

Llandrindod & District U3A April 2016 Lecture Meeting

Sharing Shakespeare – Phil Bowen

Report by Clive Barrett.

The new U3A Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2016/17 session. He gave current news of various interest groups, particularly noting that the local U3A's 10th anniversary celebratory lecture took (will take) place on Monday 25th April at 2--30p.m at the Metropole Hotel and the keynote speaker will be Rami Seth M.B.E. and his talk is entitled "Nobody speaks English like an Indian", the lecture will be followed by afternoon tea.

Berwyn then introduced the speaker for the morning, Phil Bowen of the Willow Globe Theatre Penlanole, near Llanwrthwl, who about 12 months ago was the High Sheriff of Radnorshire for a year. His talk was entitled "Sharing Shakespeare" and he spoke about his acting experiences over the last 40 years, touring all over the world with Shakespearean plays. Phil interestingly mentioned famous and not so well known actors and producers he had either met or knew of through a mutual friend. For example he knew Charles Simon, who played Dr. Dale in "Mrs Dale's Diary" on radio, and even mentioned a theatre architect. Amongst many different countries he visited in the 1970's he toured India with Shakespearean plays and mentioned that books about the famous playwright and his plays sell all over the world. The speaker gave a very informal talk and his stories and tellings were generously laced with humour which pleased the appreciative audience.

Later he and partner moved to Mid Wales and got the idea of "Sharing Shakespeare" which is defined as finding out together what Shakespeare is about. They are involved in finding out how people relate to one another exploring Shakespeare, and also translating into sign and 80 other languages. Phil and Sue organise performances at Penlanole, near Llandrindod Wells with the lovely natural countryside of Mid Wales as the backdrop. Further this year between the 6th and 9th of July they are holding an event at the local Willow Globe, "Sharing Shakespeare Festival" including visits from various actors involved in social theatre. Following his excellent talk the speaker then answered a number of questions such as those relating to professional, amateur actors and touring community groups. He ended with a mention of the local U3A theatre group's visit to Stratford the previous week to see "Hamlet" referring to that particular performance depicting an African cultural background within the original Danish setting.

Phil Bowen was thanked for his fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable talk by the new U3A Chairman Berwyn Woolnough