



## AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Lostwithiel Area u3a newsletter. In this issue there's news about our last Open Meeting and an update on some of our activities.

### OPEN MEETINGS

Our guest speaker on 7 July was Vivien Foster OBE, co-founder and former president of the Merchant Navy Association, who gave us a highly entertaining talk about the setting up of the Association and her successful campaign to ensure that the dedication and sacrifice of the brave seamen of the Merchant Navy during the times of war and conflict now receives due national recognition. Seamen aged from fourteen into their seventies kept the country supplied with raw materials, arms, ammunition, fuel, food and all of the necessities of a nation at war — literally enabling the country to defend itself. During WW11, they sustained a considerably greater casualty rate than almost every other branch of the armed services and suffered great hardship.

For many years this vital fourth service was excluded from joining the other armed services at remembrance ceremonies, including the march-past at the Cenotaph. This lack of civic recognition led the Merchant Navy Association to establish the red ensign as their standard and to fund and erect the memorial on the Barbican in Plymouth in January 1996. As a woman Vivian herself never served at sea, but, inspired by the seagoing men of her family, she became a formidable fighting force determined to gain due recognition for their bravery.

Our next Open Meeting will be on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September** in the Church Rooms at 2pm when Kevin Channer will be back by popular demand to present us with the evidence for another mock criminal trial at which we, the audience, will play the part of the Jury. Many of us came to the

wrong conclusion last time, so let's see if we can make a better judgement this time.

Another date for your diary is **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** when we have invited renowned international wildlife photographer Adrian Langdon to show us some of his stunning work.

## **COMMITTEE VACANCIES**

Our committee members are: Liz Hemsley (Secretary), Lalita Madhvani (Treasurer), Steph Thomas (Membership), David Platt (Groups Coordinator), Dave Bridges (Speaker Secretary), Karen Dickin (Publicity), Annie Singer, Sheila Mackinder and Zeb Banks,

We still have vacancies for the vital roles of Chair and Vice Chair. If you are interested or wish to nominate someone, please contact David for more information.

## **CHARITY FAYRE**

On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July we took a stall at the Lostwithiel Charity Fayre Day which was a useful opportunity to engage with potential new members and tell them more about what we do. We offered some fiendish quizzes devised by a few of our groups on rock and pop, birds and Cornish places of interest.

## **UPDATES FROM JUST A FEW OF OUR GROUPS**

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

### **Art Appreciation**

The next planning meeting will be on August 18<sup>th</sup> and dates will be circulated when they become available.

And we are sure many of you will have seen the intriguing painted panel of the crucifixion in St Bart's church found in a local barn!

### **Beverage 'n Banter**

The next meeting will be at the Fowey Valley Hotel will be on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August at 11.00

## **Report by Day Trippers - Update 22nd July 2025**

Those travelling from Lostwithiel on 19 July were expecting to catch the 07.49 train but this was delayed due to engine problems. Instead of arriving at Totnes with a 45 minute wait for our bus to the stannery town of Ashburton we only had 12 minutes to get to the bus stop. Unbeknown to us at the time our train back was also delayed. The bus journey was scenic as we travelled through the Devon countryside, passing by Buckfast Abbey and alongside the River Dart.

On arrival we were surprised to find the annual Ale Tasting and Bread Weighing Procession was to take place that afternoon. The ceremony, going back to the 1400s, checks the ale and bread are of the correct strength and weight. The bread was auctioned after the procession in aid of local charities. One loaf fetched £140. The museum and church were also worth a visit as were the many individual shops.

### **Electric Bikers**

The Electric Dynamos Bike Group ride on Weds 23 July was 22 miles from Castle Motors to Portwrinkle. See the group page on the website for more details of their exploits. Unfortunately the group is still full but Brian is happy to add anyone interested in joining onto the waiting list, contact [\*brianjohnmarriott@gmail.com\*](mailto:brianjohnmarriott@gmail.com)

### **French**

1 July was the last meeting before the group's summer break and meetings will restart on Tuesday 16 September, looking forward to another year of fun, friendship and French. Change of venue and times to: Lostwithiel Community Centre Oasis Room starting at 2pm and finishing at 3.30pm

### **Garden Visits**

#### **Report on Visit to Lanjeth Nursery and Water Gardens. 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.**

On a slightly cooler and blustery day 13 members of the Garden Visits Group met at Lanjeth. We were welcomed by two of the four Partners there, Dave and Steve and Steve then gave us an extremely interesting talk about themselves, the start of their project, where they are now and their hopes and aspirations for the future.

Steve then took us on a guided tour around the gardens where they have already made an impressive impact on what, 3 years ago, was a completely overgrown 13.5 acre site of virtually waste ground hiding

some 130 ponds, now with many up and running projects and many more in progress. They have registered as a CIC (Community Interest Company) which they hope will allow them to apply for grants and funding to spend on projects that will benefit the community and allow free and open access to all.

Steve proudly showed us the huge nursery greenhouses they have virtually rebuilt, their forest school area, several of the ponds they have uncovered – currently full of beautiful water lilies, their Christmas Tree hire nursery and many quiet and peaceful areas with seating where people of all abilities can just sit and enjoy nature, both flora and fauna. There are also a couple of areas which have been set up for sessions of a more holistic and wellbeing nature.

We returned to the café they have built and enjoyed a light lunch and were then free to wander the gardens some more if we wanted to and visit the nursery to buy plants.

A very enjoyable and quite different garden visit, which was of great interest to all of us.

## **Photography**

You can view the monthly albums of wonderful images taken so far this year on the [Photography group page](#).

## **Report from Pop & Rock Music Appreciation**

For our July meeting we had a theme of Slow, Slow, Quick, Quick, Slow - nothing to do with Victor Sylvester, but a mix of slow and fast tracks. Group members chose one of each, and for the fast section we heard from The Rolling Stones (*Star, Star*), The Undertones (*Here Comes the Summer*), AC/DC (*Thunderstruck*), Judas Priest (*Exciter*), Love Sculpture (*Sabre Dance*) and Earl Scruggs (*Foggy Mountain Breakdown*). And for the Slow Section we had The Rolling Stones (*Winter*) Joe Jackson (*A Slow Song*), James Taylor (*Sweet Baby James*), Etta James (*At Last*), Led Zeppelin (*You Shook Me*) and Lana Del Ray (*Henry Come On*). Our Tenuous track - where a song has a tenuous link to one chosen at the previous meeting - was the Bacharach/David song *Message to Martha*, performed by Adam Faith. This followed the June track of *Where Have All The Flowers Gone?* sung by Marlene Dietrich, the link being that Burt Bacharach was Dietrich's musical director in the 1950s - not many people know that!

The theme for the session on 20<sup>th</sup> May was Sad Songs and we had a wide range of tracks - some sadder than others - from PJ Harvey, The Animals, John Martyn, Angeline Morrison, The Righteous Brothers, Gary

Moore, Taylor Swift, Peter Gabriel and Kate Bush, Neth Hart and Joe Bonnamassa, Emmylou Harris, Placebo ft David Bowie, Paul McCartney and Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. Our Tenuous track was Give Peace a Chance by John Lennon and the Plastic Ono Band.

Our next session will be on Tuesday 17th June when the theme will be Happy Songs (we needed cheering up having had the theme of Sad Songs in May!)

### **Theatre Group - June and July 2025 Highlights**

Nine theatre group members attended a fabulous production of *Walk the Walk*, set in the grounds of Pool Hall Menheniot. This was the first performance of walk the walk before it tours the rest of the county so I will not go into any more detail in case you get a chance to see it for yourselves. Suffice to say that we all had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed the performance.

Ten of us attended '*Around the World in 80 days*' at Cardinham Woods, a fast paced, bonkers comedy for all the family From Into Bodmin literature. The cast consisted of two men and one woman, between the 3 of them they portrayed at least 10 main characters and a host of smaller parts, this was achieved by the changing of hats, sometimes the addition of glasses and of course different accents. The stage was quite high, allowing for actors to descend into the lower decks of ships via a large trunk. The backdrop of the stage consisted of a door either end of the stage with the rest of the back made up of various cases most of which opened up to reveal different props eg telephone, decanters and glasses, a bar and a hotel reception desk. All in all it was a great night and even had some audience participation.

Finally, a group of us went to see Annie, a musical by the Caradon Youth Theatre at the Public Rooms in Liskeard. Played by 16 amazing performers and 4 talented musicians lead faultlessly by their 19 year old musical director. What a brilliant performance by all, with an age range from 8 to 21. Annie, aged 11, threw herself into the role as did the other principal parts, in fact as did all the cast.

### **Walking**

Click [here](#) to see some of reports and photos from some of the latest walks.

## **Wine Appreciation**

**For inspiration and recommendations on what to drink on summer nights, see the June report from the [wine appreciation](#) group.**

## **Contacts**

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