

FEBRUARY/MARCH LOSTWITHIEL U3A 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2024 - just as the days are getting longer and hopefully more spring-like!

Open Meeting Monday January 15th 2024

At our Open Meeting on 15th January in the Church Rooms, our guest speaker was mining engineer Stephen Lay, who gave a highly entertaining talk to a packed hall about Mining on the Dark Side, far beyond the more romanticised image of mining portrayed in Poldark. A graduate of the Camborne School of Mines, and who worked at South Crofty and Wheal Jane, Stephen took us on an adventurous – and dangerous! - journey to places like Siberia, Georgia and Sierra Leone where he was responsible for mining gold and diamonds in multi-million dollar operations. We even got to handle some specimens of gold and tin ore which helped us to appreciate how the end product emerges. All in all an extremely enlightening talk!

Membership Fees to remain the same for 2024/5!

It's that time of the year when our membership fees are due and the committee is delighted to announce that fees will remain the same as last year - £18 for single membership, £30 for joint and for Associate members (those who belong to another u3a) it will stay at £15 for single and £25 for joint. You should by now have received an email from our Membership Secretary, Stephanie Thomas, which details how you can pay.

Despite the increase in the cost of living we are able to freeze our membership fees partly because so many of you are ticking the Gift Aid box; Lostwithiel Area u3a is a registered charity which allows us to boost the money we receive from taxpayers by reclaiming 25p for every £1 donated. Please continue to tick the box if you are a taxpayer - it doesn't cost you anything!

One new thing this year is that we are asking you to sign up to the Members Portal on Beacon (you may have already signed up to this). It's really easy to do and will help streamline the payment process for both our members and volunteers in the future. In addition to the explanation in Stephanie's email there are some very helpful step-by-step guides, complete with screenshots, on our website in the "Join Us" section [here](#). Stephanie will be at the next Beverage 'n' Banter on February 5th to talk through the process and answer any questions you may have.

Afternoon Tea

Over thirty five members have so far signed up to attend the Afternoon Tea at the Fowey Valley Hotel as the final part of our Tenth Anniversary celebrations on February 23rd. Annie Singer's email of 2nd January has more information about the event - if you want to go you will have to let Annie know by Friday 2nd February at the very latest. Entertainment will be provided by the Ukulele Workshop Group.

Our next Open Meeting is on Monday 4th March at 2pm in the Church Rooms, Lostwithiel where our guest speaker is Sue Newton, County Organiser for the National Garden Scheme.

UPDATES FROM OUR GROUPS

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.

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

The group recently held a lunch and planning meeting for 2024 at the Royal Oak.

Beverage 'n Banter

If you enjoy a cup of Coffee/Tea (refill included) & 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. Takes place on the first Monday in the months that alternate with our usual Open Meetings; the next meeting is at 11am on Monday 5th February in the Fowey Valley Hotel Lostwithiel. Our Membership Secretary, Stephanie Thomas, will also be on hand to talk through the 2024/5 Membership Renewal process. Group contact : David Platt 07484124490

Bird Watching

The group will be off to Middle Amble and Walmsley in mid-February followed by Porth Reservoir and the Gannel Estuary in March. 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.

Bridge

On Wednesdays we play rubber bridge from 2.00pm until 5.00pm (plus refreshments and a chat). We are a happy bunch who play on Wednesday afternoons and are very helpful if anyone is unsure of their bidding. We also have Bridge magazines with advice and bridge quizzes. Books to aid learning are available. If you have an elementary knowledge of the game or are a regular player and would like to be part of this group please get in touch, it's good to welcome new u3a members.

Creative Writing

Topics we've written about in the past year are - Out of the Blue, The Clock, House of Cards, The Twenty Pound Note, The Postman's Knock, Still Waters and, more recently, Neighbours. This very informal writing group meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Royal Oak; members write on an agreed topic and then share what they have written. Although this group is now full, Creative Writing 2 (see below) is still taking new members.

Creative Writing 2

This very informal group meets on the last Wednesday of the month, currently at the Royal Oak at 2pm. Our next story theme is "Workshop" Group contact : David Bridges 07891724221.

Day Trippers

The Day Trippers aim to use just public transport for their trips. The 2024 programme for the next few months is now on the website and includes proposed trips to St Ives, Newquay and Padstow and Looe and Polperro.

Electric Bikers

In 2023 the group went on 44 rides (an average of 25 miles per ride) totalling 1,100 miles which is roughly the equivalent of cycling to Edinburgh - and back! Our final event of 2023 was our annual Christmas Lunch at the Britannia Inn.

The group is full but if you have an e-bike and are interested in joining please ring group contact Brian on 07530507091

Family History

In December, 11 members were treated to a superb workshop on DNA - understanding the terms and theory together with its interpretation. We all learnt such a lot from Emma Simms whose passion for Genealogy is palpable. A truly fascinating & memorable session! Our January meeting was our "anniversary" lunch at Cloisters, St Austell.

French

Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays 2-3.30pm 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 "déviation" along the way! Group contact: Veronica Ashworth 01208 873397

Garden Visits

Currently this group is still looking for a new group leader/contact

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.

Photography

The Photography Group's page on the Lostwithiel Area u3a website has links to some wonderful images on their Flickr page. In January the field trip was to Penzance. 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. Group contact: Josephine Child 01208 871284

Pop and Rock Music Appreciation

The group ended their first year with their January meeting featuring music from acts as diverse as Tool, Pekka Pohjola, Bradley Cooper & Lady Gaga, Screaming Lord Sutch. The Fall and Fairport Convention. Over the last twelve months the group has spent around 30 hours listening to 178 tracks! For our February meeting (which has the theme of "Covers") we'll be introducing a new fun feature called Tenuous.

Quizzes

After a nearly a year this group will now be closing. Hopefully it may restart again in the future.

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

Strollers

We meet every two weeks on Monday mornings. Walks are as flat as Cornwall permits and are usually less than 2 miles. We try to include refreshments at the end but this is dependant on venue opening times. We are not all drivers so rely on the goodwill of strollers with cars to access the various venues. Group Contacts : Veronica Ashworth 01208 873397 and John Wood 01208 831657

Strummers Ukulele Sing Along Group

Fun sing along Ukulele group meet every Monday 2 to 4pm at Lanhydrock Memorial Hall. We have enjoyed a great 2023 with 46 Meetings, finishing with our Christmas Cracker Meeting. Unfortunately due to urgently needed repairs to Lanhydrock Memorial Hall we will not have any meetings in January and February

New Members and Beginners are welcome. (we can loan you a ukulele and get you started), Come along for a great Monday afternoon sing along, 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. Upcoming performances include Manon, The True Foxes, Vanya and On Before.

We use public transport where possible. When cars are required transport depends on availability of drivers. For more information please see our webpage.

u3Art

Members use a variety of drawing and painting media and at present has limited space for one or two new members of any ability. Currently the group is meeting in the Oasis Room at Lostwithiel Community Centre, usually on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month, from 2pm to 4pm. Group Contact: Trish Penrose 07780 713276

Ukulele Workshop

We continue to meet on a Friday afternoon at the Scout Hut - and will be providing the music for the Lostwithiel Area u3a Cream Tea at the Fowey Valley Hotel on Friday 23rd February. Group contacts : Alan Pearce 01208 872592/Cezar Leon 07900 694520

Walking

Twenty members braved the cold in early January for a circular walk taking in Southground Point and Polridmouth (where one or two of the group thought it would be nice to have a dip in the sea!) and a welcome coffee stop at the kiosk at Readymoney beach.

Wine Appreciation

For 2024 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 at the Community centre. We plan to go to other locations for visits to tastings and vineyards. Group contact: Michael Furminger 07715546026

You can find out more about our groups, and how to contact them, on our [website](#)