

WELCOME EVERYONE TO OUR SPRING NEWSLETTER

How on earth did it become Easter time so soon as it seems like we were just welcoming in the new year? Easter was early this year so I hope you all enjoyed your Easter festivities and not eaten too many Easter eggs.

We hope it is easier for you to find our newsletter on our new website and easy to look back at our previous ones. They are always useful to look back on to check dates etc.

Enjoy reading this issue and thank you to those of our members who have forwarded items for inclusion. Remember it is your u3a and your newsletter so, if you can, please think about making a contribution to our next one or helping in some way to produce it. This does not mean becoming a committee member, unless you would like to, but could simply mean becoming a volunteer helper.

We are looking for any budding reporters, with a few hours to spare, who may enjoy helping to research, write and organise articles for the Newsletter. Anne, our Newsletter Editor, will still be responsible for editing and producing the Newsletter, unless of course you would like to help with this also. If you think this could be you, please make yourself known to myself or any committee member.

Anne is ready to receive all contributions and you can contact her through the website on 'Members Info' and then 'Committee and Support Team'. You can also use this to contact myself and other committee members.

All contributions for the next newsletter which will be out in July will need to be with Anne by 15 June 2026.

U3A ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE

For the year 1st May 2026 to 30th April 2027

Membership renewal £15

New Members £15

Any membership queries please forward to the email below

e-mail: membership@wrexhamu3a.uk

We are encouraging members to renew online but if this impossible for you Anne will be at the May monthly meeting with a card machine if anyone wants to pay by card.

LOOKING AHEAD

WREXHAM u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS PART 2

Wrexham u3a members are invited to join an Afternoon Tea Dance at the Memorial Hall on Tuesday 16th June 2026 from 2 to 4 pm.

At a cost of just £5 per person each party-goer will enjoy an Afternoon Tea, which includes small sandwiches, a scone with jam and cream and a slice of cake, plus tea or coffee.

Silhouette will be playing live 60's and 70's music for your entertainment.

There will be a limit on the number of attendees, so booking is essential and will be available between Friday 1st May and Saturday 31st May on the website.

Please note: you will not be able to join this event on the day.

AUGUST TREASURE HUNT

Arrangements for our annual Treasure Hunt around Wrexham are well under way and all details will be in our July issue. Please remember that this replaces our regular monthly meeting.

GROUP OF THE MONTH - STROLLERS 2

Our Motto - If we get lost we get lost together (but just for your information we have never got lost) and we brave whatever the weather brings us. Not wanting to tempt fate but we have had some great weather so far this year even when the forecasts have looked like it could be a disaster.

Strollers 2 is exactly what it says on the packet. We are a friendly group that take gentle walks around the Wrexham area avoiding as many slopes as possible and definitely no stiles. We reward ourselves with refreshments on completion.

Our year, as tradition dictates, began with a stroll to the Horseshoe Pass in Llangollen to view the Snow drops in bloom. We also enjoyed a visit to the church to digest its wonderful history.

Next we took ourselves off to Chirk for a very pleasant walk across the aqueduct and along the canal.

As Leader of the group I do rely greatly on our group members volunteering to help lead our walks for which I am extremely grateful. We try to choose different walks over the year if we can. However, this is not always possible but we all agree that the fresh air and exercise and company of our group members is far more important.

If you would like to join us please go to our website and groups to contact me.

Lynn Jones

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It has already been a busy first three months of the year for you and your committee.

Our February monthly meeting, with an excellent turn out, saw us celebrating our 20 years Anniversary with cake and toasts for another 10 successful years and with interesting talks from our three speakers.

AGM - MARCH

Our annual AGM at our March monthly meeting went very smoothly and you now have a committee ready to go for another year.

We welcome our new committee member Ed Hewitt-Symonds. All, but two, of our committee members were re-elected back into post and I would like to thank them all for all their hard work and efforts over the last year.

However, we do say thank you to Sue Holland, who did not stand for re-election, for her contributions over the past year.

We also have to say a big thank you to Stan Moore, our long standing u3a Secretary, who stepped down from the committee this year. On behalf of all u3a members I thank Stan for his many years of loyal service but I know he will still be somewhere helping our new Secretary, Linda Wilson, and continuing to support myself as Chair and the committee.

We do still have space for more committee members or volunteers to help run your u3a.

REGISTERING ON OUR NEW WEBSITE

We hope you have been able to browse our new Webpage which you can access by searching for Wrexham u3a on your usual search engine eg Google. Once you have done this we have asked you to register yourselves on our Beacon portal. We thank those of you who have already done so but may I please remind you to now log in and check your personal information and remember to fill in your 'emergency contact'.

If you still have not registered, we encourage you to please do so, as this will enable you to:

- Check or change your details
- Apply to join groups through Beacon (not just the website)
- View a calendar of meetings and events especially those produced by Group Leaders, and
- Renew your membership on line which we would like you to do if you possibly can.

If you are still having issues, please do not hesitate to reach out to our Webteam who are ready to give whatever help is needed.

GROUP LEADERS

We also thank your Group Leaders many of whom who have been busy getting to grips with our new system. We know they have continued to carry on regardless so that you can all continue to enjoy your groups. We held our successful Group Leaders' Meeting at the end of January in the Cunliffe where the main discussion revolved around our new web system.

Best wishes to all for another successful year for our Wrexham u3a.

Lynn Jones - Chair

LUNCH GROUP 5 CELEBRATE THEIR 1ST ANNIVERSARY



On 3rd March Lunch Group 5 gathered to celebrate the Group's 1st anniversary - see photo - though sadly one member was unable to attend that day.

Originally eight people joined the group but two subsequently left because of other commitments. However another joined after seeing the new group mentioned in the monthly bulletin.

Since then these members have met regularly at 1p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month with Jim Read acting as our friendly and very efficient Co-ordinator.

The decision about where to meet the following month is discussed by all the members and so far we have been to a different venue each time. One member is reliant on public transport so we have not strayed too far afield and on the odd occasion when we have gone to somewhere not on a convenient bus route, arrangements have been made to give this member a lift.

We have also kept to reasonably priced venues in the hope of making the group accessible to all u3a members who might like to attend.

Of course the standard of food and service has varied but we have always enjoyed the company and can often be found chatting long after we have finished eating.

Elizabeth Pettitt

2026 MONTHLY TALKS AT THE MEMORIAL HALL

May 19th - Natalie Cummins - The Fiddle

A true story, tracing a precious violin across landscapes devastated by war and terror, to safety and restoration in 21st century Britain.

June 16th - Silhouette - 20th Anniversary Tea Dance

Enjoy an Afternoon Tea, which includes small sandwiches, a scone with jam and cream and a slice of cake, plus tea or coffee.

Silhouette will be playing live 60's and 70's music for your entertainment.

July 21st - Louise Pickford - North East Wales Search & Rescue

A talk on the work of the North East Wales Search & Rescue service.

August 18th - Treasure Hunt

Further details to follow.

September 15th - TBC

October 20th - Simon McLeave

Simon will talk on his books "The Snowden Murders".

November 17th - Jonathan Gammond - Wrexham Museum

Jonathan will talk on the history of the building of the Wrexham Museum. In the 1960s/70s it was a Police Station.

December 15th - Christmas Dinner

DIGI GROUP

Annual Photographic Competition 2026

Each year the group holds a competition for the members who submit images to be judged by an independent adjudicator.

The entries this year were of a very high standard showing the progress the group is making.

Three categories were selected and in total over 50 entries were submitted.

The results for each category were as follows -

NIGHT IMAGES



STIWT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Winner Laurna Smith



EVENING SAILAWAY

Runner up Ken Jones



FIREWORKS

Runner Up Maureen Evans

TREES



REACH FOR THE SKY

Winner Laurna Smith



A SHAFT OF LIGHT

Runner up Sylvia Clutton



AUTUMN SUNSHINE

Runner up Ken Jones

ABSTRACT QUIRKY UNUSUAL



ABSTRACT IN COLOUR

Winner Derrick & Bridget Gwilliam Runner up Sylvia Clutton



MOLTON LAVA IMPRESSION



ORANGE GLOW

Runner up Ken Jones

Well done to all members who submitted entries for the competition. Ken Jones/Alan Sutton.

STROLLERS 2 — APRIL WALK, MINERA

For our April walk Helen, one of our members, kindly agreed to organise and lead a stroll around her beloved Minera, a place she has lived in since 1957. She proved to be a fountain of knowledge of the area as well as recounting her history of the lead mines. We also broke with tradition by parking at her house and not in a car park. Fortunately, she didn't charge parking fees.



The group walked a circular route for approximately 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours around the lead mining district of Minera. Although promising some rain, the weather was kind to us and everyone enjoyed the picturesque walk through the now peaceful countryside. We were enlightened by some of the not so peaceful lead mining history of the area which lasted over two hundred years and employed hundreds of men, as well as some of the local characters who lived here in the past. This included a local who patented the mining drill 'excelsior' which was successfully used in the construction of the Panama Canal, who would have thought!

Thank you Helen for leading our walk and to top it all off she invited us into her incredible garden to partake of refreshments. As you can see from the pictures we found this as enjoyable as the walk. This, obviously, was a 'one-off' as we do usually end up in a café. Thank you again Helen for all this and not getting us lost which was obviously not going to happen due to her extensive knowledge of the area.

Lynn Jones

Group Leader

Strollers 2

STROLLERS 2 WALK FOR APRIL

Nine members met at my home.

The weather was fair, sunshine and cloud but rain was expected from midday. It was mild and there was no wind.

I led the group up the hill between fields where I explained some of the history of the land. It was a lead mining area and would have been smelly, full of smoke and noise. The land had been reclaimed and now presented a view of grassy fields with horses grazing. At a junction of footpaths we turned right along an old railway track which would have carried the lead and other minerals down the valley.

The fresh green of the leaves, the white wood anemones and the wild cherry blossom was a welcome sign that Spring really had arrived. After leaving the woodland path we turned right down a lane where there was an abundance of wild flowers on the banks. There was a view across the valley to Minera church. We turned left near the bottom of the hill to the track which took us up towards the quarry. (There was much discussion about the new u3a website at this point!).

After a while we rejoined the railway track and turned left to return to my house, where the group were offered drinks, cake and biscuits and it was a pleasure to sit in the beautiful garden and enjoy the company of u3a members..

Helen Payne



APRIL IS THE CRUELLEST MONTH...." Said T S Eliot

What memories does April call to mind for you? April showers, perhaps? Easter eggs and floppy-eared rabbits? St George and the Dragon legends?

Yes April is all those things and more, much more.

April in my childhood meant Easter holidays and long walks, with gran and my younger sister, through woods to the playground, the Rec, where there were swings and slides and dizzying roundabouts, a pitch and putt site that was always closed... but most of all was the woodland, waited for and watched until the days when all I could see was a vast expanse of vivid blue, bluebells in abundant glory, stretching up slopes of dappled shade. Glorious, glorious blue, not quite purple, or violet or even regal indigo but a particular colour that was special to itself and not replicated anywhere in any garden. Stooping close to see the delicate bell heads swaying gently, I could see they were many hues of blue, dark towards the stem and paler at the tips, petal-tips that turned up like elfin hats in fairy tales, on slender stalks in shades of lime green....I could look for ages, watching and looking, drinking in the glorious scene, until a voice called "race you to the swings!"

Our return walk was slower, tired with the exertion of pushing the swings and younger sister saying, "Push me up higher, yes, higher!" But gran would intervene with a gentle "That's enough for today girls" and "Yes, we can come again next week" so satisfied we turned for home... passing bluebells on the edge of the path we picked a few stems to put in the jam jar vase to keep the memory a little longer. That was seventy years ago, it held no knowledge that wild flowers were endangered and our few stems were hardly a threat to that abundant glory, were they?

Now, much of the Rec or Recreation ground has been absorbed into a housing development, the playground swings and slides remain but the Witches' hat climbing frame gone with the "Elf and safety gnomes"....I don't remember anyone ever falling off it in those less litigious days, but the dare and danger was part of the fun!

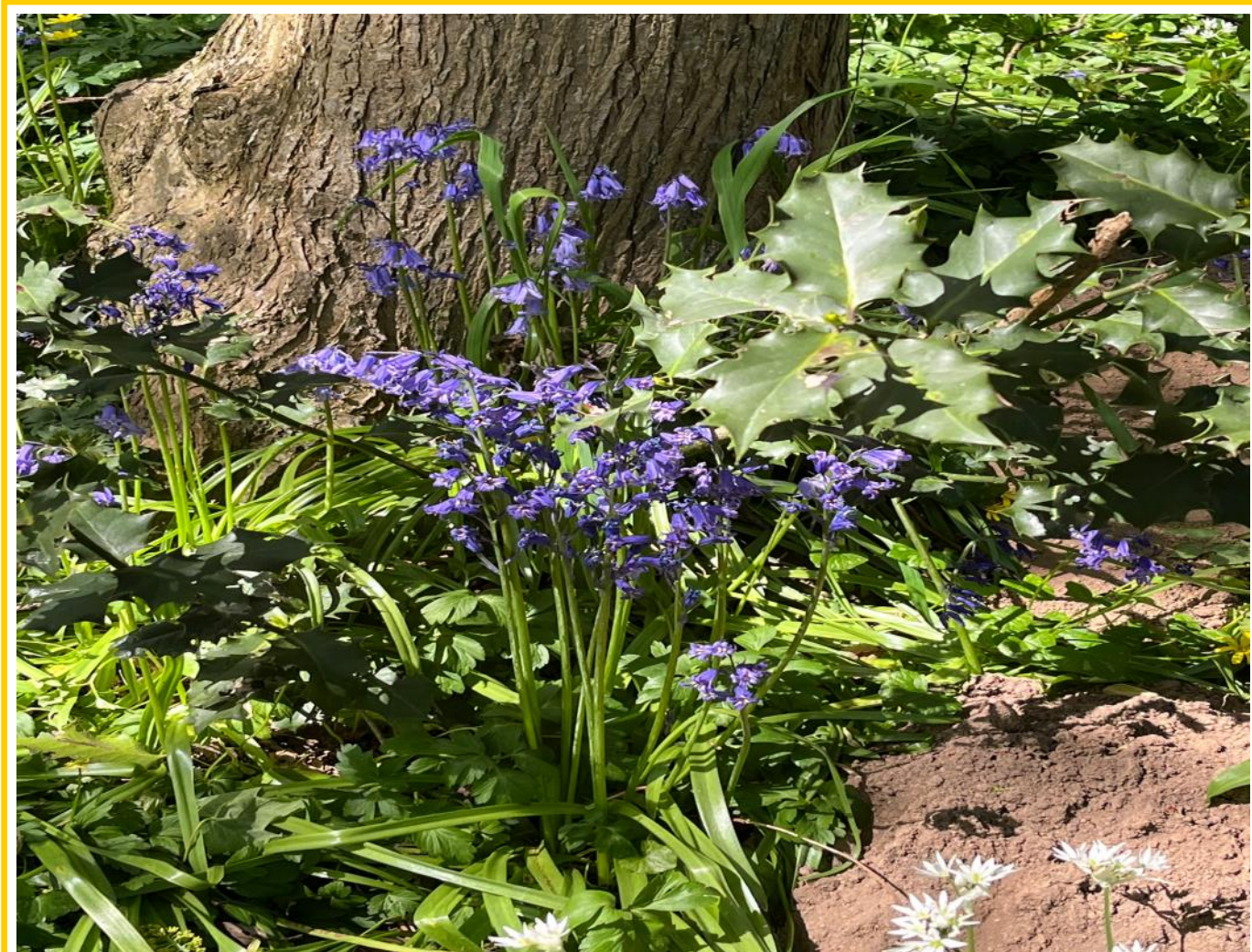
Once home the bluebells looked less vivid in their jam jar prison, it saddened me to see them looking less colourful than I remembered in the woods, so I would run up to the sitting room where over the fireplace, (instead of a mirror) was a print of a bluebell wood, almost identical to the one we had walked through earlier, there they were, restored and vibrant in my memory forever.

Now, that seventy plus years later, I recall those walks as I wander through the grounds of Erddig Hall, down the Sontley hill, turn right and walk the path along the river stream and turn and stare, gaze up at the horizontal layers of blue, bluebells nodding gently, as if acknowledging my presence, eagerly I press on wanting to see yet more of these vivid flowers... each bend in the path reveals yet more.... Surely this has to be the best display I have ever witnessed in Wrexham in these last forty three years... nestled among the bluebells are spikes of wild white garlic and scarlet champions....more delight as the path meanders over the giggling stream via the bridge, pass through the gate and admire the woven windbreaks circling the rustic benches. Rested and renewed by the brilliant, foamy blossom displays, it is time to return, climb up the path to the car, but the mental magical images remain, to be recalled whenever the woes of the world intrude..

Remember wherever you travel, in Wales or wherever.

"Take nothing but photographs and leave only footprints".

Judith Dolben





WE HAVE A NEW GROUP - Tai Chi

This group started on Friday 6th March. It has 15 members and is running well. The dates of the classes are on the website if you would like to join.

All of the following need more members before they can be set up -

- ♦ **Natural History,**
- ♦ **Creative Writing,**
- ♦ **Daytime Board Games**
- ♦ **Chair Zumba.**