

MESSAGE FROM THE INCOMING CHAIR.

Welcome to this quarter's Newsletter and welcome to the new era for Wrexham u3a. I am still trying to work out how I was "persuaded" to get to this position and in such a short time. However, I will give my best to ensure that Wrexham u3a will continue to flourish in the future because, like all of you, I too enjoy taking part in the activities of which I am a member or Group Leader.

I am sure you will join with me in thanking Judith Dolben as Chair, Carolyn as Membership Secretary and Sandra as Groups' Coordinator, for all their hard work and support over the past few years. I am also grateful that they have all agreed to work behind the scenes to support those Committee members in their new roles.

I also appreciate that I have big boots to fill and an impeccable reputation to follow. If you know Judith, you'll know she was an English teacher so I'm sitting here writing this, constantly checking my spellings and punctuation (spell and grammar check really was a good invention). I will be honest and say that I cannot guarantee that my messages from the Chair will always be as eloquent as Judith's were. Unfortunately, I was a teacher of Business Studies so you may find that in future editions I may choose to be very economical with my words.

I have already had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know many of you in the groups I belong to and in my role as Groups' Coordinator. I learnt very quickly that joining the u3a is an excellent way to spend time with friends and to make many new friends. I hope to get to know many more of you in the future and please feel free to say hello and bring any concerns to me, but I would also like to hear about the good things too.

All that remains to be said is enjoy this issue of our Newsletter and, if you can, please make your own contribution in the future.

Lynn, 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

Please e-mail items for **July 2025 newsletter** to newsrexu3a@outlook.com by
20th June 2025.

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

"FAIRWELL...BUT NOT GOODBYE"

Can you recall what you were doing four years ago? Everyday mundane life, with all the routine tasks, cooking ,cleaning, gardening, all rather hum-drum perhaps.

I returned from a relaxing holiday abroad into a covid steeped town, empty supermarket shelves and hitherto unknown restrictions. The planned AGM was cancelled and my anticipated election to the position of chair, just could not happen at that time.

Somehow matters evolved and meetings by zoom and the internet became the norm - a steep learning curve for many u3a members, not least the organising committee.

However, four busy years later my term of office comes to an end and I have a thriving organisation, increasing in membership and development of new groups and activities.

Former acquaintances have become friends and I look forward to continuing my enjoyment of activity with far less responsibility. To single out individuals for their advice and encouragement would be very difficult, but to all officers and post holders at all levels within u3a I send especial thanks as their wise words were heeded.

To all members I give thanks for your patience with me and I know you will extend that same help and concern to the incoming officers and committee members, (Don't just criticise - come on-board and help manage changes!)

Elected committee derive as much enjoyment and enlightenment as I have experienced in the world of Wrexham u3a.

Very best wishes for the next year - the twentieth of the existence of our organisation. Wrexham u3a 2025—2026.

Judith Dolben.

Monthly Talks At The Memorial Hall. Wrexham.

April 15th 2pm. Rachel Twiss A Member of the Tenovus Choir
Rachel will speak about the work that Tenovus Cancer do.

May 20th 2pm. Elizabeth Cottrell A Life in Politics.
Elizabeth will describe her unusual political career, working in the centre of Government and close to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

June 17th 2pm. Dr. Graham Arthurs Bangladesh

July 15th 2pm Chris Morris Strains of Nostalgia.
This is all about British Light Music, with lots of well known tunes and a fun quiz.

Message from the Editor

I would like to thank regular contributors for their continued support and thank you also to members who have not sent items before. I look forward to hearing from you again and also other member who would like to pass on your memories, news or comments.

Ann,

U3A Coach Trips

Firstly, we must thank Margaret for the work she puts into arranging all of the trips for the benefit of us the members. Sometimes it seems an impossible task especially when the National Trust will not accept coaches on a Saturday and they take so long to respond to enquiries.

It takes a lot of time and is sometimes stressful, but members do appreciate what she does for us so successfully. So, thanks Margaret.

The coach day trips recommenced in March with a day visit to the world famous BURY MARKET the sun shone and the coach was near full of members who wanted to spend their money. As most of you will know it is a really bustling and busy market selling a wide range of products including of course the Bury Black Pudding.

On the 17th March 2025, 40 members left Wrexham for a 5-day trip to Torquay.

We stayed at The Victoria Hotel near to the sea front. Which offered comfortable accommodation and good food. Again, the weather was excellent and the sun shone throughout and the members enjoyed days out to:

Colton Fishacre - A National Trust Arts and Crafts Property, and was really worth the visit. It was a 1920's country retreat complete with a tropical garden by the sea.



Cotehele - A National Trust property in Cornwall a Tudor House with extensive gardens down to the sea and quay.

And on the third day a visit to Exeter and to its magnificent Cathedral. With the option to go shopping in the city centre.

All in all, a very good start to 2025.

Ken Jones



GROUP INFORMATION.

GROUPS OF THE MONTH

Have you a musical interest? Why not explore these groups?

MUSIC APPRECIATION :- every 2nd Wednesday 2 - 4pm at ACTON COMMUNITY CENTRE.

RECORDERS:- every 1st and 3rd Thursday 2.30 - 4.30pm at members' homes.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION RUTHIN CRAFTS CENTRE

We are sure that you will have an enjoyable morning/afternoon visiting the many units which exhibit some interesting artefacts and beautiful hand-made items. There is also a cafe onsite.

Before your visit, please check their opening times.
(please see item on page 7 from Janet Lewis)

BRIDGE to play bridge with the Garden Village Bridge Club please contact Clive Cripps cripps@btinternet.com)

WREXHAM CARNIVAL of WORDS

25th April to 2nd May 2025

This festival includes Authors Talks, Story Telling, Poetry, Writers Panel and the Murder Mystery events

For further information, please contact the Library.

POSSIBLE NEW GROUP

Is there anyone interested in joining a 4th Reading Group?

Most reading groups are full, and there are members on waiting lists. If you are interested please let Zarina know (at the groups table) or register your interest on the website.

Zarina is taking over as Co-ordinator now, so it's goodbye from me;

Thank you
Sandra and Zarina

Wine Appreciation Group at Alticcio

On a cold Sunday afternoon in January the wine appreciation group met at Alticcio. Peter McGivern was there to tell us about the wines we tasted, and the ladies who run Alticcio provided us with fantastic canapés to go with each different wine. A great way to spend a cold winter's afternoon!

Jane Dutton



HERITAGE GROUP

In February the group started its 2025 schedule of outings to Port Sunlight. Alan Sutton took the lead on this occasion and arranged a guided tour of the village which was excellent. 26 members attended the visit and all reported how much they enjoyed it.



In March, 27 members made the trip to the historic towns of Much Wenlock and Bridgenorth in Shropshire.

Brian Hughes was the lead this time and we followed the Olympian Trail around Much Wenlock which is considered to be the birth place of the modern Olympics. Along the trail we visited the historic church of The Holy Trinity. Where we were lucky to find the vicar present who gave us a talk about the ancient church and the town's link with the Olympics. From here to Bridgenorth for lunch and to the Cliff Railway, which unfortunately was closed for maintenance work, but this did not detract from a most enjoyable day out in the early spring sun.

Ken Jones



STROLLERS COUNTRY PARKS AND STROLLERS 3

Both groups recommenced their 2025 walks in February after a 2-month winter break. We were gifted with really good weather for each of the 4 walks that were undertaken and they were all well attended. The members were just glad to get out into the fresh air and socialise with the other members once again.

The Strollers Country Parks Group walked in Acton Park in February and Alyn Waters, Llay in March, whilst Strollers 3 walked in and around Holt and Farndon in February and along the Llangollen canal towards The Sun Trevor and then back to Llangollen along the old railway track in March.

Following each of the walks the members enjoyed refreshments which is an important part of each walk.

There are vacancies in each group if any members are interested in a stroll at a pleasant pace and to meet other members on a regular basis.

Ken Jones



RUMMIKUB 2 GROUP TAXING THEIR BRAINS IN THE CONSERVATORY AT THE CUNLIFFE



Submitted by Joyce Evans, Rummikub 2 leader

STROLLERS 2

I took over this group last July to ensure that we were able to carry on strolling, as unfortunately our very busy Ken was unable to continue.

As those who join us know we are a happy band of strollers looking for a chance to get out in the fresh air with company and the opportunity to gather for refreshments usually at the end. Where we go isn't high on our agenda which is good because we do not have a very big choice of walks and do repeat them. We rely very much on our members volunteering to help lead when they can and my sincere thanks goes to those who do. Our motto is very much a case of - if we get lost we get lost together.



I am pleased to say though that we have yet to get lost. Wet yes, lost no! After having excellent walking weather to start with our October walk at Ellesmere lake didn't follow suit as it rained. Fortunately, Alan knew a short cut and got us to the Boat House at the lake before we drowned completely. As the picture shows we quickly dried out and after lovely refreshments got back to our cars just as the heavens opened again.

Lynn Jones

Outing to Welsh Open Snooker Tournament

I went with my 2 friends to the Welsh Open Snooker Tournament at Llandudno recently. The tournament was on from Monday to Sunday.

Monday to Friday which was round 1 up to the Quarter Finals was unreserved seating. This meant that in order to get on the front row, we had to queue up $\frac{3}{4}$ hr before the doors opened, that was an early start each day as the doors opened at 9am.

Saturday and Sunday was allocated seating so this meant we could have a lie in as the doors opened at 12noon. For the first 5 days the matches went on from 10am until all scheduled matches for that day were finished which sometimes made very late nights but we still had a great time.

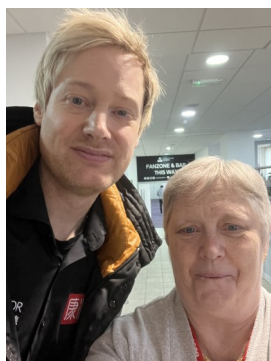
I managed to get a photo of myself with my 2 favourite snooker players - Mark Williams and Neil Robertson as well as some other players. All the players were so obliging, even when they lost.

If you are a snooker fan it is great to see a tournament live.

We are going to go to the Tour Championship tournament in Manchester at the beginning of April.

I can't wait.

Anne Hughes



A Stitch in Time

Over twenty years ago the Urdd National Eisteddfod was held in Ruthin and, as a result of one of the fundraising events, a £5 a ticket raffle, I found myself the lucky owner of a work by Bethan Hughes. It is a stitched embroidered piece on a silk fabric using beads and minute pieces of glass (that description does not do it justice!). When I won it, Bethan, at that time, was a librarian in my husband's Denbighshire education department and in her 'leisure' time embarking on a City and Guilds embroidery diploma. She later became Denbighshire's principal librarian and maintained her interest in, and practise of quilting. This is how I found myself recommending Bethan as one of our monthly speakers.

Having now retired she has dedicated herself to her work as a textile artist. She has a studio at the Craft Centre in Ruthin and there is at present a solo exhibition of her work in the gallery entitled *Stitch a Voice/Pwytho Llais*. Bethan's colour palette is basically red and black and reflects the fabric of old Welsh quilts and traditional dress and the recurring X in her stitching is a symbol focusing on both the vote or represents a kiss or sometimes a negative mark.

The other work in which Bethan has recently been involved, the subject of her talk at our January u3a meeting, tells the story of the Welsh Women's Peace Petition of 1923/4 and of how she shaped a community project which led to the production of *Thread of Peace/Edefyn Heddwch* a 16 metre long quilt featuring stitched signatures of North Walian women who signed the original petition.

A small group of us, all u3a members, had the privilege of visiting Bethan's studio, saw how the work had been produced and how individual pieces had been displayed in Ruthin houses as part of the project.

We saw Bethan's work in the gallery along with that of other artists including Lowri Davies, a ceramic artist, who produces exquisite bone china tableware decorated with floral, fauna & birds. Her exhibition in Ruthin is *Women in Ceramics/Merched ar Lestri*, seven 'portraits' of women in ceramics.

These are just two of Wales' talented artists and we are so fortunate to have such a superb craft centre within a pleasant eighteen mile journey from Wrexham. This particular exhibition finishes at the end of March but there is always something of interest in the gallery and we highly recommend a visit.

Just to add-there is a coffee shop on site or you might like to try Small Plates the excellent little restaurant where we finished our day out!

Janet Lewis



Memorable Theatre Visit by Two of our Members.

In October last year Sandra and I decided to go to see Shen Yun, the Chinese dance group, this February at Venue Cymru. I had only seen the Facebook adverts, but Sandra's friend had been last year and recommended it. It was so worth the cost of the ticket, we had amazing seats in Row F.

It was fantastic, the dancers were brilliant, and I loved the way they jumped over a low wall and the 3D animation took over the screen behind, so the story continued, then they would reappear from the screen later. There were 16 different dances during the 2 hour performance, each introduced with an explanatory storyline.

They travel the world giving newly choreographed performances each year, all based on Classical Chinese dance and culture, which is banned in China itself. The music is the first in the world to combine classical Western and Chinese instruments, including the 2 string ERHU and the plucked PIPA. These two lead the melody on top of a full Western orchestra of strings, woodwind and brass.

It was an amazing afternoon's entertainment at Venue Cymru, Llandudno. This company, based in New York, comprised of talented dancers and musicians depicting Chinese culture. A wonderful display of colourful costumes and traditional dance including impressive acrobatics was experienced in this extremely creative production.

The photos are taken from the programme as we weren't allowed to take any pictures, so apologies for shadows etc. I hope I got the names of the dances correct.

Carolyn and Sandra.



Heavenly Return



Enlightenment