



APRIL/MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the April/May edition of the Lostwithiel Area u3a Newsletter. In this issue there's news about our next Open Meeting in May, a day trip to Exeter, the Family History group returning to Lerryn's Red Store for the first time since Covid, and a sunny walk from Sunny Corner.

MARCH OPEN MEETING

At our Open Meeting on 3rd March in the Church Rooms we enjoyed an enlightening talk from local historian **Brian Oldham** who transported us back to the Victorian era and the **Trades and Occupations in 19th Century Liskeard**. The town expanded rapidly during the Caradon copper boom and became an important business centre in east Cornwall and we heard about chandlers, blacksmiths, umbrella makers and tanners - as well as the many miners - plying their trades. We were also grateful to members of the **Lostwithiel Bowling Club** who told us about the history of the club in Restormel Road (they will celebrate their centenary in 2026) and their recent successes, as well as looking ahead to the forthcoming season.

MAY OPEN MEETING

Our next Open Meeting is on **Monday 12th May** at 2pm in the Church Rooms, Lostwithiel. In addition to our **Annual General Meeting** (see below), we'll be hearing from **Stephen Lay** about his charity walk around Cornwall. After a health scare in 2020, Stephen says *"I had to do something about my physical and mental health - I walked! I believe I was the first to walk entirely around Cornwall: not just the coastal footpath, but also around each of the estuaries and then from Cremyl on the south coast, following the Tamar to Marsland Beach on the north coast.*

I started out only to improve my health. It did. I finished up by walking over 1,000 miles (as I had to get back to my start point each time) and then by running the London Marathon in October 2022. My journey raised £46,000 for Carol's Memorial Fund at Children's Hospice South West."

Plus, in our Community Slot, **Karen Gledhill** will be giving us the latest on South East Cornwall Arts.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

You will shortly receive the paperwork for the AGM, which will take place after the Open Meeting presentation on May 12th. This includes a nomination form to be part of the Committee, so please do consider putting yourself forward if you would like to help with the running of your u3a.

ANTHONY HINDLEY

We were very sorry to learn of the recent passing of Tony Hindley, our former Treasurer and member of the Electric Bikers. Tony was a valued member of our u3a and our thoughts are very much with Carolyn and their family.

Updates from our Groups

For group contact details and more information please visit the groups page on our website

Acoustic Guitar for Beginners

The group is aimed at people who want to start learning to play the guitar. It meets in the Scout Hut in Lostwithiel on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 10.00am until 12.00pm.

The group has been doing really well and has come a long way since we first started in early 2023. We have learnt several chords now and use them to play along to backing tracks of well-known but simple songs. The group meetings are divided into two parts : the first is an informative session where different guitar playing techniques, chord shapes, strumming patterns and everything guitar is discussed.

After a short break for a coffee and a natter we then move into the second part where we play along to songs using the techniques taught in the first half as well as what we've been practicing at home. The aim is to make this as much fun an experience for everyone as possible and hopefully at the end of each meeting people go away having enjoyed it as well as having learnt something new about this wonderful instrument called the guitar.

Art & Craft Experiments

The main aim of this group is to encourage creativity in any medium you want, and not to be afraid of "giving it a go". Whether you are an artist or a doodler; a knitter or embroiderer, we hope you will try mixing up styles and mediums with the help and encouragement from our group.

Our meetings are held the last Friday of each month – 10.30am to 12pm. We will either be out and about or held at a local venue. Group contact : Heidi Swire on 0776 690 0179

Art Appreciation

We visit exhibitions galleries, stately homes with collections, craft shows, sculpture gardens, locally and further afield. We want to interpret Art as widely as possible, and see and learn about new works as well as those we already admire and love.

In February the group went to Boconnoc House to see the exhibition of portraits of the Mohun family and at the end of March had the annual train trip to St Ives, taking in the various galleries, including Tate St Ives, the Barbara Hepworth museum and the Penwith Gallery. Other trips planned for later in the year include Delamore House, Bovey Tracey Art and Crafts Fair and The Box in Plymouth.

Beverage 'n Banter

If you enjoy a cup of Coffee/Tea (refill included) and a biscuit in an informal atmosphere and would like to meet up with other u3a Members - this could be the group for you! Cost just £3 per head. The first meeting of the year in February brought another good attendance and 3 new members - which is great! The group usually meets on the first Monday of the month when there isn't an Open Meeting - the next one is on 7th April.

Bridge

After trialling venues in town we are now established happily in the Scout Hut in Lostwithiel, still on Wednesdays 2pm - 4.30pm. However, we now skip the refreshment break and those who miss their cuppa bring a flask! As we now have this lovely space and ample tables we are happy to invite more players to join our group. If you would like to try an afternoon's bridge with our group please contact Jenny MacDonald on 01208 873933

Creative Writing

Another year and the group is still going strong. It is now twelve years since the group started and the number of stories written over the years must run into hundreds. The collective creative energy generated could, possibly, power the whole of Lostwithiel (maybe that's a bit of an exaggeration!). The group's theme for February was "*Ask Me Later*".

Creative Writing 2

Meeting dates for the first half of 2025 are now confirmed at 2pm in the Community Centre on these Wednesdays : April 16th; May 21st and June 18th. The group is now full and is operating a waiting list - group contact Nigel Ayers on 073 914 689 04.

Day Trippers

The Day Trippers aim to use just public transport for their trips - if possible with a bus pass and a railcard.

After a planning meeting at the Royal Oak in early March, the group now has a proposed programme arranged until Autumn and started with a trip to Exeter on March 22nd. Twelve of the group set out from Par, Lostwithiel and Bodmin Parkway stations on a dank morning. On arrival the weather had improved and we met up for the usual reviving coffee near Exeter Central Station before moving on to the excellent Royal Devon & Exeter Museum nearby. There was a temporary exhibition on food to enjoy. Some of us then met up for lunch before going our separate ways to see the cathedral, do some shopping, relax in Northenhay Park or just meander round Exeter. Soon it was time to meet up again to catch the train home. Due to difficulties on some GWR trains we were later than expected getting home. We didn't however let this spoil a very enjoyable day out! You can see photos from the Exeter trip on the Day Trippers page [**here**](#). Future trips planned include Teignmouth, Helston and Barnstaple.

Electric Bikers

John Jones and Pat Shuttlewood have decided to hang up their bike clips after being in the group for many years - they will be missed. We have already taken on new members to fill their places. Rides completed in January and February : Lanivet to Blisland, St Austell to Portholland, Goss Moor to Wadebridge, Sladesbridge to Polzeath, Eden to Bodmin, Tideford to Cotehele and Quoit to Whipsiderry a total of 168 miles, an average of 24 miles per ride.

Family History

We are a friendly group who help each other with our "brick walls"; sharing information & the use of various web sites to help our research.

In March we were back at the Red Store, Lerryn - the first time since before Covid! Besides our own research, we also looked at FamilySearch WiKi which is a tremendous research resource largely unknown and used by our Members. Hopefully, following the meeting that will change and it may even help break down some of those "brick walls"! Next meeting on 16th April will be devoted to private research and will again be held at The Red Store, Lerryn.

French

Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays 2.45pm - 4.15pm in the Lostwithiel Community Centre Reading Room (where the mobile Post Office is held). The group is very informal and of mixed ability, but not really suitable for absolute beginners. Most of us have some school French. We share our knowledge of the language and experience of French life and culture with each other. There is always a lot of laughter

and "*déviati*on" along the way! There is now a waiting list to join this group. Group contact: Veronica Ashworth 01208 873397

Garden Visits

There are times when you need to stop working in your own garden and get inspiration from other people's creativity and hard work. Our programme of visits to gardens, usually in Cornwall and Devon, starts in the spring and ends in October to admire the autumn colours.

We began our 2025 programme on March 29th with a visit to The Lodge in the hamlet of Fletchersbridge. Fourteen of us spent a very enjoyable afternoon wandering around this impressive riverside garden, open for the NGS. Although a disappointingly grey day weather-wise, we admired a colourful array of trees, shrubs and spring bulbs providing a perfect frame for the house, a remodelled Gothic Lodge originally part of the Glynn estate. The camellias, magnolias and primroses throughout were particularly pretty, and provided a welcome promise of spring. We also loved the water garden with ponds, waterfalls, sculptures, and a resident colony of Canada Geese. The afternoon was rounded off in the usual way with tea and cake – in aid of the Friends of Bodmin Hospital. Thank you to owners Tony and James (and the geese!) for sharing their lovely garden with us. The April visit will also be to a Fletchersbridge garden followed by the Antony Woodland Garden at Torpoint in May. You can see pictures of our most recent visit on the Lostwithiel Area u3a website

Lunch Group

The Lunch Group is a friendly group of singles and couples who meet for lunch on the 4th Wednesday of each month at as many different locations as we can find within 30-40 mins of Lostwithiel! Between us we have discovered some really good places to eat. The lunches usually start at 12.30 for 1pm. Members take it in turns to organise and host the lunches, so if no one volunteers there's no lunch!! If you are interested in joining please contact us to have your name put on the waiting list.

In February we had a new organiser, Zeb Banks, and new venue at the Hewas Inn at Sticker which proved to be a great success. Good pub grub was enjoyed by twenty two members in pleasant surroundings with attentive staff. One to remember for next year perhaps! The March venue was Florys in Bodmin, arranged by Sheila Goodgame - not our first time there and certainly won't be our last! Twenty one members took over their upstairs restaurant, enjoyed the usual banter, the interesting menu was well presented and served. More details - and photos - are on the Lunch Group website

Nature and Bird Watching

Though primarily we are a bird watching group we do in reality take an interest in all wildlife we come across, from mammals, insects and butterflies to plants and fungi. You do not need to be an expert, all are welcome and if you enjoy photography do bring your camera.

After disappointingly having to cancel Bude in January we made up for it February - in addition to slotting in a River Tamar/Lynher birdwatching boat trip and postponing Walmsley until March, we also did our annual Respryn and Lanhydrock walk. All successful trips and now we look forward to Porth and East Pentire on April 9th. Target species will be Great Crested Grebes displaying at Porth and maybe some Choughs at Pentire. The schedule for 2025 is now on the website.

Photography

We are a friendly photography group with a wide variety of skill levels and interests. The group meets three times each month. One of our meetings sees us out around Cornwall and sometimes further afield, taking pictures and helping each other to try new photographic techniques and challenges. There are also two meetings held online - in one we share and discuss images based on a monthly theme, whilst in the second we explore a variety of topics related to camera techniques in a little more depth. Over the last ten years we have also held four successful exhibitions. We welcome members with all ranges of ability and equipment - most of us started using our phone as a camera! There is an annual fee of £10 to join this group to fund the Zoom licence which is used for our online meetings and allows us to post recordings of the meetings on our webpage. The group's planned field trips for 2025 are on the website where you can also find links to some wonderful images on the Flickr page.

We started March with a challenging assignment - panning, for Photo Extra. Following February's visit to Wheal Martyn, the focus for our Platform images was "Industrial" but for the March Field Trip we returned to the natural environment.

Poetry

Currently our meetings are held monthly every 1st Friday of each month at 10.15am in the Reading Room at the Lostwithiel Community Centre. We had a super meeting in March, sharing poems roughly linked to the supernatural or ghosts. Our next meeting is on Friday 4th April. The topic is '*Accidental Finds*' - that is, poems we have come across while looking for our previous topics.

Pop and Rock Music Appreciation

After the somewhat ambiguous theme of "*Under the Influence*" in February, for March the chosen topic was "*Waxing Lyrical*" and we had some great tracks from Spandau Ballet, Georgie Fame, Glen Campbell, Emmylou Harris, Rod Stewart, The Blues Brothers, Brian Eno, Joe Cocker, Joan Armatrading, Mark Knopfler, Taylor Swift, Roxy Music, Bob Dylan and The Pogues. Our Tenuous track was Robert Johnson with Cross Road Blues. April will be a *Free Choice* session, so anything goes!

Scrabble

The group would be delighted to hear from any new members. They are a friendly little group and not over serious, playing purely for enjoyment. The group meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 2.00 pm at the Royal Oak. All equipment is supplied. For more details please contact Jon Hancock 01208 269456

Strummers Ukulele Singalong Group

Please note that this group is no longer part of Lostwithiel Area u3a.

Theatre

We are a very lively, active and friendly Group meeting every 3rd Thursday morning of the month when members choose and help organise trips. We go to live and live-streamed theatre, music and dance in and around Cornwall and beyond. We use public transport where possible. When cars are required transport depends on availability of drivers.

Recent highlight have included **Lynn Faces** at The Drum - which had mixed reviews from group members - and **Doctor Dick**, where ten members attended this production on a very cold night in a chilly Bodmin Old Library. The intriguing story of Dr Dick - a 19th Century 'quack' doctor called Richard Pascoe - was well told by Will Hazell resplendent in a tricorne hat and was interspersed with interesting slides. Will, who is the creator of Falmouth Uncovered, also entertained with his melodeon – a lovely type of accordion which was admired by members.

u3Art

Members use a variety of drawing and painting media and we would welcome new members of all abilities. We are a non-teaching group but offer the use of reference books and members are always ready to share their experience and expertise if required. We compile a list of themes or projects to work to, for those who wish a more structured way of working, but that is entirely up to the individual as some people prefer to work on their own projects.

We meet at Lostwithiel Community Centre Oasis Room on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, from 2pm to 4pm. We charge a small fee (£2 or £3 depending on attendance numbers) which pays for the hire of the room. Group Contact: Trish Penrose 07780 713276

Ukulele Workshop

We are a group of enthusiastic ukulele players who are keen to improve our skills and make our music more interesting to listen to, by introducing more advanced chords/ rhythms/riffs/arrangements/instrumentals etc. We continue to meet on a Friday afternoon at the Scout Hut.

Walking

After cancelling the January walks because of the weather, the Group has had a good run of fine weather, starting with the first walk in February, a 6.5 mile circular from Luckett, where we came across a llama and some Shetland cattle - and their cuddly looking calves - along the way. This was followed later in the month with a 5.15 circular around the National Trust estate at Treilissick, while early March saw the group navigating a 5 mile circular from Grampound to Trenowth.

At the end of March the Group went from Sunny Corner to Heligan and back. Sunny Corner lived up to its name for this very sociable friendly short walk. After a bit of juggling of cars, fifteen set off from the car park, walked a short stretch of the Pentewan trail where we stopped for a photo opportunity, before crossing the road to the track through Tremayne Estate woods. Although it's only a few miles from where most of us live it was pleasing to lead a walk which many had not done before. There wasn't much wildlife to be seen, except a proud mother duck and her brood of very young ducklings. And one of our group in his shorts!

At the top of a fairly steep gradient we had a choice of either Heligan cafe or Lobbs Farm Shop cafe. In the end everyone chose Lobbs, again a new experience for many, and declared it a success. Then it was back by the same route, pleasant in the warm spring sunshine, to the cars, with a feeling that summer is on the way!

See reports and photos from the walks on the website

Wine Appreciation

Our 2025 schedule is now on the website and we will continue with a regular fixture of 3pm on the last Monday of the month. The location will be either in a members home or the Café of the Community centre. We plan to go to other locations for visits to tastings and vineyards, to be advised.

For our February meeting we had two whites and two reds. Two wines from New Zealand, an excellent Sauvignon Blanc from Aldi and a so-so Pinot Noir. The French Pouilly Fume was expensive but dull. The best red was from South Africa, an excellent Roodeberg blend (Morrisons)

Contacts

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