

u3a learn,
laugh,
live



NEWCASTLE EMLYN u3a NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the August issue of the Newsletter. The big question is 'will it rain soon?'



Thanks to all the Group Leaders who have provided information on what has been happening and also what is happening in September.

Monthly Meeting – 2nd September at the Rugby Club, starting at 10.30am for coffee & chat. Talk at 11am



John Piggott will be giving a talk on his (and Janet's) trip to Belize - John is a u3a member and has given us various talks before.

Expand your horizons this September with *u3a week*

From 19-27 September, we'll be celebrating *u3a week* and National Office are providing a number of online events, designed to present new perspectives.

- Monday 21 September - *Secrets of the human brain: Sleep and dreams*
- Tuesday 22 September - *The Enchanted Archipelago - a journey through the Galapagos with HX*
- Thursday 24 September - *Promoting brain health: from evidence to action*
- Friday 25 September - *Live cookery demonstration - try something new*

On Thursday 17 September at 10am the online talk, "*The Titanic sails at dawn*". Punk in the 1970s, Lee Wellbrook, will explore the origins and rapid growth of UK punk in the 1970s, explaining how economic uncertainty, social change and youthful frustration fuelled a culture of rebellion, creativity and self-expression. Beyond the music, he will examine how punk transformed fashion, identity and everyday life, leaving a legacy that continues to have an impact today.

Visit [the u3a week page](#) to book your place at an online event.

Message from Susannah Hodge from National Office

Written and produced with u3a members, the monthly u3a podcast can be accessed on all podcast platforms. The August episode is about the u3a Festival hosted in York, featuring interviews with Johnny Ball who opened the event, a member who plays in a steel band and a member who was a builder and had a career change into shoe design. Coming up in September is an interview with the Editor of u3a Matters magazine, discussing why gardening is so popular and going behind the scenes of the annual Jane Austen festival in Bath. More information about the podcast and how to listen is [available on the u3a website](#).

SCIENCE GROUP

This month the Group looked at two videos about the progress with robots. If you think they are just clunky mechanical machines, then think again. The links to the videos are as follows:

<https://youtu.be/UALxgn1MnZo> - Dr Hannah Fry

<https://youtu.be/bYlwXTnnexU> - 92% human robots

Programme for rest of 2026 is as follows:

21 st September 2026	The Climate Crisis by Brenda Ainsley	Phat Forks – starts at 2pm	Zoom talk open with all Wales u3as
26 th October 2026	Visit to Sea Trust	Meet there at 2pm	Ocean Lab, Fishguard Harbour, Goodwick, Pembrokeshire SA64 0DE
23 rd November 2026	Talk by Mike Parecell	Phat Forks – 2pm	
14 th December 2026	Christmas Lunch	Phat Forks – 12.30 for 1pm	TBA

Welsh Group

There was no meeting in August. A number of our group attended the National Eisteddfod, with some being on duty at the U3A table for a few hours then having the rest of the day to explore. I think we all found it very worthwhile. It was great to see and hear so much going on, with singing, dancing, music, poetry and lots of other events. A very enjoyable day out.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 1st September in Capel Iwan village hall starting at 10.30. We are going to be describing our favourite books, films and plays.

WRITE NOW

We welcomed two new members, Andrea and Janet, to our August meeting, who had heard of the group via the recent open day.

The homework task had inspired an interesting variety of responses based on famous works of art. (The Scream by Edvard Munch proved a popular choice.) Davido's 'Boy in a Straw Hat' based on a Van Gogh painting and Gwyn's 'I could have been Michaelangelo's model' can be found below.

Continuing the artistic theme, our 'Poem of the month' was 'Landscape with the Fall of Icarus' by William Carlos Williams.

Our '10 minute writing task' used the word 'lost' as an inspiration.

Homework for this month is to base a piece of writing on a night out with a famous literary figure.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 14th September 11am-1pm at the Church of the Latter Day Saints in Newcastle Emlyn.

Boy in a Straw Hat by Davido Saccaggi

I feel the warm sun on my head – the hat shades my face and I can smell the freshly mown field behind me. It must have been harvest season when I was made. I could see nothing yet, as my eyes were not done. But my clothes, hat, ears and nose were complete and perfected.

I started to see in patches, first one eye, then the next. Then blank again, this happened a few times as they were not right. Then, finally, clear vision, looking out into a bearded face, dark brown – bordering on black eyes staring back at me, concentrating as he applied the last fine finishing touches to my eyes.

That was years ago. Since then my life has been an adventure. First I was in a grand house, hanging on a wall in the hall. Servants, guests and family constantly passed by. Life was full of events; parties, games and children all flowed passed me.

Then came the war. Children and parties disappeared. Serious men hurried by, quiet conversations in the shadows. Then came the darkness. I was taken down and put into storage. For safety they said. I was moved around, often taken out, with many strange men looking at me, appraising me and discussing my value. I heard that those works of lesser worth were being left behind. Then darkness overtook my life. Jostled, upside down, screeching noises, bumped, strong smells of dirty water, car engines, sea swells, filled my days - if they could be called days. I had no way of telling the passing of time. Then finally, stillness.

It's cool here. I can feel the passing of the seasons though - changes in temperature and pressure, subtle, no major variation. How long have I been here? I can no longer tell the passing of time.

The day arrived. I was awakened from my slumber, out into the world. Such a cacophony of noises, changes of atmosphere, then unboxed. Oh, how the light hurts my eyes. This is like no other place I have ever seen. Tall ceilings, light coloured walls, stairs that move, lifts, a grand spiral stair case, people walking by rapidly, talking, scarcely glancing at me. Such vibrancy, business and intensity. It felt rather lonely - nobody stopped and looked at me. My blue eyes, brown face and straw hat in a field, seemed to have been forgotten.

Then an old man with a young boy stopped by. "Look" he said. "See the picture there? The boy in the Straw Hat. That was in Oupa's house when he was small, like you. Look at where it hangs now. See the fields, the sun and the light. Boy, I want you to remember that this painting is to remind you of where we came from and how the past is connected to you."

I could have been Michaelangelo's model by Gwyn

Skin, smooth, youthful, unwrinkled

No skin tags

No moles to hide

no sagging breasts.

No unsightly bulges

Muscles tight, not rippling

stomach flat, not six pack

Buttocks marble hard

legs that have run quickly

from danger, towards adventure.

Muscle around the spine strong, upright.

Back taut

Cloak thrown carelessly over the shoulder

Curled hair crowding on the head

Always in place

White, not with age

Aquiline nose

Lips that could speak warmly

Full of psalmody

but are cold.

Naked,

Unafraid to show manhood.

Eyes gazing

Saying

Look at me

I am beautiful in my youth.

Philosophy - July Report

Following missed from last Newsletter

The philosophy group met to discuss the issue of whether animals should have the same rights as human beings.

After a very enjoyable discussion, the group decided that animals should have some rights but not the same right as Human beings. We felt that they should have the right to be treated kindly (we had a discussion about whether we should use the word 'humanely, as this would put the decision as to what those rights are in the hands of human being and would therefore detract from the rights if they had to be granted.)

As a precursor to the discussion on animal rights we looked at the issue of human rights so that we could get a clear idea of what a right was and how they were acquired to see whether the same logic could be used to argue for animal rights.

The topic for our next meeting is Morality

Philosophy - August Report

The intention of the group was to explore how individuals come to their own moral code – if indeed we come to it on our own and through our own will, or via other influences. For example, many people likely have come to the idea of morality through the ten commandments. We began the group by defining morality and this was a recurring theme throughout the discussion; an accurate definition seemed to elude us, despite the time spent and number of avenues that were explored. Though defining morality was not the main intention of the session we became perhaps, at times, a little waylaid in it. However, the discussion flowed, a number of interesting points were made and tangential topics arose (such as the blurred boundary between morality and ideology).

Pétanque

We had seven players for our first session of which four were from Narberth u3a and only four for our second session on Tuesday 18th. Despite the good summer attendance has not been good this year mainly due to ill health and busy lives.

For September I am away for both sessions due to medical appointments for my wife, so these will be taken by John Binet-Fauvel.

Trevor

Wine Appreciation

The wine appreciation group met at Julia and Brian's in August to taste and find out about French rosé wines. There are 6 rosé wine regions in France. These are Provence, Bandol, Rhône Valley, Languedoc, Bordeaux and the Loire Valley. We tasted wines from 4 of these regions. The conclusions were that French Rosé were all quite similar with some being slightly more fruity than others. They all scored well and were well liked. The ultimate favourite, but not by many points, was a Rhône Valley wine bought from the Co-op called Coeur de Cardueline. We also decided that Rosé wine in general was a lot paler these days!

We are hoping to organise a visit to a winery in September.



Hazel

August Outing



Instead of our monthly meeting in August we had, as usual, an outing. This year we revisited St Fagans (last visit 8 years ago). We arrived early so lots of us had a coffee or refreshment before we went to the theatre for a talk. There was lot of interesting information about how and why various buildings had been moved there, a history of the “castle” and details about some of the exhibits in the galleries (one of which unfortunately was closed). We then dispersed to go our own way (I unfortunately visited the old sweet shop and bought £20 worth of old fashioned sweets like cola drops etc. I said they were for my grandchildren!). We then gathered together at 3.15 for the journey home having had good weather and an enjoyable day. A special mention needs to be made about our driver Dominic, he entertained us with some very funny jokes and stories both on our way there and on the way back.

Kari

Creative Writing - August 2026

The meeting started with an exercise. A packet of Haribo starmix was handed around and each member selected two or three gummies.

Before eating any gummies, the members were asked to look at either the colours or shapes and, taking inspiration from them, write a short story.

The stories varied from aliens at a set of traffic lights,

Jack and Jell's bucket of frogs with 2 large eyes.

Commercial for sweeties in wartime rationing

Bonnie and Clyde story

A red bear whose polar bear's mum mated with a red squirrel.

The members then read aloud their 500-word homework on dancing.

Ali wrote her experience of riding her bike to a picnic and having an accident, injuring her knees, before her ballet exam the next day.

She had to undertake the exam with plasters on her knees; however, she loved performing the freestyle better.

Carol wrote a radio interview where she reminisced about her 60 years of marriage and how they met at a dance.

Angela wrote about a disillusioned older dancer on a cruise ship, met an 8-year-old girl who, in telling her about how she loved her dancing classes, revived the dancer's love of dancing, so when the cruise finished she decided to start a dance school.

Eric wrote about a 5-year-old Julie who begged to start ballet classes.

As she progressed, she was disappointed that her father never came to see her dance. Finally, at the age of ten, her mother insisted that the father go to see her dance in the lead role in *Swan Lake*.

Unfortunately, as she made her entrance, she tripped over a cable, although embarrassed, she went on to perform a perfect solo.

Afterwards she asked her father what he thought. - with an entrance like that your about as light on your feet as a billiard table. Despite being hurt, she went on to become a professional dancer on *Strictly Come Dancing*, and her father did become proud of her.

June wrote about the experience of a non-celeb dancing with Anton Du Beke on *Strictly Come Dancing*. Week one was a waltz, week two was a tango, but week 3 was the dreaded jive, which ended her strictly experience.

It was obvious that June loved Strictly as she described the glamour of the make-up, hair, and swishy sparkling dresses so well.

Shelia gave her 500 words the title *The Demented Duck Show*

The event was the Scouts' end-of-summer show, and, how, to everyone's surprise, the mums' and dads' performed Swan Lake.

The mums wore pink bodysuits, pink tights, shocking pink tulle tutus ,satin pumps and sparkly coronets, perched precariously on their heads. They were supposed to be an elegant line of little swans but looked more like a floundering shoal of misshapen salmon, poured into unsuitable clothing.

The Dads' costume was the same except they wore green wellies with pink bows.

The writer remembered her ballet classes and included the names of ballet steps.

The topic of dancing inspired the members to think back to their younger days and how dancing had played such a significant part in their lives.

Angela

New members welcome

The Eisteddfod



The West Wales u3a Network were at the National Eisteddfod in Llantwdd last week to promote the u3a. The network includes 6 u3as in West Wales including Newcastle Emlyn. We had a table in the Voluntary Organisations marquee so could also network with other groups.

I was there both days but thanks to willing volunteers was not on the table the whole time. We were giving out leaflets, free keyrings and sweets to encourage people to talk to us about the u3a. All of our literature had to be in Welsh or bilingual which set us quite a challenge, plus we had to have Welsh speakers around as well. It gave those of us that are attempting to learn Welsh a chance to practice!



There is so much going on at an Eisteddfod, and I would encourage anyone to go along and immerse themselves in Welsh Culture. It was a wonderful experience. We met Ann Davies the Plaid Cymru MP for Caerfyrddin and Mabon ap Gwynfor MS, the Welsh Minister for Health and chatted with both of them.

Two of the groups that I came across that might be of use to members were Dolen Teifi, Community Transport for all and AbilityNet. The first gives an affordable way to individuals or not for profit groups to travel to venues. If you want to know more then go to www.dolenteifi.org.uk.

The second offers free digital skills training for older people to boost skills with mobile phones, laptops, computers and tablets. They work with groups or individuals. If people are interested, I could organise a group session and people could take it further with individual support. To find out more go to www.abilitynet.org.uk/BTDigitalSkills

I will have some leaflets about the digital skills sessions at the next main meeting in September.

Thanks again to all those who volunteered to help.

Hazel

u3a getaways – the new travel service for u3a members

A collaboration between u3a and the UK Holiday Group, each trip takes the learning and fun of u3a on tour. On a u3a getaway you can scrub up your knowledge on a wide range of topics while exploring the UK and forming new connections.

<https://track.parliament-hill.net/?C/7ede1db9-44f0-4ca3-9754-1cf2581e46a6/https%3a%2f%2fwww.justforgroups.com%2fu3a-getaways>

MESSAGE ABOUT BOOKS & PUZZLES



We are bringing the books and puzzles to the September meeting but will leave them in the car. Can anyone offer to take over this task, as of that day. If not we shall take them to the charity shop.

We won't be taking any donations of books or puzzles that day.

Regards *Jill Spiteri & Elaine Thompson.*

Local History

The next meeting will be the 15th September.

As discussed at the last meeting, we are trying to arrange a lunch at the Bunch of Grapes to initiate the second part of the national u3a project. I will keep you informed

Peter

Zoom Talk on 21st September at 2pm

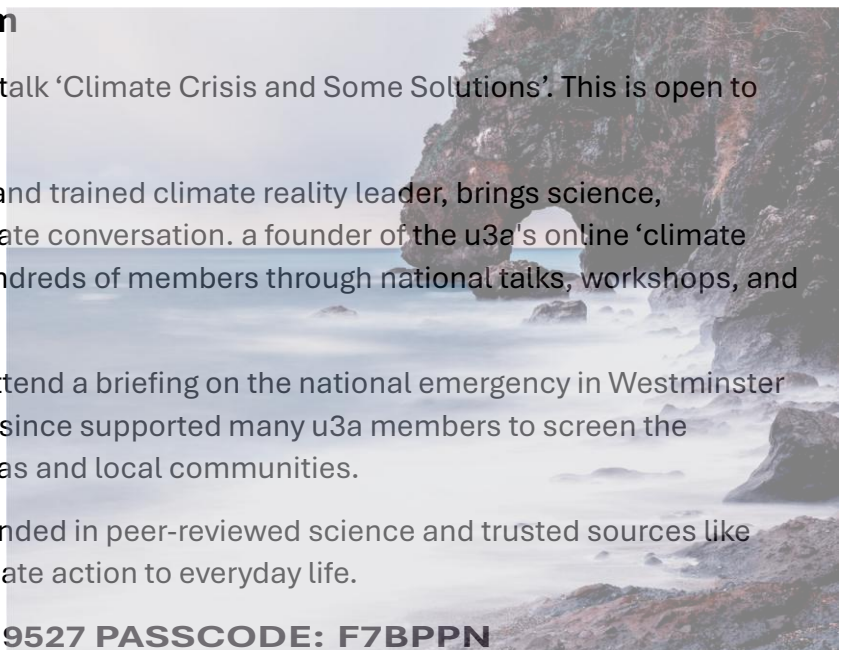
The Science Group have organised a Zoom talk 'Climate Crisis and Some Solutions'. This is open to any u3a member in Wales.

Brenda Ainsley, a passionate u3a member and trained climate reality leader, brings science, solutions, and hope to the heart of the climate conversation. a founder of the u3a's online 'climate matters' group, Brenda has empowered hundreds of members through national talks, workshops, and u3a magazine contributions.

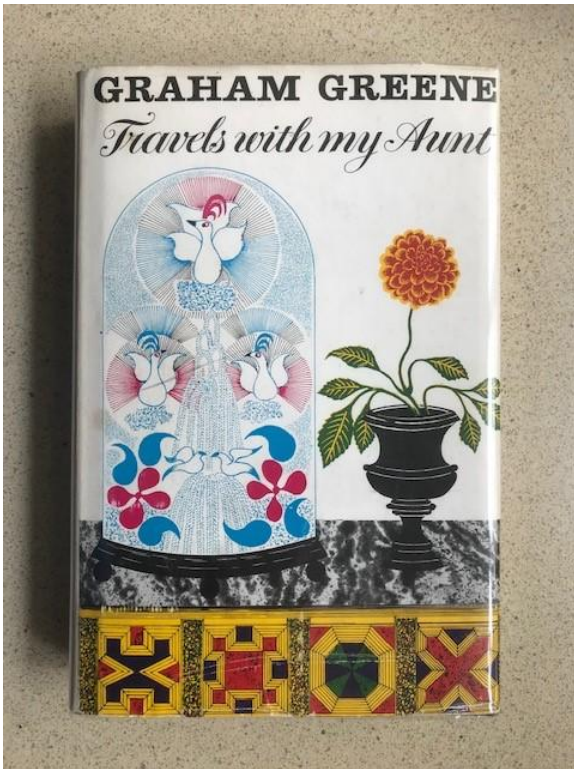
In November 2025, Brenda was invited to attend a briefing on the national emergency in Westminster Hall, London, to represent the u3a and has since supported many u3a members to screen the people's emergency briefing film in their u3as and local communities.

Her engaging 40-minute presentation, grounded in peer-reviewed science and trusted sources like NASA and the UK met office, connects climate action to everyday life.

Zoom link is: MEETING ID: 890 6921 9527 PASSCODE: F7BPPN



Book Club Report July 2027



Henry Graham Greene was born into a comfortably off and influential family and attended boarding school at Berkhamsted where his father was a house master and later headmaster. He subsequently went to Oxford to study history and then into journalism and writing. He joined the Roman Catholic church in 1926 and some of his novels have been described as catholic novels. Catholic religious themes are at the root of much of his writing, especially *Brighton Rock*, *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, and *The End of the Affair*. Others works show his interest in international politics and espionage. In 1941 he was recruited into MI6. Kim Philby, who was later found to be a Soviet agent, was Greene's supervisor and friend there. Greene resigned from MI6 in 1944. He lived with bipolar disorder and had a history of depression, which had a profound effect on his writing and personal life. Greene (1904 – 1991) was regarded by many as one of the leading novelists of the 20th century.

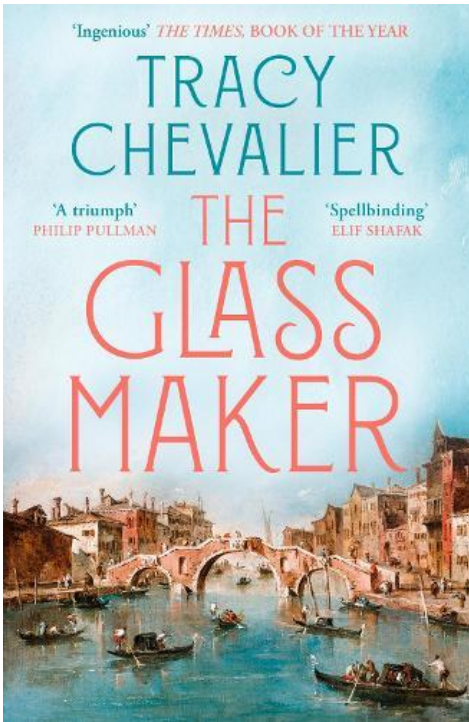
Travels with my Aunt was said by Greene to be 'The only book I have ever written just for the fun of it'.

At his mother's funeral, Henry Pulling, a stuffy, retired bank manager with an interest in dahlias, meets his Aunt Augusta. The indomitable Aunt Augusta pulls Henry along on a whirlwind adventure travelling to Brighton, Paris, Istanbul and Paraguay, telling him tales about, and introducing him to, her old lovers along the way. Henry describes their behaviour with shock and bewilderment as he joins a twilight society: mixing with hippies, war criminals, CIA men; smoking pot, breaking all the currency regulations and eventually coming alive after a dull suburban lifetime.

This was a book that we all enjoyed. Those of us reading Greene for the first time thought that we would read other books by him. Those of us rereading this book found new insights that had escaped us on the first reading. We all felt that it was very cleverly written, with many funny episodes interwoven with more hidden clues and with serious subjects like Nazi war crime and drug smuggling made amusing by the interchanges between dull Henry and amoral Aunt Augusta.

If you enjoy reading and would like to share your thoughts about different books, why not join us.

Book Club Report August 2028



Tracy Chevalier was born in 1962 in Washington DC, but moved to Britain after graduating, to work in publishing. She subsequently gained a master's degree in Creative Writing and her first novel was published in 1997. To date she has written 11 novels, the most famous being *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*, which has been translated into 38 languages. A film based on the novel gained several Academy Award nominations along with ten Baftas and two Golden Globes.

The Glassmaker is her latest book, published in 2024. It is an historical novel, beginning in 1486 and proceeding in jumps of varying lengths to the Covid pandemic. It is set on the island of Murano in the Venetian Lagoon, a place renowned then and now for its glassmakers. It follows the lives of one family of glassmakers and in particular of Orsola Rosso who learns to make glass beads. Because they are not considered lucrative or prestigious this is something that she can develop, as a young female, without upsetting her male relatives. Although the book covers about 450 years, the Rosso family age very slowly with Orsola reaching the age of 65 by 2019. Meanwhile Venice undergoes transformations, from a wealthy renaissance trading centre through Napoleonic rule to a modern tourist destination.

For our August meeting we met in person at The Leaky Barrel in Henllan. This was a book we all enjoyed and we had a lively discussion. We have decided to start giving books a score out of 10 and this one received an average 9.5. So, *The Glassmaker* is a good read. Although some of us took a while to get used to the historical time jumps, we all enjoyed the narrative and writing style. And we thought that the time skips were a clever way of driving the story and the history forward, being seen through the same eyes over centuries. We felt involved in the characters, the location and in the art and skill of glass blowing and bead making and we felt connected to the Rosso family and to Orsola in particular.

Our book for September will be *Only the Dead can Tell* by Alex Gray. Our next session is on Tuesday 22nd September and we will be meeting on Zoom, starting at 10.30.

If you enjoy reading and would like to share your thoughts about different books, why not join us. **New members are welcome**

Vicky

Table Tennis

We meet twice a month in Rhydlewys Village Hall. It's always a lot of fun – and good exercise. All equipment is supplied, though you're welcome to bring your own bat if you have one. New members will be very welcome – you don't need to be super-fit. There is a small charge of £2 or £2.50 each to pay for hire of the hall and refreshments.

Margaret

Family History

This month we were looking at examples in our research of illegitimacy, bigamy, irregular marriages – the circumstances and how the families involved were impacted. A few of us have ancestors whose father is not recorded anywhere, which makes it impossible to take that particular line back any further and we discussed how we can now use DNA to trace possible descendants of the father. Unfortunately, that has not so far helped me with my example.

It seems that marriages between first cousins did not become legal until 1949, a widower could legally marry his late wife's sister in 1907 and a widow could marry her deceased husband's brother from 1921 but of course many people broke the rules before these laws were passed.

Next month we will be looking at one of our census records and building up a picture of the street or that part of the village by looking at the other households on the census – ages, occupations, family sizes, were there other family members living nearby etc.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining the group.

Margaret

Crafty Crafters#

At the July and August meetings of Crafty Crafters we worked on canvas embroidery. We had pieces of 14 hpi (holes per inch) of canvas which had previously been painted with a variety of acrylic paints. The embroidery threads used were then chosen according to the colour of the canvas used. It was suggested that a border was first stitched to define the area to be embroidered and then this space was filled with a variety of stitches to create different texture and patterns. There were several members missing from the July meeting who only started their canvas at the August meeting. A couple of suggestions for using the completed embroidery were to attach it to the front of a bag, a cushion cover or a cover for a notebook.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, 9th September when we will be doing needle felting,



Patchwork and Quilting

At our patchwork and quilting meetings, members work on their own projects. Projects which have been completed so far include smaller items such as tote bags (always popular) and table centres, medium sized items like cot or small bed quilts and play mats and as large as double bed quilts. We have members who prefer hand sewing as well as those who use their sewing machines and we have beginners who wish to learn and more experienced members who are always on hand to help and give advice if it is needed.

Our next meeting is Friday, 11th September.



Photography Group

The Group had another great meeting this month where we were able to review a number of photos using slow panning techniques, which was the homework topic for August. Next month we are looking at all things Macro. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 23rd September.



Ian & Pete

Newcastle Emlyn u3a
Calendar September 2026

Tuesday	1	Welsh	Capel Iwan Village Hall	10.30
Tuesday	1	Outdoor Bowls	Newcastle Emlyn Bowls Club	14.00
Wednesday	2	Main meeting	NCE Rugby Club, Adpar	10.30
Wednesday	2	Pickleball	Llandysul Leisure centre	12.15
Thursday	3	Art	Penboyr village hall	10.00
Monday	7	Pétanque	King George V playing Fields	14.00
Tuesday	8	Sketchers	Leeky Barrel, Henllan	10.00
Tuesday	8	MOTO coffee morning	Caffi Twts, Newcastle Emlyn	10.00
Tuesday	8	Table Tennis	Rhydlewys Village Hall	14.00
Wednesday	9	Crafty Crafters	Penboyr Village Hall	10.30
Wednesday	9	Strictly Basic Ballroom	Holy Trinity Church Hall	10.30
Wednesday	9	Badminton/Pickleball	Llandysul Leisure Centre	12.15
Thursday	10	Art	Penboyr village hall	10.00
Thursday	10	Creative Writing	Rhydlewys Village Hall	11.00
Friday	11	Patchwork and Quilting	Penboyr village hall	11.00
Sunday	13	MOTO Sunday Lunch	Venue Varies	
Monday	14	Walkers	Venue Varies	10.30
Monday	14	Write Now	Church of Latter-Day Saints	11.00
Monday	14	Don't Get Me Started	Susan's in Pontgarreg	14.00
Tuesday	15	Pétanque	King George V playing Fields	10.15
Tuesday	15	Games	Penboyr Village Hall	10.30
Tuesday	15	Local History	Church of Latter-Day Saints	14.30
Wednesday	16	Pickleball	Llandysul Leisure Centre	12.15
Wednesday	16	Astronomy	Coracle Hall, Llechryd	14.00
Thursday	17	Art	Penboyr village hall	10.00
Thursday	17	Philosophy	Rhydlewys Village Hall	11.00
Thursday	17	Wine Appreciation	Venue Varies	14.00
Monday	21	Outdoor Bowls	Newcastle Emlyn Bowls Club	14.00
Monday	21	Science	Ffatt Forks, Cenarth Falls Resort	14.00
Tuesday	22	Book Club	Zoom meeting	10.30

Tuesday	22	French	Sue's in Penrhiwllan	11.00
Tuesday	22	Family History	Church of Latter-Day Saints	14.30
Wednesday		Lunch Group	Venue Varies none in Sep	12.00
Wednesday	23	Photography	Coracle Hall, Llechryd	14.30
Wednesday	23	Pickleball/badminton	Llandysul Leisure Centre	12.15
Thursday	24	Art	Penboyr village hall	10.00
Thursday	24	Table Tennis	Rhydlewys Village Hall	10.30
Friday	25	Strollers	Venue Varies	10.30

To add or amend events to this monthly calendar contact neu3anewsletter@hotmail.com giving date, venue and time. Closing date for newsletter contributions is the 24th of the month.