events, Well dressings and parades
August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Stratford on Avon	Includes trip to the cottage of Anne Hathaway
August 30 <sup>th</sup>	Powis Castle	Includes visit to Charlies for shopping and lunch
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	Little Moreton Hall	A medieval Manor House

More trips are planned for October and November - details to be confirmed when dates and reservations are confirmed.

Wrexham U3A  
Torquay Spring Break  
17<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
St Patricks Day

A 5-day break at the **Victoria Hotel Torquay** has been arranged to depart on the **17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**.

It includes Dinner, Bed and Breakfast and Entertainment.

Excursions to the National Trust home of Agatha Christie – Greenway and to Coleton Fishacre – an Arts and Crafts property have been arranged.

The hotel is just 5 minutes from the beach in a great position.

**All of this for a great price of just £310**

**A deposit of £50 is required to reserve your place.**

Book without delay by contacting Margaret Hadwin-Smith on 01978 541646 or at the monthly meeting.

## Monthly Talks At The Memorial Hall. Wrexham

2025

January 21st. 2pm. Bethan M Hughes - "Stitching a Voice"

Bethan is a textile artist and principal librarian in Denbigh. She has displayed many of her quilts and other works of art in Wrexham Merched y Mawr. They are true works of art and she will speak about the inspiration behind them.

February 18th. 2pm. Kinza Sutton "Recycling and what you don't know."

March 18th. 2pm. AGM followed by The Tenovus Choir.

April 15th 2pm. To be confirmed

## Notification of 2025 Wrexham u3a Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 at 2.00pm, at Wrexham Memorial Hall, Bodhyfryd, off Chester Street, Wrexham LL12 7AG. before our normal monthly meeting. Please register in advance on our web-site. Also, please refer continually to our web-site and/or email for the latest news.

The Committee is seeking three general Committee members. Opportunity will be given for new members to shadow existing members with a view to taking over their roles in the future.

If you require further information, please contact the Secretary via the web site

If you wish to be nominated, please email the Secretary as above with your name and u3a number. Also, please include on your email the names, addresses and u3a numbers of two seconders. Nominations must be with the Secretary by 5pm, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2025.

If you wish to make a proposal for inclusion in the AGM Agenda, please email it to the Secretary, as above for discussion by the existing Committee. Proposals must be with the Secretary by 5pm, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2025.

The AGM Agenda and associated Proposals and other relevant documents will be posted on the Web-Site by 16<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

Those without access to the web-site will also be contacted.

## Christmas Lunch

The u3a Christmas Lunch was held at Wrexham Golf Club on Tuesday 26th November. Judith Dolben, our Chairperson, welcomed all members and the proceedings began by singing 'Happy Birthday' to Joan Williams, one of our long standing members.

Forty -four members were treated to wonderful food in a lovely relaxed festive atmosphere complete with crackers and Christmas melodies.

Many thanks to Judith who also provided us with an enjoyable Christmas quiz which thankfully was not too difficult.

A vote of thanks to all involved in organising the event by Derek Gwilliam, our President who also commented, "We couldn't have had a nicer meal at such a thoroughly enjoyable event"

**Sandra Jones**



## New for 2025

Newsletters will now be published 4 times a year. January, (Winter edition) April, (Spring edition) July (Summer edition) and October. (Autumn edition).

They will be published on the u3a website as usual, from where they can be read online or downloaded and printed. A copy to share will be displayed for members to read at the main meetings and a copy will also be available on Margaret's coach trips and at Wrexham library.

I would also like to thank regular contributors for their continued support by sending item for publication in the newsletter, and would love to here from any other member who would like to pass on your memories, news or comments.

**Ann, newsletter editor.**

## Turkey and Tinsel Break in Scotland

In December a coach full of merry members made the journey to Scotland to stay at The Winnock Hotel near Loch Lomond.

I think the following photographs say it all, everyone really enjoyed the pre - Christmas festivities.

**Ken Jones and Margaret Hadwin-Smith**



## Strollers 3, Strollers Country Parks and The Heritage Groups

All three groups during November and early December completed their planned schedules for 2024.

These took place at Alyn Waters Country Park in Gwersyllt, Chirk Castle grounds, Acton Park and for the Heritage Group they visited the 2 Aqueducts and 2 Viaducts in Chirk, Ty Mawr and Pontcysyllte, all part of the Llangollen Canal Heritage Site.

On each occasion for once, the weather was kind to us and of course pleasing after the very mixed weather we have endured during 2024.

All 3 groups remain very popular but there are still vacancies in each if you are interested in joining any of them - further information can be seen on the web site.

The walks and Heritage visits will restart in February 2025 and we hope that the weather will be better next year. It cannot be any worse than in 2024.

**Ken Jones**

## Past Times

As I began tidying the study (again!) I came across an account of my late aunt's experience as an evacuee during WW2.

I used to visit her several years ago at the care home where she spent the last year of her life. Although she was rather unwell her recollection of times past remained quite clear. It had been suggested to me that maybe I should record her speaking of her experiences but she surprised us all by producing her own written record.

Eileen was the eldest of four children and, aged thirteen, in 1939 was charged by her mother to look after her three siblings aged eleven, eight and six as they left London 'for the countryside', away from the prospect of bombing and danger. And so these young Eastenders left Rotherhithe by train with a packed lunch, a change of clothing and the inevitable gas masks with no real idea of where they were going. Eileen vividly recalled one particular and poignant incident - 'My dad was a stevedore in Surrey Commercial Docks working on the Canadian boats and as war was imminent the Canadian government wanted the boats in their home waters so that the men were working all night to get the boats turned around. I looked back when we got to the station and just caught a glimpse of my dad pushing through the crowd. He had come straight from night work. Tears were running down his face. I realised then that this was to be no holiday but a serious evacuation

Can you imagine arriving at your unknown destination, being told to sit down in a large field and eat your packed lunch while local people 'moved amongst us picking and choosing the children they wanted. The choice seemed to depend upon how you were dressed and how you ate your food.'

The children, despite some homesickness, enjoyed what Eileen describes as good times 'but those good times came to an end as Dunkirk looked imminent in May/June 1940. We had to leave that area and were moved to South Wales.' This time they were in different houses but in close proximity. Eileen was asked to go to a village called Glanamman where she would be able to attend a commercial school. And it was here that she first encountered members of our family. She wrote 'I was re-evacuated to a Mr and Mrs Zephaniah Jones. They did not know what to expect and had taken up both the stair and bedroom carpets replacing them with home made rag rugs! Within a day or two of my arrival (presumably having decided that Eileen was quite civilised!) they had been put back to normal. I soon settled in and was made truly welcome' My great uncle 'Seph' and great aunt Olwen had no children and in time doted on Eileen who became a valued family member.

Eileen and her sister were chosen and billeted together with a retired army captain and his wife while the two younger boys were placed with ten other boys in a local 'mansion'. Because Eileen asked a few days later that all four siblings should be kept together the captain took umbrage, told them to pack their bags and get ready to 'go to the country miles from anywhere'. It so happened that this proved to be an excellent placement on a farm in a lovely Sussex village where they received what Eileen termed 'a wonderful welcome' by the owners. Moreover they were together and enjoyed helping with the animals, with the planting and around the house. Doubtless the two older children were welcomed as extra pairs of hands but for Eileen it was important that 'We had good food, plenty of milk, eggs and butter. I even became rather good at cheesemaking. At Christmas time we helped with cake making and on Christmas day my mum and dad were invited to join us for Christmas dinner.'

'On the first Friday, writes Eileen, I came 'home' for lunch to find we had been joined at the table by one other person. Who would have thought that one day she would be my lovely sister in law, Norah'. Yes, Eileen married my mother's brother, Derrick who was in the RAF, came home on leave, visited his Uncle Seph and Auntie Olwen, and fell in love with the pretty, dark haired evacuee. The rest, as the saying goes is history.

**Janet Lewis**

## Digital Photography Group

In December 2024 members of the group submitted photographs of their choice, from which 6 were selected for our annual calendar.

The following images are the ones that were not selected by the group, but are really worth viewing and are representative of only part of the group's activities throughout the year.

Enjoy!!

Ken Jones and

Alan Sutton



WREXHAM U3A DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP  
CALENDAR 2025



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