

Chairman's Report for 2016-17: Berwyn Woolnough

Once again Llandrindod U3A. has had a very good year. Membership is slightly up from last year - it now stands at 264 - and the interest groups have continued to flourish. Our monthly meetings are very well attended, an average of 128 members, and we have enjoyed hearing speakers on a variety of topics ranging from palaeontology via frame-spotting to Tai Chi.

In addition we have had some special events, starting with our 10th birthday in April. We celebrated this with a highly entertaining and informative lecture by Dr Rami Seth, whose topic was: "Nobody speaks English like an Indian". After the talk 105 of us enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea.

In October we took part in the annual Mid Wales Quiz. We entered two teams, the Wise Owls and the Diehards and the latter fought their way to victory.

In December the Art Group, together with the Unfinished Objects and Digital Photography Groups, mounted a really superb exhibition at The Radnorshire Museum which, after an opening event attended by local dignitaries, ran almost until the end of January.

Our Christmas meeting was extremely popular. It was attended by 156 members and guests who were treated to a reenactment of the iconic Crackerjack game "Double or Drop". This brought back happy memories to all but the few who claimed to be too young to remember the programme! Afterwards 130 of us gathered for a fine Christmas lunch.

During the year the Theatre Visiting Group made two trips to Stratford to see "The Tempest" and "Hamlet" and two to Aberystwyth, one to see the musical "Footloose", the second "The Mousetrap". The Creative Writing Group organised a day workshop to which members of other U3As were invited, and the Recorder Group made its annual pilgrimage to Knucklas for a playing day with Ludlow U3A.

Unfortunately I can't mention every one of our study groups, but I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the group leaders and Martha, the Groups Coordinator, who put in so much effort to ensure that this vital part of our activities goes from strength to strength.

Before I go into the final furlong, I'll mention just two more points. Last month we held a meeting with members who had joined us over the last 18 months. It proved to be a very enjoyable event which gave us the chance to get to know each other and exchange ideas.

On the community front, we have established links with both Builth and Llandrindod High Schools, but due the continuing uncertainty about their future we shall have to wait and see where this leads us. Both institutions are eager to pursue the idea.

I have to say that the U3A I inherited when I became Chairman was, to use a phrase coined by President Trump, a fine tuned machine, overseen by a dedicated team of committee members, three of whom are retiring today after three years of service - our secretary Karen, treasurer Mary and Speaker Secretary Helen. Your enthusiasm and super-efficiency will really be missed. Thank you so much for the first class jobs you've done. The fourth person leaving is Ann Harvey who, apart from being active on the committee, has looked after our notice boards and always been ready to help when needed.

Of course, our organisation isn't kept going by officers and committee alone. There are several people working in the background to ensure smooth running and add something special. My thanks go to Nick, who oversees the website and gives us technical support; to Margaret and Cathy, who produce four very colourful and informative editions of "Borderlines" each year; to Fay whose cheerful smile greets everybody who comes to our meetings; to Helen and Patsy who look after new members and Clive, who writes our press releases.

That's it, I've finished. All that's left for me to say is: A Happy New U3A year to you all!