

Group Co-ordinator's Report on 2021

for presentation at the 2022 AGM

This has been a far from normal year as so many face to face activities have again been curtailed. As I remarked last year, Zoom prevented a total wipe-out of meetings but this platform is unsuited to the requirements of several of our groups.

At the end of 2021, 27 groups were in existence of which 16 had resumed physical meetings. 1 is still using Zoom. At the time of writing, it was anticipated that 4 groups will restart early in 2022 and a further 6 in the spring.

As the Group reports below indicate, during our period of enforced inactivity, some groups convenors have decided to have stand down from their roles. Some have been long standing in this role and we thank them for their long years of service.

On a positive note, at the "Welcome" Coffee morning, interest was expressed in starting Family History/ Genealogy and the possibility of restarting Painting. A member has offered to convene Musical Instrumentalists group. A new Board Games group has been formed.

In conclusion, it is important to recognise the work of the Group Convenors and their assistants who all give so generously of their time and enthusiasm. It is in the groups that the ethos of u3a is most in evidence, where we truly learn laugh and live. I have thoroughly enjoyed my stint as Groups Co-ordinator at u3a Clitheroe. I trust that my successor will find the role equally rewarding. In no small measure that will depend upon members being prepared to come forward and play an active part in the running of groups. Please remember we should not expect too much of the convenors. Their job is to facilitate activities not to lead or teach them!

Philip Bradshaw
Groups Co-ordinator

Architecture Report

The group reacted with considerable enthusiasm and not a little skill to the challenges presented by Covid. Perhaps fortuitously we had begun a study of major historical architectural styles last year. Several members of the group stepped in and delivered their presentations via Zoom. From October we were able to return to the splendidly reconfigured Trinity Community Hub. The last three months saw us examine key aspects of the twentieth and twenty first century.

Philip Bradshaw

Art Appreciation Group Report for 2021

Despite Covid and my absence for operations the group has been able to function well. In the first half of the year this was done remotely using Zoom. A massive 'thank you' for those members who felt able to give the technology a go - Joanne Wilson, Jacquie Melia, Jonathan Pickup, Philip Bradshaw and Mary-Ann Renton, on a variety of very interesting topics. In September we resumed meetings at West Bradford. A very interesting presentation given by Barry Brown, as well as viewing DVDs by Andrew Graham-Dixon. Alison Hoyle

Bird watching Group

Bird watching and nature members rely on car sharing which was not advisable during 2021 so we will hope to resume in the Spring of 2022.

Wendy Richardson

Board Games

Lesley Charnley has initiated this new group which meets at her home.

The Book Group

has continued to meet at 2 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month on Zoom. Online meetings have worked well for a core of 6-8 members and there have been some advantages to virtual get togethers, including the development of members' digital skills. However, we are aware that average attendance has dropped and not everyone has been able to participate. We are looking forward to resuming face-to-face meetings in Clitheroe Library from November 2021.

Ann Yates has taken over from Sue Mayor

Canasta

No meetings were held in 2021, anyone interested has been kept up to date with the news flashes.

Su & John Grant

Circle Dance Group

A few enthusiasts started meeting out of doors in the Summer. The Pendleton Village Hall generously allowed us to run a cable to the car park where we danced. This Autumn we moved indoors with three 'teams' coming on a rota basis to keep the numbers small. Many have missed dancing during Covid but others have been cautious about returning.

Sally Maxwell

The Discussion Group has survived Covid despite meeting only on the odd occasions when the rules allowed; mostly in the garden.

Things are easier now and we meet in my home as before but now number only three though of course would like more. We discuss all manner of topical subjects.

Inevitably, because of our small number, we are an informal gathering, knowing each other well by now.

This may well change with an increase in numbers and a will to become more formal.

There is no charge for the use of my home and we do have refreshments. All are welcome.

Liz Lawson

Food and wine has not met since March 2020

The French Group has not met since March 2020 because of the Covid situation. I have tried to keep in contact with members by e-mail although this is a bit irregular. In fact the group has grown with three new members joining with the help of the website.

Barbara Pickup

Garden Study

Wendy Richardson and AnnKay have relinquished their roles as Convenors of Garden Study. It is hoped that another member will step forward to support the member who hopes to reform this group

Geology Group

The Geology Group moved online using Zoom in 2020. So by 2021 we were used to meeting that way, indeed the group gained a quite number of new members, some living at a distance.

We continued our programme looking at the geology of various places. In the first half of the year we "visited" North West Scotland, roman mining in the UK and Spain, the geology of three "chilly" places - Antarctica, Iceland and Greenland, then a first look at New Zealand.

From July we were amongst the first U3A groups to arrange trips out. We went to see the historic lime kilns of Chatburn and Stainforth, and to look at the Yoredale series of rocks at Askrigg in Wensleydale.

In September we took the bold step of meeting face to face, in the lounge at West Bradford Hall.

Numbers initially were a lot less than online, but by November had built back up to pre-covid levels. We had feedback on our trips out and rocks from NW Scotland, a look at the La Palma Volcano and Washington State earthquakes, and another more detailed look at South Island New Zealand.

Overall, in the time of lockdowns and Zooms, the geology group managed to keep going remarkably well. One thing we learnt to do was to use a greater variety of short videos around a subject to avoid talking heads on zoom. We also made efforts to provide email feedback and links so those missing a meeting could catch up. Another plus was passing on Zoom links to various "professional" standard lectures or meetings.

Frank Taylor

German Conversation has continued to meet via Zoom.

Denis Cassidy

History Group's report

Despite the pandemic and lockdown, the History Group has continued to thrive and meet up regularly throughout 2021. Zoom meetings with excellent presentations by members covered topics such as Barnoldswick's development as a mill town, the Civil war in Lancashire, the role of women in World War One, and What's in a name ?

We also held 2 zoom Antiques Roadshows in which members displayed and gave interesting talks about antique items in their possession. Additionally, 2 lovely guided walks led by members around Higham and Barnoldswick were enjoyed.

Most recently, we were able to meet in West Bradford Village Hall for our second session of What's in a name?

Hazel Best

iPad

The iPad group has ceased to function. Grateful thanks are extended to Ann Taylor and Jennifer Lockwood.

Italian Conversation

The Italian Conversation group have not met as they usually hold their meetings in members houses and as some of us were having to take extra care it was decided to wait until Spring 2022 before we resume.

Wendy Richardson

Let's Do Lunch Group has been unable to meet.

Music Appreciation Group

Lockdowns and Zoom proved quite a challenge, particularly with regard to relaying music. However, we managed to do monthly presentations online for about a year up to September 2021. The group were extremely loyal and persevered through all the technological ups and downs!!!

Zoom did bring some benefits, though, as members were able to join the meetings from a variety of places, including Cambridge, Buckinghamshire, France, Portugal and even a school car park in Wirral. Also, two of our group had recently moved to Shropshire, but continued taking an active part in our monthly programmes. Now, it has to be said that most members were more than pleased and ready to resume actual meetings from October.

Margaret Cunliffe

Playreading has been unable to meet

Plodders Report

We would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Edna Clarkson who initiated the Plodders Group in 2017. This group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 11.00am to walk together for about one hour. The mileage covered is approximately two miles on paths and pavements at a gentle pace. There are no styles or difficult terrains. The group is ideal for people new to walking or who are experiencing

mobility difficulties. Start/finish points are chosen near to cafes and restaurants to allow for members to have lunch after the walk.

Post Covid, the Plodders recommenced in Oct 2021 with a new co-ordinator, Jacquie Melia. The Oct walk was attended by the coordinator, a back marker and one other walker. The Nov walk attracted 8 walkers in total. The next walk will be in Jan 2022.

Jacquie Melia

Poetry

Towards the end of the year, a Kate Creig has come forward to act as Convenor for the Poetry Group, filling the gap left by Alison McNulty and Annie Hoyle.

Science & Scientific Enlightenment Report

S&SE continued during 2021 with regular meetings by Zoom. There were about 14 members attending each meeting. We had just one outside speaker, from Sellafield, other meetings being led by members of the group.

Topics during the year included Wilhelm & Alexander Humboldt, Refrigeration, Maglev railways, William of Ockham, Local Scientists, Thomas Bayes, Neanderthal genes and Covid-19, KGB murders, Protection against radiation, Havana syndrome, Nuclear fusion Reactors, IgNobel prizes, Godwit migration, Hydrogen as a Fuel, Natural Selection.

David Grimes

Scrabble Resumed meeting at Margaret Manning's home in October

Singing for Pleasure has been unable to meet

Strollers Group Report

Strollers, in line with the Walking Group and Plodders, have followed the rules and guidelines regarding Covid 19 so were prevented from meeting for a Stroll until September 2021. Following Risk Assessments we took a contact number register, provided hand gel and advised the group to make their own arrangements for lunch instead of our usual group lunch at a local hostelry. We have Strolled monthly since, from Downham, Hurst Green and Walton le Dale and will hold a planning meeting in January 2022. In future Strollers will meet on the 4th Monday of the month instead of the "last Monday".

Ann Kay and Wendy Richardson Group Convenors

STUDY GROUPS

In 2021, as a 'Winter Project', a study group of 14 read novels set in the NW of England and looked at 'the north' as a literary symbol. Due to Covid restrictions we used surface post, email and Zoom only managing to meet in the summer. A group is planned for 2022 and will study the novel as a literary form, ever being reinvented, under the title 'Forever Novel'. Six meetings are planned for April/May 2022. For details and to register interest please contact Meg Shaw. shawmargret@gmail.com

Table Tennis Resumed meeting at Trinity in October

Walking Group has been unable to meet

Wine Appreciation Group held a zoom meeting at 3p.m. on the first Thursday of every month during 2021 and covered Wine Mans Bluff and an in-depth examination of several countries with each member researching and presenting their chosen wine.

Christine Snape