



## DECEMBER 2024/JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the December/January edition of the Lostwithiel Area u3a Newsletter. In this issue there's an update on our 2025 Open Meetings, a further appeal for a Groups' Coordinator, some ghoulish goings-on in Golant and an Anniversary walk to Restormel.

Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year!

### DATES FOR YOUR 2025 DIARY - OPEN MEETINGS NOW CONFIRMED

Our first Open Meeting of 2025 is on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January** at 2pm in the Church Rooms in Lostwithiel where our guest speaker will be **Lynn Goold**, taking us on a journey through **Daphne du Maurier's Cornwall**. This promises to be a talk of great local interest about one of Cornwall's best-known literary figures;

Karen Dickin, our Speaker Secretary, has been busy finalising the Open Meeting schedule for the remainder of 2025 and these are detailed below:

**3rd March** – Brian Oldham – Trades and Occupations in 19th Century Liskeard

**12th May** – Stephen Lay – 1,000 miles fundraising walk around Cornwall for Cornwall Hospice South West (*plus AGM*)

**7th July** – Amanda Allan – Researching the History of Penrice and the Graves Sawle Family

**1st Sept** – Kevin Channer – You be the Jury. A second mock trial for u3a members to decide.

**3rd Nov** – u3a Photography Group Showcase : a selection of stunning photos and the stories behind them.

All Open Meetings will be held in the Church Rooms in Lostwithiel and start at 2pm - and all are on a Monday!

## **NOVEMBER OPEN MEETING**

At our November meeting, on the eve of the US Presidential election and to a very full Church Rooms, we were treated to a highly topical talk from local resident **Robin Dyer**, who took us through “***The historic US election of 2024 – the fight for America’s democracy and its soul.***” Enlightening us to the complexities of US politics, Robin brought to life the characters involved and led a lively question and answer session at the end of a highly entertaining talk. We also heard from **Amanda Tamblin**, Practice Manager at the **Lostwithiel Medical Practice**, who gave us all the latest news from the practice, ranging from new members of staff to the recent vaccination programme – and there were many words of appreciation from members for the brilliant work the practice does for local residents!

## **Role of Groups' Coordinator - vacancy on our committee**

As mentioned in earlier newsletters, after serving as our Groups' Coordinator since May 2021, Annie Singer is now standing down which means we will need someone to take over the role. Over the last three years Annie has provided tremendous support for Group Contacts and Leaders, both existing and new, helping them with the smooth running of their groups.

As Annie says, “*It is a very interesting role which gives you the opportunity to be in regular contact with the Group Leaders and Contacts, keep up to date with the exciting range of activities they offer, support the introduction of new groups as well as offer advice and support to existing group leaders*”. If you would like to find out more about what the role entails, do not hesitate to contact Annie on 01208 871272 or at [annie.singer@talk21.com](mailto:annie.singer@talk21.com). Our next Groups' Coordinator will of course receive much support from Annie during the transition period.

## **HAVE YOU ANY IDEAS FOR NEW GROUPS ?**

At a previous Open Meeting we had some suggestions for new groups - these included Backgammon, Knitting, Mah-Jong and Canoeing/Kayaking. Do you have any interests or hobbies that might merit sharing with a wider audience and fit in with the u3a ethos? We already have over 20 fantastic groups but if you have any ideas for more please let our Groups' Coordinator, Annie Singer, know on 01208 871272 or [annie.singer@talk21.com](mailto:annie.singer@talk21.com)

## **COULD YOU BE A MEMBER OF THE THIRD AGE TRUST OR COUNCIL?**

The national u3a is moving to a new governance structure with a smaller Board, that will focus primarily on the governance of the Third Age Trust, and a new Council that will represent the voice of u3as. Nominations are open now for both Trustees of the Board and Council members. This is an exciting change that gives u3a members more of a voice than ever before. Details of each role and nomination

forms can be found on the election page of the u3a website. The deadline for nominations is Thursday 19 December 2024.

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## 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 Art & Craft Experiments group meets regularly on the last Friday of each month – 10.30am to 12pm, either out and about or at a local venue.

### **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.

### **Beverage 'n Banter**

If you enjoy a cup of Coffee/Tea (refill included) and a biscuit in an informal atmosphere & would like to meet up with other u3a Members - this could be the group for you! Cost just £3 per head. The group usually meets on the first Monday of the month when there isn't an Open Meeting.

### **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 will soon be 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!). Although this group is now full, Creative Writing 2 (see *below*) is still taking new members.

## **Creative Writing 2**

In arranging our meetings we try to avoid clashing with other group meeting dates and these have now been confirmed until the end of year, all at 2.30pm in the Lostwithiel Community Centre. Our most recent story theme was "*Such things as dreams are made on*". 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. Recent trips have included Looe and Camborne (for Trevithick Day).

## **Electric Bikers**

We cycled 110 miles over our four October rides : St Austell to Gorran Haven. Tideford to Saltash, Quintrell Downs to Perranporth and Washaway to Delabole and another 89 miles in November : Trerulefoot to Cawsands, Sticker to Hemmick Beach, Lanhydrock to Lakeview and Taphouse to Duloe.

If you are interested in joining the group please ring Brian on 07530507091

## **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.

## **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) New members very welcome! 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 "*déviaton*" along the way!

Group contact: Veronica Ashworth 01208 873397

## **Garden Visits**

Our programme of visits for 2024 has now finished but we look forward to next spring starting with the snowdrops! You can see lots of colourful pictures of all the garden visits 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. A big thank you to Doug Mills for organising a very successful last minute change of venue for our October lunch at The Jubilee Inn at Pelynt. Thirteen members enjoyed their respective choice of menu and the usual friendly banter.

## **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. In October, eleven of us visited Old Town Cove. It stayed dry and we managed just under 40 species of birds, only 3 varieties of butterflies and to our delight a grey seal. Some of the notable finds were the Osprey, Kingfisher, plenty of waders such as Godwit, Red and Greenshank, 500+ Oyster Catchers and Dunlin.

## **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. Our first field trip for 2025 is planned for Charlestown.

The Photography Group's page on the Lostwithiel Area u3a website has links to some wonderful images on their Flickr page. Group contacts : Stephanie Thomas 01208 841484 and Lindsay Southgate 01208 873371

## **Poetry**

Currently our meetings are held monthly every 1st Friday of each month at 10.30am in the Reading Room at the Lostwithiel Community Centre. In our October meeting we read poems from Scottish Poets and in November we invited local poet Derek Hines to read some of his poems. Group contact: Josephine Child 01208 871284

## **Pop and Rock Music Appreciation**

The theme for our October meeting was "*Time Machine*", looking at artists when they were starting out - and how their careers progressed. We listened to a wide range of music from Van Morrison, Steve Marriott, Eric Clapton, Joe Jackson, Peter Dinklage, Taylor Swift, Paul Simon and The Who. For November the theme was "*Music that means something to me - and why*" - we had lots of interesting stories and backgrounds to the track choices at this session! Artists included Steve Miller Band, Bob Dylan, MC5, Carole King, Queen, Dave Gilmour, ELO, The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Kate Bush, Iggy Pop, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Bonnie Raitt, Joy Division, The Proclaimers, Yes and Arthur Askey with the Bee Song.

## **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 Sing Along Group**

Meetings start at 2pm every Monday in Lanhydrock Memorial Hall. We have now revised our meeting format with all group members selecting a song at random for the group to perform. This seems to be working extremely well and you are most welcome to come along and join us at one of our meetings. On a sad note, David Healy, a member of Strummers for many years, passed away a few weeks ago.

Contact: Brian on 07530507091

## **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 highlights have included a visit to the village of Golant to see a one-man performance of **Dracula** by David Mynne. Most of us were not sure what we were letting ourselves in for but at £10 it was worth a punt. Well, David recited the story very accurately and did all the voices as well as all the sound effects : door handles turning, squeaky doors and flappy bats etc. The bats, Dracula's brides and the cargo ship Demeter were all handheld models. All-in-all the play was engrossing, funny and a little bit creepy. All of the theatre group went home feeling that the play was £10 very well spent and all are looking forward to his next play. We also saw **Pepper and Honey**, a one woman play performed by the Not Now Collective which was a poignant, subtle and timely play about the journey of change. cultural differences and trying not to feel a foreigner in your adopted country. Excellent acting, a comfortable theatre and we were given a pepper and honey biscuit on leaving!

### **u3Art**

Throughout the summer months and into autumn the group has continued to be well attended with some new members joining us. We have continued to work on a variety of projects, all suggested by members and including still life, wallpaper/fabric designing, reflections, skies, flowers from real life, painting soft toys, local landscapes of Lostwithiel. We also acquired a dvd player and dvds, generously donated by two of our members, and have so far watched a tutorial on using pastels with water and afterwards had a go ourselves. We hope to have more such sessions in the future.

With Christmas now in sight, we are going to be making cards for the festive season which will probably include use of mixed media and a chance to use some of the techniques we have explored in the past.

We meet at Lostwithiel Community Centre Oasis Room on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, from 2pm to 4pm (although this can be subject to change at times to accommodate other groups). 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.

Group contacts : Alan Pearce 01208 872592/Cezar Leon 07900 694520

### **Walking**

The group has been on three walks in the last couple of months, all around four miles each - Par Beach to Tywardreath circular in October, Golitha Falls to Sibblyback Lake on November 12th and Lostwithiel Community Centre to Restomel

Castle and back on November 26th. For the latter, unfortunately Janet and Chris were unable to lead their planned anniversary walk but a scratch team of three, aided and abetted by several others in the group, managed to find their way around this local route.

So 14 of us, in a brief fine weather spell in between some dreadful weather, clambered up the wet slippery rocky trail at the side of Tanhouse Road and then dropped down through the fields towards Restormel Castle. The view from the top is spectacular, with vistas stretching for miles across the valley, taking in the Castle, Duchy of Cornwall Nursery and Lostwithiel. The walk finished with some of the party descending on the Community Centre Café for sustenance.

## **Wine Appreciation**

In October we met at Christine's house and enjoyed a range of wines from Sainsbury's. The choices were made based on the unusual bottles. The choice ranged from an AI selected white blend through to a solid red in a dumpy bottle. The prices did seem high but one of the best was the Spanish Albarino white in the blue bottle at £16. (*Visit the webpage to see the weird and wonderful bottles selected for the tasting!*).

In November we met at the Community Centre and enjoyed a range of wines personally imported by Sue and Carl. The choices were made were from their recent trip to France. The prices paid in France for this quality wine were very reasonable, all being at the 10 euro mark. The wines were all very good, the group liked the Brouilly (a cru Beaujolais) best closely followed by the Saint Véran an elegant white. The Coteaux de L'Aubance turned out to be a sweet wine, not in favour with the group, and the Haut Medoc Bordeaux was nice but might have needed another year to mellow.

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 Cafe of the Community centre. We plan to go to other locations for visits to tastings and vineyards, to be advised. Group contact: Michael Furminger 07715546026

## **Contacts**

Chair - David Platt 07484124490

Membership - Stephanie Thomas 07980871491

Lostwithiel Area University of The Third Age  
Address: c/o Polmena House, Polmena Lane, Lostwithiel, PL22 0LB  
Telephone 01208 873792