

**Editorial.**

**“Aren’t We Lucky”**

This is a phrase that David Dallinger used to say about living on Mull. Sadly he died suddenly in September and on 8th<sup>th</sup> October a group of us had a memorial walk at Scarisdale , one of his favourite places.

Thanks to Barry for the suggestion and to Irene for the invitation.

In typical Autumn weather we got quite wet but the Sun soon came out and we dried off again.

There was a magical rainbow, a magical Otter swimming past and lots of chat.

David was a lovely friendly man and will be much missed.





I came across this poem about a month ago and it touched a nerve. I think David might have liked it.

### Out There

How we are drawn to edges; to sweeps of pale sand,  
to the banks of rivers to watch the waters endlessly process,  
to marvel, without knowing why, at boats  
and at those who know the ways of boats and of water;  
to seashores, brown estuaries, white cliffs, and most of all  
to the farthest west, to dream of the drowned.

Imagine yourself a goldcrest, comfortable in a cushion of down  
between an eagle's shoulder bones, high over Cader Idris.  
You'd see, you think, the drowned lands of Cantre'r Gwaelod  
pale silver in a shallow sea. Or high over brown Bodmin  
the sun going down in a fume and the pinnacles of Lyonesse,  
and the lost world of Ys, scattering gold in a molten flux.

Imagine yourself a white horse to follow the track of the sun  
west over seas to sink in the dream of Tir na nOg  
where no one shall grow old. Understand you cannot come back.  
The weight of lost years falls on those whose feet touch the earth.

We take strange comfort in this.  
If we were white horses we would settle for the earth.  
If we were birds we would have no boundaries.  
Edges would mean nothing.

John Foggin.

John lives in Yorkshire , for more of his poems search <https://johnfogginpoetry.com/>

Cantre'r Gwaelod was an area of land which, according to legend, was located in an area west of present-day Wales which is now under the waters of Cardigan Bay.

Ys is a [mythical city](#) on the coast of [Brittany](#) that was swallowed up by the ocean.

Lyonesse is a kingdom, which according to legend, consisted of a long strand of land stretching from [Land's End](#) at the southwestern tip of [Cornwall](#). In some legends it was swallowed by the waters in a single night.

## **What's Been Happening**

Our AGM was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October and following it  
Emily Wilkinson our local ranger on the Ross gave a talk entitled A Wild Goose Chase.

Emily gave us an insight to her busy job. Often working with volunteers she spends time a lot of time monitoring the local wildlife and habitat.

Types of Monitoring.

### Staffa Counting Seabirds

Photos of Puffins rafting and counting their burrows.  
Ground nesting Seagulls, Shags in caves, Fulmars on open ledges.  
A pair of Bonxies, Eider ducks below cliffs,  
Overnight stay, before dawn for Black Guillemots early in the season before nesting.  
Storm Petrels, nesting in old walls and boulders, recognised by their calls.

Burg - overnight to count Manx Shearwaters.

June Survey,

Largest population of Slender Burnet Moth, on South facing slope – dark bare soil for warmth.  
Caterpillars need Birdsfoot Trefoil. A photo of this was sent to COP 26.

Results re Butterfly Conservation goes to Defra for long term policies.

Plant monitoring – Iceland Purslane, Hairy Stonecrop. Both vulnerable to Climate change.

### Wild Geese

Greenland White Front - White face

Monthly Europe wide count on same day. Fiddens, Potties, Assapols.

In Mid 70s numbers shrank on Mull, approx 20,000.- Red Listed.

# Staffa Monitoring Results

Species	Count	1999	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022
Fulmar	AON	281	148	-	79	123	129	96	-	57	36	29	37
Greater Black-Backed Gull	AON or IND	6 AON	2 AON	-	-	-	2 AON	0	-	1 AON	8 IND	6 IND	5 AON
Lesser Black-Backed Gull	IND or AON	6 IND	32 IND	-	-	-	12 IND	6 AON	-	10 IND	14 IND	10 IND	3 AON
Herring Gull	IND or AON	60 IND	50 IND	-	-	-	26 IND	8 AON	-	30 IND	10 IND	4 IND	5 AON
Common Gull	IND or AON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 AON
Shag	AON	9	25	-	-	-	12	17	-	16	25	23	35
Puffin	IND	328	268	230	250	-	260	~200	-	~250	*	500	510
Black Guillemot	IND	-	106	-	60	76	111	101	121	108	81	-	85
Great Skua	AOT	-	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
European Storm-petrel	AON	5	-	-	-	5	7	15	-	22	-	16	20

Emily said that she is constantly improving her knowledge which she can pass on to others and believes that volunteering improves well-being.

Here are some sites that you can contact for helping in ongoing research.

Zooniverse,

Big Seaweed search,

UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme

British Trust for Ornithology

Woodland Trust – Nature

calendar.

**BTO**  
British Trust for Ornithology

Make your birding count - volunteer and support BTO surveys, schemes and projects

From expert ringers and ecologists, to patch birders, garden enthusiasts and Cuckoo sponsors - we have a range of projects to suit your skills and time available.

BBS volunteer: David Spinks

**WOODLAND TRUST**

**Nature's Calendar**

**BIG SEAWEED SEARCH**

**POMS**  
UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme

**ZOOVERSE**

GALAXY ZOO

THE PLASTIC TIDE



In November Chris Smith gave us a talk on - 'Manchester But Not the One You Think'

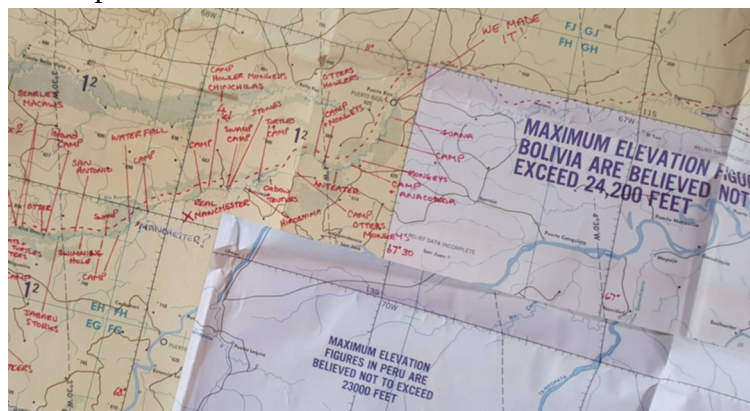
### Manchester Bolivia.

Whilst motorbiking round South America Chris and Liz heard of a place where in the 1880s Anthony Webster James was involved in Rubber smelting, and had set up a township that he called Manchester. On route to Tierra del Fuego they swapped maps with another couple going the opposite direction.

When home they did some research and found a book by Roy Cookson 'A World of Manchesters'.

They decided to return to Bolivia to find 'Manchester'.

They took a flight to Lima with a collapsible canoe that they eventually filled to the gunnels and set off on the Rio Madre de Dios. The map had very little information so they added their own notes as they travelled. It was extremely difficult at times, having to push the canoe whilst being waist deep in mud and covered in Leaches !



En-route they came across large River Otters that could be quite aggressive; Tapers, Pumas and Caiman. Three Toed Sloths that had a habit of falling out of trees alike a ton of bricks!

Anteaters that could swim, various types of Kingfishers, seems that there are about 10.

Also herons, large beehives in trees and the bees that could swarm on their hammocks. Also coral snakes pretty but with a deadly venom; it was large toads they could land on them during the night that Chris hated most whilst it was the bright green butterflies that gave the greatest pleasure.

Eventually Chris and Liz found Manchester where 60 folk lived who knew nothing about its past history of rubber smelting. There was still the remains of a boiler made in Milan that was used in the process that they took no notice of. There was a generator for electricity and a video player and only two videos. 'Breaker, Breaker' and a Porn movie!

In all they journeyed 370 miles over three and a half months.



## Group Activities

### Games Afternoon

After our successful, small but perfectly formed Games Group met on the 14th Oct, I think we should consider the next one!!

I must say I really enjoyed all of the explanations to 'Blocker' and Barry's 'Strategic' Game... So we could certainly have a go at those next time ... or any other options...

Let me know what you think and we can consider another date and do it again!!

Linda

### Cookery Group

This is another new group , the idea being that folk meet in each others' houses to explore and taste new recipes . The inaugural meeting was held in Salen and Girlie made a veritable feast of Crispy Stir-fried Pork with Stir-fried Vegetables with Noodles and Sticky Rice with Mangoes.

**Crispy Stir-fried Pork with Stir-fried Vegetables with Noodles and Sticky Rice with Mangoes** Ingredients: (for 6 people)

2 cups belly pork - diced  
2 cups sliced mushrooms  
2 cups sliced green beans or mange-tout peas  
2 cups shredded cabbage (Savoy or similar)  
Red pepper - chopped  
1 pack mini sweet corn  
1 chopped onion  
2 cloves garlic  
2 tsp cinnamon  
1 teaspoon paprika  
1 tbsp garlic powder or granules  
Chili flakes  
Black sesame seeds or niger seeds for decoration  
Finely chopped green part of spring onion  
3 nests of egg noodles  
2 cups stock (beef or vegetable)  
Salt & pepper  
Sugar  
1" Root ginger - grated  
Cornflour for coating pork  
1/2 cup milk (non-dairy works just as well)  
Soy sauce  
Oyster sauce  
Bay leaf  
3 cans coconut milk  
4 cups sticky rice - washed 2 ripe mangoes, peeled and sliced  
Oil for frying

#### **Crispy Pork**

Marinate the chopped pork in the milk with garlic powder, 2 tsp soy sauce and oyster sauce and set aside while preparing sticky rice.

Drain of liquid and toss in cornflour seasoned with cinnamon and smoked paprika. Heat oil in wok or heavy frying pan and add seasoned pork. Do not attempt to stir until coating is cooked and moves easily. When cooked all over remove and drain on cloth or paper. Keep oil in pan for vegetables.

#### **Sticky Rice**

Place 4 cups of rice, 2 cups of coconut milk, 2 of water and 2 dessert spoons sugar in saucepan and cook on gentle heat, do not allow to stick. At end of cooking pour into shallow dish/aluminium tray and leave to cool.

#### **Sticky Sauce for rice**

Place 2 cans coconut milk and 2 cups of sugar and teaspoon salt, cinnamon and in saucepan and cook on gentle heat, gradually bringing to boil, stirring as mixture thickens adding tsp. vanilla extract, at the end. Pour into jug for serving with the sticky rice and sliced mangoes.

### **Stir-fried Vegetables with noodles**

Heat pan used for pork and add all the vegetables except for the cabbage. Toss in oil then add 3 tablespoons soy sauce, 1 of oyster sauce, 1 tsp pepper and 1 tsp sugar and remove from pan when cooked. Add 2 cups of stock to pan, bay leaf 1 tablespoon Soy sauce and when boiling add noodles and gently stir till cooked, adding more stock if necessary.

When cooked add all the cooked vegetables back in pan, sprinkle on chili flakes and taste for seasoning and now toss in the shredded cabbage. Remove to serving dish.



### **The first meeting of the Book Group was on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November.**

The book choice was 'All the Light You Cannot See' by Anthony Doerr.

We had our first Book Group discussion at Alison and Vic's. All five of us had read 'All The Light We Cannot See' by Anthony Doerr. The joy of it was that we all had differing views of the book, the writing, the characters and even of what the title refers to. This is a moving book that follows the lives of two very individual youngsters as they grow into adulthood. Their circumstances could not be more different, a blind girl growing up amongst highly educated adults in Paris and an orphaned boy growing up in an impoverished mining community in Germany before becoming involved in learning to use his technical skills for the purposes of war. All they have in common is living in Europe as it heads towards War in the 1930s and experiencing that war in contrasting ways as it unfolds. Their paths cross only briefly.

For me, it was the characterisation that engaged me, that and the effective portrayal of overwhelming events such as the bombardment of St Malo. It was great to discuss the book together. Already looking forward to the next one.

Sue Hawkes

This group is lead by Vic Linnerman but since the group meet is dependent upon space in folks houses any other u3a people wanting to join a book group will be able to start group 2. Linda - Groups Co-ordinator.



## Art & Crafts Group.

Trees were the subject in October



Old Hawthorn Loch Buie Shirley



Water Colour Trees Felicity

In November Morar, Linda, Dee & Shirley started on Christmas cards.





### My favourite mother-in-law story. Felicity Pollard

David's Mum's second home was the local church she had been the mainstay of for at least 50 years. Well into her eighties she was still making a weekly trip on the bus to do some cleaning there. David's sister Ann was in the habit of ringing her every evening to check she was ok, but one cleaning day there was no reply. Ann rang again and then went round to find the house locked and empty. Then began a frantic evening of ringing family and friends to see if they had seen her, but no sign. The vicar went to the church but found it locked and in darkness. Next were calls to the hospital and the police, both drawing a blank, but the police circulated her description to beat officers and said they would check benches and other possible places she might have stopped to rest if she had a memory lapse and been unable to find her way home.

An anxious night with no news was followed by family and friends gathering at her home with flasks, sandwiches and walking boots, preparing to search the town themselves. Blackpool is long and narrow, mostly a short distance from the promenade, she could not have just disappeared. The vicar said a short prayer for her safe return as they prepared to set off, at which point they heard a key in the front door and Mum walked in, astonished to find the house full.

The previous afternoon she had arrived at church with her hands full of cleaning equipment, so having unlocked the door she left the key in the lock while she took it all inside. Before she could go back for the key she heard the door click shut and the key extracted.

Mum was unperturbed. She spent the afternoon cleaning. There was tea, milk and biscuits in the vestry for supper, and a toilet. She had her radio so settled down to listen to a football match she was looking forward to, making a bed out of kneelers. She found plenty of choir robes to keep her warm and smiled to herself to find one that still had David's name in it 40 years on. There was street lighting coming through the windows so she did not bother to switch any lights on. She knew the next morning the 'dinner ladies' would be coming to prepare for the lunch club so passed the time to wait for them. In the morning she had more tea and biscuits, cleaned a bit more and surprised the ladies when they arrived to enable her to go home. It had never occurred to her to ring the bells or switch on the lights which would have brought the vicar running.

When the story reached the local paper she was most put out by being described as an "elderly" lady.

## Back in the Saddle: Using the U3A On-line Resources

Steve Littlewood

Time heals, they say, and time buries memories as well. It already seems an age since the peak and panic of the COVID crisis. Recollections of disinfecting shopping, home-made masks and crossing the road to avoid contact with people have almost faded and, in pandemic terms at least, for the time being the world seems to be again spinning gently on a stable axis. So, an opportunity to reflect on the recent past, cast off a bit more of the accumulated mental rust and lethargy, and replenish some of the brainfood that perhaps went missing during the long sleep of a year or two back.



COVID wasn't all a mindless fog, of course. I had forgotten until the other day that whilst languishing in lockdown I had occasionally signed up to attend Zoom meetings and lectures featuring various experts in a range of disciplines, from the familiar to the (to me) highly obscure. Just for the hell of it. Why not? Among these, I carelessly registered to do a modest on-line U3A course.

It was an introduction to short story writing. I know. I didn't have any interest in writing a short story either, but it seemed like an undemanding way to kill some time and perhaps bring a little structure to my otherwise fairly aimless lockdown-days.

I blithely wandered into it without any preconception as to what the course might entail. It turned out to be light-touch, consisting of five weekly zoom meetings, with a tutor and eight or nine friendly people from around Scotland. Each week we were given some modest task to write something, a hundred or couple of hundred words, a sentence or an odd paragraph, to be presented to the group for some non-judgemental and very constructive critiquing.

I have to say that I am as happy as a clam that I signed up for it.

Although my happy-go-lucky approach initially morphed into slight panic, it quickly changed to real engagement as fascinating insights were shared. It may sound dry here, but I began to appreciate such things as how language functions, how it can be variously structured, and how we can capture and impart meaning with even the sparest use of an odd verb, adverb or adjective.

I met some great people, and though I may never write a short story, I now have the confidence to *believe* that I could do. At the least, I have added a little something to my understanding of how and why good writing is good writing – and *vice versa*. It cost me nothing, it gave me plenty, and recharged several brain cells which otherwise might have atrophied and dropped off into obsolescence.



All of which is to say that I am reminded that this course surfaced from a fountain of real opportunity bubbling away on the national U3A website during COVID. As the threat of COVID receded I got on with other things and forgot to visit the website, but recently I thought I would jump back in to see what resources are currently available on-line for members. This is where I landed: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Currently (and this is just a selection, with the list changing all the time) members can, for no charge: enjoy yoga workshops; learn about journalism; join live cookery demonstrations; hear a series of talks about geology; connect with philosophy discussions; try an introduction to the maths of bell-ringing (who knew about that? Don't knock it!); listen to entertaining podcasts (currently by an employee of NASA); take a poetry writing course; explore genealogy and understand how to interpret your DNA test; get better at doing crosswords; hear the story of how a couple survived the holocaust; find lots of tips to enhance your use of your Apple devices or



access on-line films and digital entertainment channels; learn about world faiths, or how the brain dreams; and so on. If your interest is pottery or sculpture, or extreme knitting, crafters of all standards can send in photos to a monthly (friendly) competition, with an inspirational on-line gallery of entries to enjoy; photographers can enter, or just view, a similar photo competition; Birdwatchers share news; And you can read the efforts of the finalists in the 2022 U3Ashort story competition.

There is more on the site, and I would encourage all Mull local members to add it to their list of post-Covid resolutions (what do you mean you don't have one?). Give it a go! Try exploring the opportunities available. Nothing to lose – and perhaps quite a lot of stimulation and enjoyment to be gained.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

### **Up and Coming events.** Cragnure Hall

Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup> 11.30 -3pm Not the Christmas Do - Bring and Share

Eleanor McDougall - Scottish Art

Friday April 14<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm Open Meeting  
Mauvis Gore - Coral and Deep Sea Sharks.

Thursday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2-4m Open Meeting  
Simon Thomasson - RNLI

Thursday August 3<sup>rd</sup> Open Meeting

Ron Cordeiro – Spanish Armada

Friday September 29<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm AGM

Margaret Broad – Living on Mull and Changes over 50yrs

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> 2-4 October Open Meeting

Helen Howarth - Bee Species

### **We will let you know if there are any changes**

The best source for U3A news is the main U3A website :-

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

The Third Age Trust Newsletter is also a good place to start and you can have this emailed to you if you wish. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>





