

BARMOUTH



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Newsletter



Autumn 2013

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A message from Alan Vincent

Activity in our U3A during August is necessarily fairly quiet as many members are on holiday, this time including myself and Geraldine. It's always interesting for people to look at other people's holiday snaps (big grin!!) so for this edition of our newspaper here are some "snapshots" of our trip to the USA, primarily for a family wedding.

Five years on from when we last travelled across to Atlanta by Delta, and the menu on the flight does not seem to have changed at all. It's still chicken or pasta and the chicken still runs out before they reach me – so it's pasta or pasta as it has been every time I have taken this trip!

What has changed in this time is the terminal at Atlanta – transit passengers now go into a separate area, so instead of the 4 hours plus it took to get out of the airport in 2008 we were clear in less than 30 minutes as almost everybody else on our flight were going on connecting flights elsewhere. In fact so few Brits actually stay in Atlanta, that we were taken for locals by the staff and greeted with "Welcome Home" by many of them. Mind you, 45

minutes at the Hertz desk to sort out a pre-booked rental took some of the gloss off.

The wedding was held in Savannah, a beautiful city on the southern coast of Georgia with an extensive historic quarter set out in the 1730's. It has 22 squares set at the junctions of the streets, each of which is different in size and character.

Legally the couple were married on the Thursday when they obtained their licence from the District Court, so the celebrations afterwards were just that. On the Friday a rehearsal at the Hotel took place for the main protagonists, followed in the evening by the Rehearsal Dinner hosted by the groom's parents for close family and visitors from "out of state" – that included us – and very nice it was too – the restaurant being housed in an 18th century Mansion.

The wedding ceremony on the Saturday afternoon was conducted by the Bride's Grandmother's third husband who had recently been ordained over the Internet! Also a significant part was played by the couple's dog, a British Bulldog, who was escorted up the aisle adorned by various ribbons etc. and was required to stand quietly at the front for the whole of the event. He also subsequently spent that night with the couple in the Bridal Suite!

At the reception the top table was reserved for the bridesmaids and groomsmen and their partners. The couple's parents were seated on the outlying tables with the other guests. Despite these quirks it was a great family weekend.

The rest of the holiday was spent quietly with my sister at their home in a place called Big Canoe in North Georgia. A time to chill out but a notable highlight was seeing a young bear walking across the road.



STROLLERS' GROUP

From: Patricia Percival, Strollers' Group co-ordinator

JULY WALK TO LLYN CWM MYNACH LAKE - in brilliant sunshine!



We had a lovely hot summer's day for our July Strollers' Walk to Llyn Cwm Mynach. Mainly on forest roads on a circular route around the lake, the walk started from a newly-made parking area, two miles drive off the A496 road at Taicynhaeaf along a narrow winding track. The walk was well supported with thirteen members taking part.

We started with a gradual but steady uphill walk along forest paths where we were grateful of the shade offered by the overhanging trees. One unexpected interruption was the passing of two large forestry lorries while we stepped aside. A path to the right then took us down steps to the view point and the lake where we took a welcome break on the bench provided and watched the fish jumping in the lake as we took in the lovely scenery.



The short path up the steps took us back to continue our route round the lake. At the end of the lake the paths crossed, one going off to open hills with views of Craig Aberserw, which we all admired while catching the lovely breeze to cool us down.

Taking the path back down the other side of the lake, it then opened out offering distant views of Cader Idris. Taking a branch off this path to the right led us past the house *Blaen Cwm Mynach* about which Anne L Hill wrote her book *'Four Fields, Five Gates'* in 1954. We then stopped in the shade of a large sycamore tree to have our lunch while the sheep grazed around us. After lunch a short walk along this path brought us back to our cars.

SEPTEMBER - OVER BARMOUTH BRIDGE AND THE MAWDDACH TRAIL



The first Strollers' walk after the summer break was across Barmouth Bridge and along the estuary to the Mawddach Trail. Although most of us had walked the area before this is still one of the most pleasant walks in Barmouth.

Starting from the gardens opposite the Last Inn in Barmouth, we walked up the main road to join the footpath down to the bridge passing the old Lifeboat Station and Toll House. After crossing the iron section of the bridge, the views up the estuary and over Fairbourne are amazing, made even more attractive by the high tide on the day. Part way along the bridge the train came rumbling past at the same time as jet planes flew overhead!

At the end of the bridge, just before Morfa Mawddach Railway Station, we followed the

footpath which joined the road leading to the Edwardian Mawddach Crescent. Here we passed between the Sentry Boxes left by the army after its wartime operations.



On reaching the Crescent we turned right following the estuary until we came to the Mawddach Trail path where we stopped at a picnic area for a for a quick drinks break. Continuing along the trail we noted the considerable work being carried out on the flood defences before finding a picnic area by the water's edge with lovely views across the estuary. Here we had our lunch before retracing our steps along the trail until we came to the Arthog Bog. The short detour, following the footpath through the bog, brought us back to Barmouth Bridge where again a train passed at the same point as on our outward journey.



Back at "The Last Inn" we went our separate ways having enjoyed our walk, especially Sam and Patch, the two dogs who accompanied us and led the walk most of the way.

MONTHLY GATHERINGS.

From: Evelyn Richardson

In June we had a delightful presentation by members of the Theatr Fach, Dolgellau, who read and sang a selection of poems, prose and songs about rivers. It is the first time we have had this sort of presentation at the monthly meeting and those attending appeared to have enjoyed it.

As the person responsible for the organising of these meetings I am constantly looking for material which will be of interest to all members so if any of you have any ideas for speakers or activities please let me know.

September's offering was again extremely interesting. This time we were flying high in the sky with one of our own member's tales of his career as a pilot and the ways in which the job changed during his time.

Not only did we hear and see, from the illustrations, aspects of his work, but we also heard about the social changes which most of us have experienced as we have lived through the last half of the 20th century and into the beginning of the 21st .

If you have never attended the monthly meeting you will be most welcome - it gives us all a chance to meet and have conversations with others and to get to know a little bit more about Barmouth U3A.

If anyone of you would like to talk on a subject or if you know of someone or some activity which might be of interest, then please contact me on 01341 250 428.

NEEDLECRAFT

From: Wendy Bramley

We meet twice a month in the home of Jean Wilde - anyone interested in any form of needlecraft or knitting is welcome to join us, there is also a bit of nattering goes on too. Please come along you would be made most welcome.

U3A WALKING GROUP

From: Norma Stockford

Seven U3A members met at Morfa Mawddach on the 29th July at the more convenient time, for those travelling by train, of 11 a.m. After the longest heatwave for 27 years the weather was, thankfully, a little cooler, with just a chance of a shower forecast.

We set off on the Mawddach trail, intending to leave at the bridge at Arthog and take the public footpath to St Catherine's Church where we could more easily cross the main road to join the footpath up to Arthog falls. However, (and Peter did warn me when we set off!) we found the footpath closed by Galliford Try – the contractors responsible for the flood defence work in the area.

They are building a wall around the stile to the footpath, which was barricaded off. The place was deserted, without a workman in sight, so I was tempted to scale the barrier and use the footpath anyway. But the more sensible members of our party thought this might not be a good idea as the stile en route was probably blocked, as would be the exit at St Catherine's. I bowed to their better judgement and we took the (pavement-less) road for 50 metres.

(Note to self: 'Next time to you offer to lead a walk, do a recce first.')

We perspired our way up the steep path through the woods and were surprised to see so much water in the river. A stop at the Clapper bridge was required to rehydrate and air our damp clothing before continuing to Llys Branwen, over the fields and the stone stile to the Cregennan Lake for lunch.

Our later start meant that we did not have enough time to do Pared y Cefn Hir so, conscious of meeting train times, we took the road down, and who should we meet on our way but Jack Richardson. We think he may have come especially to meet up with us, but was unable to stop for long on the narrow single-track road, and we only had his company for a few minutes.

We continued past Pant Phylip taking a left towards Arthog Hall and David and Bronwen's house to join the road for our dice with the oncoming traffic again.

We parted company at Arthog Crescent (I was determined to use the right of way in front of the

terrace). The train travellers took the route to the station at Morfa Mawddach while we Barmouthians opted for a stroll across the (very tired looking) Barmouth Bridge.

(Network Rail is to spend £5.5 million on it – and it looks as if it needs a little TLC.)

SINGING FOR FUN



From: Evelyn Richardson

I would like to congratulate Mary and Nikki on The Cambrian Coast Community Choir's first outing, a successful fund raising venture in aid of the old library in Harlech.

Starting off such a venture requires a great deal of hard work and determination, the overcoming of obstacles and keeping the impetus going. Well done both of you, and those who have supported you in it. Glad also to see that you both remain loyal members of the Singing for Fun group despite the added work load you have undertaken.

We have been functioning as a singing group since 1998, we have members whose ages are over 90 years and quite a few youngsters all of whom sing heartily and help make the afternoon enjoyable.

There are changes ahead and I will keep you posted regarding these and hopefully we will continue to grow and develop both in numbers (we are the biggest Barmouth U3A group) and in our scope and repertoire.

Once again I cannot thank enough all the members who help in many ways to keep us singing - just for the fun of it. I couldn't do it without you.

BADMINTON GROUP

From: Wendy Bramley, Badminton Group co-ordinator

WANTED!

BADMINTON PLAYERS - TO JOIN OUR DWINDLING BAND - WE PLAY EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT THE LEISURE CENTRE 2 - 4 P.M. AND WOULD WELCOME NEW PLAYERS TO JOIN US. DO COME ALONG AND GIVE US A TRY!

PUZZLE CORNER

Answers on page 7

1. What Latin word is often used to mean 'word for word'?
2. What does a chandler make?
3. *Barwick Green* is the name of the title music to which radio show?
4. The euro replaced the guilder in which country?
5. What was Ferdinand Porche's best-selling car design?
6. How many of Henry VIII's wives were beheaded?
7. Who was the Prime Minister at the start of the First World War?
8. Who was the only USA President to resign?
9. How many pips are there in the BBC time signal?
10. How many muscles are there in one finger?

TABLE TENNIS

Still playing most Fridays at noon - £1. **Best Value in Town!**

LUNCH GROUP

From: Marie Thomas

After the summer break and the start of the new College year, the regulars tried the Wednesday Buffet lunch at the College (as recommended by the Strollers, who had already sampled it more than once). It gave a different feel to the start of term and we were impressed by how smoothly the first-year students coped with their first catering experience.

We shall revert to our usual Thursdays for the rest of term, and the following dates have been booked for the delicious 3-course lunch plus coffee/tea, all for the bargain price of £10.50:

Thursday 17 October, 12.30 pm
Thursday 14 November, 12.30 pm
Thursday 5 December (Christmas menu)
12.30 pm

The December date was the latest available, and because it is very popular we are limited to 20 maximum, so early booking is recommended.

If you have never tried the College lunches and would like to join us, please ring Marie Thomas (01341 247247) not later than the Sunday before the monthly lunch date.

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NEW GROUPS

From Norma Stockford

Have you thought any more about new groups? What would **you** like to do or learn about?

We all have a story in us. How about recording your autobiography, just a simple account for your children and grandchildren? We could restart the Writing Group that met on alternate Fridays. Don't worry if you don't know where to start, help will be at hand.

Give it some thought and let me know (my contact details are at the end of the newsletter).

TV programme - Do you want to take part?

The following enquiry was received via our website. If any member is interested in this project then they should contact Rachel Ozers direct.

'The Gift'

I'm working at Wall to Wall – a television production company – on a new series for BBC One provisionally called 'The Gift'. I just wanted to tell you a bit about it and see if you thought it might appeal to anyone involved in the Barmouth University of the Third Age.

The idea is to help people who are desperate to locate an important person from their past to finally say the 'sorry' or 'thank you' they've been needing to say for years. For many people it is not possible to do this themselves – the person they want to thank may be a stranger that they don't know how to find – or perhaps they don't have the courage to make an approach alone. With a team of professional mediators, psychologists and experts in tracing people, we aim to put these people in touch, help them find a gesture or gift that represents their feelings, and support them through a meeting.

We are currently trying to find people who may need our help and this is why I am contacting you. We're really keen to use the series to reflect the diversity of the UK – both in terms of the locations we visit and the experiences we address in the programmes. We are hoping to feature a whole range of different experiences in the series, from people who want to find and thank the person who saved their life, to ex-offenders who would like to apologise to the victims of their crime, to forces veterans who owe their life to someone they have lost touch with, to people who for whatever reason have become estranged from those they have things they'd really like to say to.

I am contacting the U3A specifically as I wondered if this might appeal to anyone involved in the organisation. I imagine that your place in the local community means that you have links with a whole range of different places and people from different walks of life and who perhaps have had really fascinating experiences that they might now be interested in sharing. I don't know if retirement might give

people an opportunity to reflect on the experiences they have had, and perhaps mean that they do begin to think of missed opportunities, or of those they would like to find if they possibly could?

It would be great to know if this is something you might be interested in helping out with. I'm on this email (rachel.ozers@walltowall.co.uk) or direct line 020 7241 9310. I can easily send you over some additional information and our A4 poster if this would help, and please do feel free to pass on my contact details should you know of someone that would like to find out more.

Rachel Ozers
Wall to Wall Television
85 Gray's Inn Road
London
WC1X 8TX
Direct Line: 020 7241 9310
www.walltowall.co.uk/thegift.aspx

And this was received from an upright, well-respected, but *anonymous* U3A member:-



ENJOY READING BUT CAN'T VISIT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY?

If you are finding it difficult to get out of the house, or to visit a library, you can get the mobile library to visit your home each month with a selection of reading materials for you. This is a handy, friendly and free service.

Gwynedd Library Service offer a selection of books, audio books on CD and large print books – in Welsh and English.

To get more information about this service for either yourself or another person, contact

Gwynedd Library Service at Caernarfon -
01286 679465 or
Dolgellau – 01341 422771

or e-mail llyfrgell@gwynedd.gov.uk

Flintshire U3A have sent an invite to a talk by Huw Jenkins, writer and reporter for Radio Wales

'WHAT DO YOU DO WITH WILD GOATS IN YOUR GARDEN'



and

'A SNAKE IN YOUR GREENHOUSE'

An entertaining collection of stories from North Wales and beyond

FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 2.00 pm

NEW BRIGHTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

£2.00 INCLUDING TEA AND CAKES

**PLEASE CONTACT:
PHILIP: 01352 741001
philip194johnson@btinternet.com**

PUZZLE CORNER answers.

1. Verbatim
2. Candles
3. The Archers
4. Holland
5. The Volkswagen Beetle
6. **2** - Catherine Howard and Anne Boleyn
7. HH Asquith
8. Richard Nixon
9. 6
10. None, only tendons

Only 3 Hours a Week!!

That is all that is required from volunteers who would be prepared to help out the "Save the Children". If you can spare this small amount of time and are interested, then please speak to Jean Wilde on 01341 242664.

North Wales Network 2013 Study Day

Reminder to those going on this trip to Llandudno, 23rd October. If you are not sure what time you are getting on the coach, speak to Peter Leyden on 01341 281172.

North Wales Network 2014 Study Day

Something to start thinking about.

The 2014 Study Day is going to be held in May 2014 rather than later in the year as recent Study Days.

Hosted by Porthmadog U3A and taking place in the Galeri, Caernarfon, the theme for the day will be "**Myths and Legends**". More details in due course.

All Wales Conference

This will be held in the week commencing 24th March 2014 at Llandrindod Wells.
Again more details as we get them.

New U3A's in the North Wales Network

Following the successful launch of the Llandudno branch in April – they now have over 450 members – another new branch is to be started in Prestatyn.
This branch will be launched on the 19th November at the Pavilion Theatre in Rhyl.

Want to join a recorder group

Dyffryn Conwy branch run a small recorder group twice a month. They are now being joined by a couple of Porthmadog members. Although it is a bit of a journey (Betws y Coed) Barmouth members who would like to play with them would be welcome. Speak to Alan Vincent on 01341 247415 if you are interested.

Barmouth U3A Officers 2013

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Peter Leyden: 01341 281 172

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The winter newsletter will be published for January. Can I have your contributions before Christmas please?

GOOD HEALTH EVENT!

Friday 18th of October 2013
at Glan Wnion Leisure Centre
& Fire Station Dolgellau

AN EVENT FOR EVERYBODY!

Drop in at any time between
10 am and 2 pm

- 40+ organisations to give Advice and Information
- Blood pressure taking opportunity
- Local Pharmacy on hand to give advice
- Complementary therapies
- Taster sessions
- Memory & Friendship Café
- Light Refreshments
- Entertainment
- And much more!

For more information please contact Mantell Gwynedd on
☎ 01341 422575 or ☎ 01286 672626
or sioned@mantellgwynedd.com

An event organised in partnership between the South Gwynedd Long Term Health & Chronic Conditions Alliance and the South Gwynedd Older people planning group.

Barmouth U3A will have a table at the above event so why not come along and say hello whilst also seeing what advice and help the other organisations at the event have to offer.