

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER

After the prolonged heat wave this year I am sure that many of you are pleased to see less sun and cooler weather.

I also hope you will forgive me for mentioning the 'C' word but, as far as I am concerned, it's never too soon to talk Christmas. Our Wrexham u3a Christmas Lunch is now open for bookings, payment and menu choices. You will find all of the information you need on our website and in this Newsletter.

Happy reading

BEHIND THE SCENES AT YOUR COMMITTEE

Volunteering to help on your Committee shouldn't be a daunting one. Please remember that without a committee and Group Leaders there wouldn't be a Wrexham u3a.

We all have roles, but our terms of office are fixed, so we need members to help take over these roles when that time comes. A few hours to spare every month is all that is asked and to be able to get to our monthly committee meetings does help. I promise you we are a happy bunch. We have tea and biscuits and between our light hearted moments we do, obviously, make some important decisions.

If you aren't sure and would like to pop along to one of our committee meetings to find out what happens then you are very welcome to contact me and I will arrange it. Almost everyone on the current committee joined at the same time and the clock is ticking so please help if you can.

So what is happening in Committee at the moment?

Firstly, for those involved with organising and running our successful 20th Anniversary Year celebrations, a well-deserved rest over the summer was definitely due.

Zarina, our Groups' Coordinator, has been and still is busy helping to set up new groups, offering help to Group Leaders when needed, organising the October Group Leader's Meeting (with a buffet to thank them for all they do for you our members), making arrangements for our Christmas Lunch and all this whilst welcoming a new granddaughter into her family. Thank you and congratulations.

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR (continued)

John and Ed's business acumen has been invaluable when updating our policies to ensure that they are easy to read and understand. However, they have only touched the tip of the iceberg so we look forward to more revised policies in the future.

Jane is constantly on the look-out for new and interesting speakers to ensure that you have a monthly meeting speaker for at least well into next year. For those of you who know what this particular role entails can verify that any help by suggesting a speaker will be fully appreciated.

Thanks to Kate, with help from Andy (or possibly the other way round), our Website is running smoothly, is as up to date as possible and at the same time spreading the good works of our and the Network u3a.

Linda, who is doing an excellent job of getting to grips with the role of Secretary, helps with the website too.

Thanks Anne for looking after our new members and she has proved to be a real whizz with our new card reader machine which really helped her/us with our renewals this year and for paying for group events.

Finally, but not least, our money is safe and gets spent wisely and this is thanks to Gwyneth, who constantly keeps a keen eye on our funds.

Lastly a big thank you to Val, your vice-chair, for supporting me as Chair and stepping into my shoes when needed (and other Committee members - you know who you are).

Me, I make lots of decisions, run and attend meetings and write a lot of emails and, obviously, articles for the Newsletter. The best part though is I get to work and socialise with you our wonderful members.

If you can help us by joining your committee, please do so - **your u3a needs you.**

Lynn Jones

Chair

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

We have had some good articles for this issue of the Newsletter. We have also had some that will be used in future Newsletters.

Deadlines for submission of items for the next 3 issues are as follows:-

Winter - 15 December 2026

Spring - 15 March 2027

Summer - 15 June 2027

If anyone has any contributions these will need to be with Anne (news@wrexhamu3a.uk) by the above dates.

ANNUAL TREASURE HUNT

This year's Treasure Hunt, set by Ken Jones and Alan Sutton, was based around Wrexham City Centre.

Nine teams, totally thirty-five members, participated. Congratulations to the winning team - 'Quil' who solved the clues and worked out the riddles, comprising of Carolyn McKenzie, Julie Chambers, Sue Holland and Ruth Povey.

Inevitably there was tea and cake for everyone who participated. Thanks to Julie for the cake and Alan, Wendy and Alison for helping to organise the event.



MONTHLY TALKS AT THE MEMORIAL HALL

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 - No meeting

January 19th 2027 - Colin Burnham

Colin will talk about the Vale of Llangollen Canal Boat Trust.

February 16th - Bill Harriman

Anecdotal Evidence - Bill is a Guns/Armoury expert from the Antiques Roadshow.

March 16th - Stan Moore

Stan will talk about Richard Wilson, Artist.

Please note this will be our AGM as well

April 20th - Nick Fry

Nick will talk on the Stained Glass Windows of Chester Cathedral

UPCOMING DAY & THEATRE TRIPS

TRIPS 2026

- 3rd Nov Hanbury Hall
- 12 Dec Powis Castle Dressed for Christmas, then to Coed y Dinas.
Restaurant facilities available. Price £15 for members of National Trust, non-members of National Trust will pay entrance to Powis Castle

Contact Margaret Hadwin-Smith on 01978 541646 for more details and to book. More details are also available on the Wrexham u3a website.

THEATRE VISITS - Are you interested in seeing any of the following shows? If so, please contact Jan at evansjan114@gmail.com for further details.

Grove Park Theatre - 'Strangers on a Train' Saturday. 31st Oct, 2 pm £11

Theatr Clwyd

- 'The Haunting of Hill House' - Wed. 14th Oct. 2.30 pm
- 'Othello' - Sat. 24th Oct. 2.30 pm
- 'The Picture of Dorian Grey' - Wed. 28th Oct. 2.30 pm and Sat. 31st Oct. 2.30pm

BOOK CORNER



In July I attended the 20th Annual Crime Writers Festival in Harrogate (sponsored by Theakstones Old Peculier Legendary Ales).

This event is the most prestigious celebration of crime writing. From best selling authors to up and coming authors the festival is dedicated to nurturing fresh talent and providing a platform for new writers.

It is held at the Old Swan Hotel which was where Agatha Christie stayed when she went missing in 1926.

It started on Thursday 23rd July with a creative writing workshop during the day and the Crime Writers Awards & party in the evening.

Author Elly Griffiths won the "Theakson Old Peculier Crime Novel of the Year 2026 and David Baldacci (who is one of my favourite writers) won the Theakson Old Peculier Outstanding Contribution to writing award.

On Friday 24th & Saturday 25th there were lots of events held on the Main Stage. The events were interviews with various crime writers (by interviewers such as Louise Minchin and Jeremy Vine to name but a couple) which lasted 45mins followed by a Q&A session with the audience and then the writers would sign books for those who had bought copies of the books they were promoting.

On the 24th in the evening was Interview Bingo with the authors and on the 25th there was an evening quiz with the authors.

On Sunday 26th the weekend finished with an interview (by Steph McGovern) of Ann Cleves (Author of Vera TV series) and Brenda Blethyn.

I only bought 3 books which were by my favourite authors but I ended up going home with a total of 10 because also during the days publishing companies e.g. Penguin were holding promotion events for their writers and were giving books away.

Also on site was the "Detectives Tent" which was where the bar was and where the authors used to go to just generally converse with members of the public. This was where I got most of my selfies with the authors.

The highlight of the weekend was getting a selfie with Brenda Blethyn, who was really lovely.

I was like a cat in headlights as there was so much to do and see but it was a brilliant weekend. I will definitely go again.

Anne Hughes

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Val Hughes

Vice Chair of Wrexham u3a.



As Vice Chairperson tell us a little about your early life and your working life?

I was born in Wallasey and brought up in Moreton on the Wirral. I loved languages at school and after university I taught French locally for 8 years.

What motivated you to join Wrexham u3a and what do you most enjoy about being a member of the Committee?

I retired to live in Chirk just before the first lockdown but when I tried to find a group of Recorder players, I discovered the u3a Wrexham group was full. After the lockdowns, when things started up again, it was possible for me to join Recorders so I became a member of u3a Wrexham. Unfortunately the Recorder group wasn't able to meet because the leader was in poor health. Eventually after playing with the Shrewsbury Recorder Consort for a few years, I offered to re-launch a u3a group and called it Recorders for Pleasure! And somehow that led to me ending up on the Wrexham u3a committee which is a privilege. A great team of people to work with on behalf of all our members!

Do you find time for other hobbies/organisations?

I sing in Lleisiau'r Afon ladies choir based in Carrog and have been learning Welsh since my first week in Wales seven years ago! I also volunteer at the Welshpool and Llanfair heritage railway as shop assistant and assistant station master.

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Faith-full, (in every sense I hope) Diligent Passionate

If you could spend a few minutes with someone famous from any era, who would it be?

I was such a huge Beatles fan from my early teens - I think it's only now I would be able to overcome my shyness to be able to meet my idol Paul McCartney!

Tell us about your favourite holiday destination?

Wales, of course, which is why I feel so lucky to have been able to retire here.

What was the last gift you gave/you received?

I am not a cook but last week I managed to produce gluten-free banana flapjacks for a group of friends!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU (continued)

Name a book you would take to a desert island?

Well it would have to be the Bible, which I'm currently reading as beibl.net, a lovely modern translation of ancient wisdom.

Tea or coffee?

I'm a big tea drinker and can't function without regular mugs.

Cocktail or mocktail?

Is it just me or does alcohol disagree with us as we get older? I'll be sticking to mocktails and tonic without the gin!

Early bird or night owl?

Always have been a night owl, used to stay up late on the computer in my working life.

Beach person or country lover?

Used to love a holiday lying on a beach in the past but perhaps a gentle stroll in the country suits me better these days.

Cat or dog?

I have had beautiful cats as loving companions.

Sweet or savoury?

I was born in Moreton in the shadow of the Cadbury's factory and have been addicted to chocolate ever since!

Classical music or pop & rock?

My son plays in an indie rock band and I have to turn up at gigs in Liverpool to support him - but I listen to Classic FM to calm me in the car!

TV or radio?

I love Radio 4 in the morning but would miss my TV diet of fictional detective murder stories.

What might we be surprised to know about you?

I was in the first batch of college leavers to be ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1987 and in the first group of women ordained priest in 1994. I served in various parishes in Chester and Liverpool Dioceses till 2019 and am still active in my retirement in Wales.

Now tell us a secret!

I have a non-identical twin-sister!

Now who is next to share their story — and maybe even a secret!

Janet Lewis

JULY MONTHLY MEETING

Talk by Louise Pickford on 'Search and Rescue'

This was a really interesting talk about a service that is quietly organised and gets on with a really important job without very much publicity. Louise Pickford introduced herself as Deputy Team Leader for the North East Wales Search and Rescue Team. She explained that they are one of the seven constituent teams under the umbrella of the North Wales Mountain Rescue Association (NWMRA). Each team is autonomous but the NWMRA coordinates training, insurance cover and radio communication across the region.

The N E Wales Search and Rescue team covers Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire, north Powys including the Berwyn mountains and Conwy up to the river Conwy, so quite a big area.

Louise explained that all members of the Search and Rescue Teams are volunteers and our local one has 53, called 'operational hill team members'. They come from all walks of life, employed and retired. Call-outs can come through at any time of the day or night and obviously not everyone is available at any one time. A minimum of eight are required for each call-out and all teams help each other out as necessary.

The region shares one Cave Rescue team between them - there are some quite extensive cave systems in North Wales - and one Search and Rescue Dog team - Chloe and her handler Dave.

The NE Wales team has around 80 - 100 call-outs a year, some quite short, others days-long. The team are currently base at Liverpool City Council's outdoor centre at Colomendy, near Loggerheads, Mold. A Search and Rescue Team is called out through the police via the 999 system.

We were shown pictures of the Search and Rescue Team's vehicles. They have one big 4x4 van which is their mobile HQ carrying all their equipment eg folding stretcher with a mountain bike wheel, inflatable mattress, a raft, boiler for brewing up. There are two very old Land Rover Defenders, which were described as very noisy and uncomfortable but totally reliable and able to get anywhere! There is also an Air Ambulance helicopter operating in this area and a Coastguard one.

Louise described the training all team members must have. Everyone does basic paper map and compass work training (- technology is useful but doesn't always work out in the hills!), training with the Fire and Rescue service in water awareness and with the Coastguard team on ropework. Everyone has basic life support training and about half the team are also trained up to ambulance technician level, the aim being to stabilise the person's condition until they have reached the ambulance or helicopter.

Continued on next page.....

JULY MONTHLY MEETING (continued)

Each team has identified search managers who have more extensive training, so that on a search call out one of those will be responsible for a search plan specific to that particular missing person.

Questions from the audience

Funding - a little comes from the Police, some big companies eg. Tesco sponsor, but the rest must be raised from the public. It costs around £40,000 p a to run one team, excluding extras like replacing worn-out equipment.

Types of call-out - around here a lot are due to accidents. In Eryri, there are more to do with people over-estimating their own abilities in the mountains and being ill-equipped

Use of drones - the police use drones eg tracking wildfires and there are individuals on S&R Teams who use them. There is increasing discussion about using drones routinely by teams in the future

Kate Bunning

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

This year's Christmas Lunch will be held on Tuesday 24th November - 12 noon for 12.30 pm.

The venue is Maesgwyn Hall, Mold Road, Wrexham, LL11 2AF

The cost will be 3 courses £28.00 - Tea and Coffee included

Bookings are now being taken.

Please contact Zarina Kagan to reserve your place, submit your Menu choices and specify any Food Allergies.

CLOSING DATE : 8th NOVEMBER 2026. Full payments required by the closing date

PAYMENTS

These will be taken at the Monthly meeting in October 26.

Alternatively, members can pay by BACS, Bank Transfer.

If you wish to pay by BACS, Bank Transfer please email Anne Hughes (email below) and she will be able to give you the details.

hughesuc26@gmail.com

You can also pay by cheque , made out to Wrexham U3A. Please email Zarina Kagan for details (email below).

zarina.kagan@crosslanes.co.uk

The Menu is on the next page.



u3a Christmas Menu 2026



Tuesday 24th November - 12 noon for 12.30 pm
Maesgwyn Hall, Mold Road, Wrexham, LL11 2AF

STARTERS

Winter vegetable soup - Henllan bread wedge (vg)
Pear, walnut & balsamic watercress salad (vg)
Traditional prawn cocktail, Marie rose sauce, Henllan bread (gf)
Bang bang popcorn chicken, mint yogurt
Mini Fat Boar sticky pigs in blankets, garlic mayonnaise
Festive loaded croquettes, thyme salt, crispy turkey & bacon bits, cheese sauce

MAINS

Garlic and sage roasted turkey, sage and onion stuffing, pig in blanket, buttered Brussel sprouts, roast potatoes, rich pan gravy, braised red cabbage, maple glazed root vegetables
Crispy kale, spinach & garden pea risotto, charred tenderstem broccoli (gf)
Nut roast, cranberry stuffing, Brussel sprouts, chateaux potato, vegan gravy, braised red cabbage, maple glazed root vegetables (vg)
Seared Seabass, coconut Penang curry, garlic chili noodles, prawn crackers
Pan fried salmon, buttered new potatoes, hollandaise sauce, minted greens
Fat Boar 8oz festive burger, bacon, brie, sticky pigs, cranberry, crispy turkey bits, skinny fries
12oz sticky glazed bacon chop, poached eggs, hand cut chips, dressed leaves (gf)
8oz Welsh dry aged ribeye steak, roasted tomato, chestnut mushroom, peppercorn sauce, skinny fries (gf)(+£6 supp)

DESSERTS

Fat Boar Christmas pudding, vanilla brandy custard (gf/vg)
Double chocolate brownie, vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce (gf/vg)
Raspberry and white chocolate cheesecake, berry compote, chantilly cream
Warm Belgium waffle, honeycomb chocolate dust, vanilla ice cream
Citrus tart, crème chantilly, orange compote

3 COURSES £28 - Tea and Coffee included (vg = vegan/veg - gf = gluten free)



U3A DENBIGH & FLINT SHOW

Report from the u3a stand at the 2026 Denbighshire and Flintshire County Agricultural Show

The 162nd Denbigh and Flint Agricultural Show took place on Thursday 20 August 2026 at their showground in the Vale of Clwyd near the Green, Denbigh. The u3a North Wales Regional Network decided to have a stand to publicise the u3a on behalf of the eleven member groups from across the North Wales region. I volunteered on behalf of Wrexham u3a and worked the 12 noon-14.00 hours slot, along with the Network secretary Elaine and treasurer Pat.

Elaine and Pat had collated and set out a grand display of u3a information and material, including photos and lists of a wide range of different u3a group activities from across the North Wales region to interest people and whet appetites, all under a blue and yellow u3a gazebo lent by the Ruthin branch, behind a banner lent by Penmaenmawr u3a and wearing bright yellow official u3a tabbards lent by Llandudno branch.

The weather had turned blustery and cool with sudden downpours of rain (so the gazebo was very welcome!) yet despite this there was a huge turnout for the Show. The fields were all dry and brown by now of course, but the trackways were soon pretty muddy. The crowds seemed well used to this though, with wellies and Barbours much in evidence.

Network Vice-Chair Vicki had been preparing a glossy, gateleg, bi-lingual leaflet about the North Wales u3as specifically to be in time for this event, so we had piles ready to hand out to people. We were unfortunately not organised enough to have counted all that we had of these first, so couldn't say exactly how many were given out, but business did seem gratifyingly steady (although we did occasionally cause some offence when people indignantly said, 'but I'm not retired yet!') Quite a few thanked us for a leaflet because they said they had heard of the u3a and had been thinking of joining. Several were from outside North Wales, visiting family for the holidays, but took a leaflet anyway because of course there are u3a's all over the UK now.

My slot finished at 14.00 when two members of Berwyn u3a arrived. I had a quick look around the rest of the show but was due to set off on holiday the next morning so couldn't spend long before heading home to pack. It all looked an interesting variety of mainly rural and agricultural - based activities and sales stands though. As I left, a large procession of vintage cars and other vehicles was heading into the main ring and a horse-riding competition was taking place in the other, with a fearful-looking axe display happening near the exit gate!

I enjoyed it all and would say that it was a worthwhile promotional activity for the u3a and would recommend for the future.

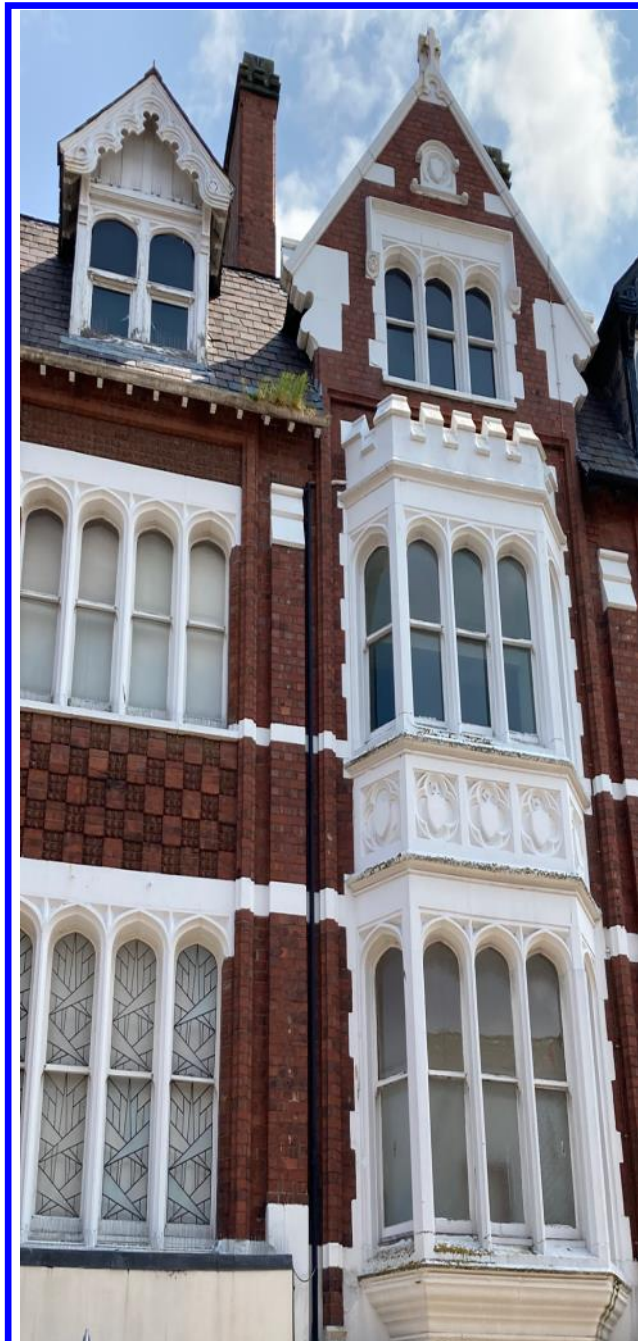
Kate Bunning

GUESS THE LOCATION

Below are 5 pictures showing places within Wrexham—can you guess where they are.

Answers in the next Edition of the Newsletter.





ITEMS FROM ANNE DOUGLAS

I have been making greetings cards with dried flowers and below are two examples.



A POEM - ANOTHER WALK AROUND THE PARK

We started off, by strolling up the Way
The day was warm and airless
The trees were still, green and lush-looking
The grass, tall and swaying slightly
Wild flowers grew in abundance,
The red horse chestnut tree
had lost its dark pink flower
And still the weeping beech wept
The camellias.. flowers
now, long vanished,
Stood lonely on the Lake' shore
By a Chinese-looking jetty,
Ten ginkgo bilobas grew
In awe of the Tree of the Year
Of five hundred years, nearby,
Through the trees, close to undergrowth
We made our way homewards
Out of the park, through a Chinese garden
Past contemplative zen-like boulders
Until passing beneath a wealth of
delicious, ancient trees
We found ourselves
On our garden path
~The blue weed-like forget-me-nots
still growing through the cracks of stone~
Leading to our door, once more.