

Hi everyone

Many of you will know that we have a private Face group page which can only be accessed by our members. If you have a Facebook account and wish to join us please search for [Kath's u3a Group](#) or let me know and I will send you an invitation.

The page is mostly used for letting people know about meetings but can also be used to share what else is going on in Torfaen and elsewhere.

(I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pat Parsons amongst others who regularly contribute.)

Should you need further information on Torfaen u3a activities you can find contact details for the committee toward the end of this newsletter.

Kath

CRAFT NEWS.



This month we have been working on a number of individual projects including knitting, crocheting and embroidery. The quilt we were working on has now been completed. The group took turns to embroider the names of places Lynne's husband had worked. See attached photo.

All welcome to join us every Tuesday at 12.30-2.00 in St Mary's Church Hall. Suggestions for new projects always welcome too. **Rose**

EXERCISE CLASS



Exercise Class is still doing well and we had three new ladies attending.

The Class is every Tuesday held at the LMC from 11.30 - 12.30. Everybody is welcome.

You can email me at anngill18@gmail.com for more information.

FOCUS GROUP

Meet regularly on the first Monday of each month - 11.00 at the Ashbridge Inn, Avondale Road.

Lyn Oelman

GARDENING GROUP

There were just a few items to discuss this month. We spent a little time on considering what to do for our u3a Open Day in October. We decided on a display, making it as attractive as possible and as it's the time of year for dividing herbaceous perennials we would bring some of these along to sell.

We also discussed the future of our gardening group. After many years as convener I feel I needed to take a break but would continue in the position until the end of this year. Thankfully, Marion and David volunteered their services in helping out with the organisation of the tasks involved and I would not be giving up completely so would also be available. We will have further discussion on how to split the work at a future meeting.

There were a few plants available to share out from plant divisions already made including Campanula, Geranium phaeum, and a Japanese Anemone.

I am looking into the possibility of having a Xmas wreath making session at the end of November or beginning of December. This may be at Llanfrechfa Grange Gardens or at Llanyrafon Methodist Church. I will contact members to ascertain interest once I have more details.

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday 22nd October** 2pm at Llanyrafon Methodist Church.

LISTENING TO MUSIC



Autumn wound its way into a lot of music choices this month. September in the Rain, Autumn Leaves, Shine on Autumn Moon and September Song made sure we knew that leaves would soon be turning brown. Ronnie Ronalde (famous for his voice, whistling, yodelling, and imitations of bird song) was a blast from the past whistling his Autumn Evensong. Our unusual instrument was the Wintergatan a music box that uses marbles to play instruments and as always Mozart made an appearance alongside pop legends and folk singers. . We enjoyed theme songs from films, a little Bollywood was thrown in for good measure and we were introduced to Sydney Christmas (a winner of Britain's Got Talent). A wide eclectic mix which included old favourites and new discoveries.

Every Tuesday in one hour from 11 am to 12 noon on Zoom we try to find something for everyone. Do feel free to just drop in and listen and let me know if there is

POETRY GROUP

Our meeting planned for September was cancelled because several people were unable to attend. Our next meeting will be Thursday 24 October, when we will be discussing the life and poetry of the South African poet and one of the founders of modern Afrikaans' literature, Ingrid Jonker, and the life and work of Indian poet Sarojini Naidu.

We meet on the fourth Thursday of each month at 2 pm at Llanyrafon Methodist Church. If you have an interest in poetry, why not come along and join us. You would be most welcome.

Chris Andrews

HISTORY

Our talk for this month was a very interesting and informative talk about the year 1957 and was given by one of our own members Rob Wilkinson.

In the entertainment sector the following celebrities were at the forefront

Stirling Moss won the British Grand Prix at Aintree

Anthea Gibson was the first black woman to win Wimbledon

The first episode of the Sky at Night with Sir Patrick Moore was broadcast

It was the first meeting of John Lennon and Paul McCartney who later with George Harrison and Ringo Starr formed the Beatles

The long running show The Mousetrap was first performed in a London theatre

The popular pop stars of the time included Marty Wilde and Lonnie Donegan

On television Derek Jacobi starred in the epic series I Claudius

Other momentous happenings included

The first testing of the hydrogen bomb

The end of the Suez Crisis and the end of petrol rationing

The first winner of the Premium Bond drawn by Ernie

Women were permitted to enter the House of Lords

A vaccine was developed to combat the epidemic of Asian flu which took many lives

Norwich City Council became the first council to install a computer system

The Treaty of Rome was signed which became the EEC between France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg

The First Christmas message from Queen Elizabeth the 2nd was broadcast on the television

A rail crash in Lewisham killed many passengers

In this year Ghana, Malaya and Jamaica became independent

The Wolverdon report recommended an end to the criminalisation of homosexuality and the reform of prostitution laws in Britain

It was recorded that there were three hundred murders in that year

The death expectancy in that year was seventy years as opposed to eighty years of age for a female and eighty one for a male at the present time



Afterwards Rob gave us an interesting short talk about a writer and explorer Mary Kingsley a writer and explorer who was born in London in 1862 to an eminent doctor and scientist Sir George Kingsley. She had very little education as at the time it was not deemed important to educate girls. However, she was very interested in anything to do with travel with a special interest in African culture.

Her father spent most of his time away on journeys to foreign lands once accompanying Colonel George Custer on his expedition against the Sioux nation. In 1892 her mother became ill and a year later her father also so she spent a long while nursing them until their deaths which occurred in the same year.

In 1893 aged thirty Mary decided to visit Sierra Leone afterwards travelling to Angola where she lived with locals who taught her how to survive. She became a missionary and trained as a nurse to tend to injuries and other maladies.

She met and worked with another missionary and nurse Mary Slessor and pursued another unusual type of culture which involved cannibalism. She contracted a type of typhoid whilst nursing in the a jungle area and died in 1900 at the age of thirty eight .She was buried at sea and she stipulated that she was to be on her own with no mourners in attendance .

Our next meeting is at 2pm at Llanyravon Methodist Church {in the Sanctuary} on Thursday the 3rd of October and the talk is entitled Ancient Cwmbran myths, legends and facts and the speaker is Richard Davies

Look forward to seeing you all it should be an interesting talk. Take care Regards *Merle*

LUNCH CLUB



Lunch Club was held at The Blinkin Owl , the staff and the service was very good and everybody had a good time.

The next Lunch Club will be on the 18th October the venue TBA

Best wishes, Ann email: anngill18@gmail.com tel: 07454010074

SCRABBLE

Everyone welcome we are a fun group who doesn't take it too seriously and all enjoy the cake and biscuits. Ruth



PSYCHOLOGY



In our September meeting we discussed the psychology behind the "Deadly Sin" of Sloth, with an entertaining contribution from Kath. As usual, the discussion was lively and varied.

There will be no meeting in October as I am away on the scheduled date. Our next meeting will be at 2 pm on Tuesday November 5th in Cwmbran Library where we will be discussing the "Deadly Sin" of Lust.



READING SHORT STORIES

There have been some interesting Irish stories this month, perhaps the strangest being 'Formerly Feral'. In which a twelve-year-old girl remains living with her father when her parents' divorce. Whilst her mother leaves and takes her older sister, her father swiftly marries a woman who has adopted a wolf, and is raising that wolf, named Helen, as a daughter – from then on the girl and the wolf are effectively treated as sisters.

Favourites from the past included an extract from Testament of Youth by Vera Brittain and we enjoyed love stories, biographies and lots of facts not least about the history of the humble pencil. On Bullshit published in 2005 book (originally a 1986 essay) by the American philosopher Harry G. Frankfurt which presents a theory of bullshit that defines the concept and analyses the applications of bullshit in the context of communication. In essence Frankfurt determines that bullshit is speech intended to persuade without regard for truth. The liar cares about the truth and attempts to hide it; the bullshitter doesn't care whether what they say is true or false. This gave us food for thought and discussion.

There will be a 'face to face' meeting on the 14th , please come along to Griffithstown if you can and on the 7th, 21st and 28th we will meet on Zoom.

THEATRE & EVENTS GROUP



We met as usual at the Crows Nest in Llanyrafon on the 18th of the month. Our numbers were a little diminished as a number of members were at the New Theatre in Cardiff enjoying the musical, 'A Chorus Line' but we were delighted to meet two new members Jennifer and Mavis.

At the monthly meeting it was decided that tickets for the Panto Cinderella, at the New Theatre would be booked, which, this year, stars our lovely Gethin Jones and Owain Wyn Evans.

This has been arranged for 11th December. A few members also expressed an interest in attending a Christmas Market. Members can join us to visit In Winchester Christmas Market, on the 26th November, by booking via Jenson Travel 01495 760539. If you mention you are with the u3a they will try to seat us together.

Members have also been to a viewing of Miss Saigon at the Vue cinema and attended a musical Shakin Steven's tribute show at the congress. Both shows were enjoyable but some found the sound at the Vue cinema too loud.

Jane took another group of members for a second visit to the BBC Studios in Cardiff, where they went into the weather and recording studios as well as being allowed onto the roof of the building to see views of Cardiff. So enjoyable was this trip we have been asked to organise another next year!

Our next meeting will be at the Crows Nest in Llanyrafon on the 16th October. We would love to see you.

Christine & Jane.

QUIZ GROUP



We meet on the 1st Friday of the month @ 2:00pm in the Ashbridge Pub. Why not come along for a fun couple of hours and meet fellow u3a members. Everyone is welcome.

NB: there is no quiz on the 4th October due to many of the regular attendees being absent. We will meet again on Friday 1st November.

Helen

WHIST

Nice to meet again after the August break.

We welcomed Joan, a Newport u3a member, giving our group a try.

We are a friendly and sociable group, who welcome players of all abilities.

The next meeting in LMC Hall is on the third Thursday of the month - Thursday October 17 from 2-4 pm

For more information contact Margaret Oelmann 07387287596



VIEWPOINT

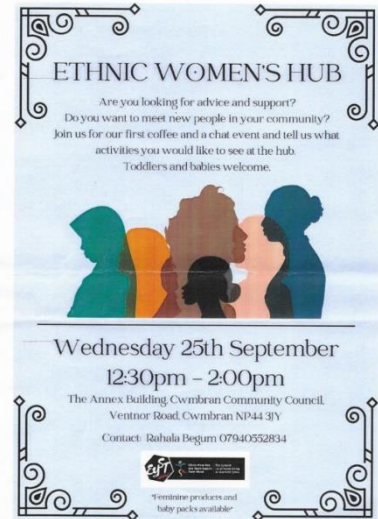
Our September meeting was held on Friday 20th when Marilyn Priday gave a presentation and led a discussion on the topic of Cultural Diversity. We were pleased to be joined by two visitors, Uzme Khan, a Youth Support Worker who is working with Torfaen Council on an exciting new project providing weekly youth groups for young people aged 10 to 25 from ethnic minority groups living in the area.



Rahala Begum, our second visitor, has been instrumental in working with Torfaen Council to set up an Ethnic Women's Hub aimed at providing advice and support, and the opportunity to meet people from all ethnic communities in the area. The discussions were lively and Rahala invited anyone interested to attend the inaugural meeting. Marilyn and I attended and were made very welcome. We met people from diverse ethnic groups in the area and it was clear that this Hub, which is scheduled to meet on a monthly basis, will meet a need in the community.

Our next Viewpoint meeting will be at 10.30 am on Friday 18th October in the Meeting Room of Llanyrafon Methodist Church. The topic has not yet been decided and any suggestions or offers of leading the discussion would be very welcome.

Dori



WALKING GROUP -

26 September 2024 Abergavenny Llanfoist Walk

An intrepid group of 7 of us set out to chance reasonable weather (at least to start!) for this walk. We started from Abergavenny following a path that ran through Castle Meadows and along the River Usk, where we had good views of the north flank of The Blorenges shrouded in mist. We left the Meadows near Llanfoist Bridge, which is thought to have been built in the mid-15th century by Jasper Tudor, the great-uncle of Henry VIII. It is a listed building and a scheduled ancient monument. It is thought that the downstream arches and piers survive from the 15th century, those upstream are from part of the 1811 Llanfiangel tramroad while the roadway and parapet date from around 1868 when the two bridges were amalgamated and the roadway widened. Remnants of a railway bridge, part of the Merthyr, Tredegar & Abergavenny Railway, once stood upstream alongside it, can still be seen.

At the Bridge we crossed the main road to follow a lane, and visited Llanfoist Cemetery locating the grave of Alexander Cordell, who is perhaps best known for his novel "Rape of the Fair Country", depicting the iron industry of the Blaenavon area in the early decades of the 19th century. The lane crossed the route – marked by bridge abutments – of the former rail line linking Abergavenny to Brynmawr via Llanfoist. We passed by Llanfoist Garden Centre before turning north along the former rail line, now a cycle and walking track and well used by local walkers (and dogs) and cyclists.

At this point the rain came but we continued north before joining the Monmouthshire Brecon Canal near Govilon Wharf to head south. This marked the southern end of the old Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal, which was extended here from Gilwern in 1805. Govilon was the terminus of this canal for seven years, while the section to Pontymoile was being built. By 1812 it was linked to the Monmouthshire Canal at Pontymoile, which meant that Brecon was connected to Newport. It

was taken over by the Great Western Railway in 1880. Commercial traffic declined and the canal closed in the early 1960's, but this section was restored and re-opened for canal boats in 1970. By this point the rain became torrential but with no proper cover for us, we carried on gradually getting wetter and wetter !

Our walk then followed the canal to reach picturesque Llanfoist Wharf, which in its heyday was a key interchange for exporting the industrial output of Blaenavon, via the Hill's Tramroad. This opened in 1821 and crossed the Blorengge to connect the canal with the ironworks at Blaenavon and the forge at Garndyrus. Loaded trams descended around 235 metres of the steep slope of Blorengge in three stages of an incline plane. The extra weight of the descending goods hauled the empty or less heavily loaded wagons uphill on an adjacent track, by means of chains and wheels. From Llanfoist Wharf their loads were carried by barges down the canal to Newport. Unusually at Llanfoist there is a narrow tunnel underneath the canal which visitors can use to take the very steep path following the route of the wagons.

We then walked down through Llanfoist, passing St Faiths, the Llanfoist Village Church which is largely a 19th century Gothic building but with some stonework dating from the 13th century; the churchyard also includes the grave of Crawshay Bailey, the 19th century ironmaster. Crossing the main road we passed the Garden Centre again, with the route then taking us through an underpass under the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road, before we returned to Abergavenny, by which we time we had all began to dry out !

Jeff and Jane Phillips

PLEASE NOTE: The U3A Walks will be on Thursday 17th October & Thursday 31st October.

SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER 2024

Any errors or omissions schedule please let me know. *If in doubt please check with your convenor.*

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
Tuesday	1 st	11.00	Listening to Music	Zoom
Tuesday	1 st	11.30	Exercise Class	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Tuesday	1 st	12.30	Craft	St Mary's Church Hall
Tuesday	1 st	CANCELLED	Psychology	CANCELLED
Thursday	3 rd	2.00	History	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Friday	4 th	CANCELLED	Quiz	CANCELLED
Monday	7 th	11.00	Focus Group	Ashbridge
Monday	7 th	2.00	Short Stories	Zoom
Tuesday	8 th	11.00	Listening to Music	Zoom
Tuesday	8 th	11.30	Exercise Class	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Tuesday	8 th	12.30	Craft	St Mary's Church Hall
Monday	14 th	2.00	Short Stories	Kath's home
Tuesday	15 th	11.00	Listening to Music	Zoom
Tuesday	15 th	11.30	Exercise Class	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Tuesday	15 th	12.30	Craft	St Mary's Church Hall
Wednesday	16 th	2.00	Convenors Meeting	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Thursday	17 th	2.00	Whist	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Thursday	17 th		Walking Group	Details to follow
Friday	18 th	10.30	Viewpoint	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Friday	18 th		Lunch Club	TBA
Monday	21 st	2.00	Short Stories	Zoom
Tuesday	22 nd	11.00	Listening to Music	Zoom
Tuesday	22 nd	11.30	Exercise Class	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Tuesday	22 nd	12.30	Craft	St Mary's Church Hall
Tuesday	22 nd	2.00	Gardening	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Thursday	24 th	CANCELLED	Poetry	CANCELLED
Monday	28 th	2.00	Short stories	Zoom
Tuesday	29 th	11.00	Listening to Music	Zoom
Tuesday	29 th	11.30	Exercise Class	Llanyrafon Methodist Church
Tuesday	29 th	12.30	Craft	St Mary's Church Hall
Thursday	31 st		Walking Group	Details to follow