
OBAN U3A NEWSLETTER

I am continuing to deputise for Penny this month and, like you, look forward to the resumption of normal service in April. The good news is that our Chair is back and well.

Anne Archer

Your u3a needs you. There is always a flurry of activity at the beginning of a new year (u3a membership year, that is) but by this time, nearly half way through the year, things calm down. We still need new committee members (at least one), so now is the best time to volunteer and join the committee. Please consider this, it really is important if we are to continue to thrive.

Bob



A constant and cheering reminder of the clean air we live in is the fact that lichens thrive here.

Dot Dahl's lovely shot reminds us of how wonderfully varied they are.

Of course, they do especially well in a moist atmosphere, which Argyll is, as we are all aware, also able to provide.

NATIONAL NEWS

u3a in Scotland is holding its Spring Event (formally known as Assembly) on the 20th March via Zoom. It will be open to **all members** of u3as in Scotland, not just those who are committee members. It will start at 10.30 and finish about 1.30ish with breakout rooms for people to meet others following the close of the event.

We will receive further details next week. Please be in touch with Bob to find out more if you are interested in attending.

LOCAL NEWS

Our speakers on March 7th are Jamie Macgregor, Dunollie archivist, and Jennifer Shaw, who will be talking about the Dunollie Rentbook of the 1660s.

April's speaker will be Steven Peake, talking about Climate Change and Energy.



GROUP NEWS

Membership of u3a:

Please remember that, for insurance reasons, you cannot join the activities of a u3a group more than once if you are not a member. You will have received a membership card this Autumn if you renewed your membership. If you are not sure, please contact Graham Cameron at obanu3amemsec@gmail.com.

Calligraphy Group:

We now have room for one more member. Beginners welcome, or if you already have the skills, come and share them with us! Next meeting at Glencruitten Church Halls on Thursday 9th March 10.30-12.30. Contact Gill Moore for information.



Craft Group:

The Craft group meet together weekly to start, continue or finish a variety of projects. Weaving, knitting, tapestry, sewing up small books and embroidery are the different crafts being done by individuals.



Creative Writing Group:

The Creative Writing group meets fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons - often on the beautiful island of Kerrera, sometimes in and around Oban on the mainland side.

Members are working on a variety of projects, from memoirs to the beginnings of novels, and there are also non-compulsory topics for short stories and flash fiction.

These sessions have limited numbers, but there is a space for anyone who would like to join. Perhaps it might be you?

Discussion Group:

We are meeting again on Thursday March 2nd and Thursday March 16th in the Royal Hotel at 2.30 p.m.. In deference to our subject matter 'procrastination' we are putting off naming a topic for discussion until nearer the time!

French Conversation Group:

The French Conversation Group meets weekly on Fridays at 1400 in the Lancaster Hotel, enjoying a cup of tea, coffee or hot chocolate while chatting with members in the French language. We also read a little in French, the current book being *La Tresse* by Laetitia Colombani. We are a friendly, supportive group, and would welcome new members to join us. Please contact Kathy Murgatroyd, French Group Convener.



Gardens and Wild Flowers Group:

Monday, March 20th, 2 pm, Fire Station Community Lecture Room

Maurice Wilkins, former head gardener at Arduaine Garden, champion of Keeping Oban Tidy, and a very keen photographer, will give us a presentation of some of his photos of gardens and plants. He is going to tell us some of his tips on producing really good shots! The use of the room is free, but in order to give Maurice a token of our appreciation, a donation of £1 would be helpful.

There will be some parking at the Fire Station.

April will see us meeting at Achnacloich Garden, near Connel. There is usually a delightful display of narcissi and other spring bulbs at that time.

NTS has plans to re-open Arduaine Garden in the spring. If it does indeed open, it would be very nice to offer support by planning to visit in May.

Members of the group will be sent an email giving more details nearer the time of each visit.

Geology Group:

We have one meeting planned for March, as we will be away in the middle of the month.

28th March: Ambo room, Church Centre, Glencruitten Rd, 1.45 pm as usual.

Life Story 5: As the era of the 'Boring Billion' comes to an end, we have to ask what happened to end it, leading to the first evidence of life in a wide variety of forms in increasing abundance. Not yet the Cambrian Explosion, but its more recently understood predecessor, the Ediacaran biota. The catalyst for this sudden change was the second Ice Age, or rather series of ice ages, the Cryogenian, better known as the Snowball Earth period.



German Group:

The German Group meets 10:00 to 11:30 Thursdays at Graham's House. Although Graham lived in Germany for 12 years, his German is far from perfect. In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is god, as they say. At the meetings we each speak for a few minutes, often on an agreed theme. We then read simple German stories, and watch a video. Having started off the year with seven members, we have rocketed to eleven. With some expert additions. This is about as many as we can manage, and if their attendance stamina lasts we will have to declare the group full for now. Watch this space.

Mahjong Group:

The Mahjong group met for Christmas(!) lunch before our usual game at the beginning of February. We play from 2-4pm on a Monday at the Royal Hotel over coffee and chat and would be delighted to welcome new members to our group. It is an easy game to pick up and most enjoyable.

Out and About Group:

We are going to the Phoenix cinema to see the National Theatre Live perform **The life of Pi** on 30th March. Puppetry, magic and storytelling combine in a unique, Olivier Award-winning stage adaptation of the best-selling novel.

Poetry Group:

We are meeting on Monday 6th March at 2.00pm. Our theme is Natural Phenomena. Please send in any poems relating to the theme for the Anthology by this date, or bring them if you're coming to the meeting.



Reading Group 1

We are due to meet on Monday 27th February at Janet C's, to discuss "The Lost Continent" by Bill Bryson, which, hopefully, will have provided the group with some amusement. The March book is "The Purple Swamp Hen" by Penelope Lively.

Reading Group 2 (Crime):

Thursday March 9th, 5 pm, at The Falls of Lora Hotel. The book selected for this month is "Secret in Blood" by Jack Cartwright.



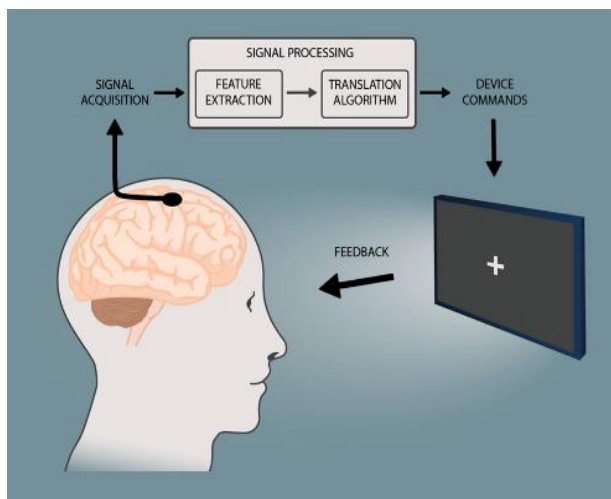
Reading Group 3 (Fact & Fiction):

Regrettably, we had to cancel our February meeting, as we were not quorate on the day. However, we agreed to discuss the February book at our March meeting, along with the March choice. 16th March our book choice is Dust on the Paw by Robin Jenkins. We will also review February's Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys. Host is Dot Dahl.

Science Group:

All our meetings are held on Wednesdays at 2pm in the Undercroft, Glencruitten Church Centre.
8th March Zena Henderson

The *Stentrode*, a minimally invasive, thought-control device for paralysed patients. Brain-computer interfaces, once in the realm of science fiction, are now being developed to help severely paralysed patients to regain some control over their lives. The talk will describe a novel, minimally invasive technique using the “Stentrode”, a stent-electrode recording array that enables the patients to perform simple tasks on their laptop with the use of brain power alone.



15th March Alastair Fleming
Nobel Prize for Chemistry 2022.

Sometimes simple answers are the best. **Barry Sharpless** and **Morten Meldal** were awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2022 because they brought chemistry into the era of functionalism and laid the foundations of **click chemistry**, colloquially called **chemical lego** - small molecular building blocks are made to snap together quickly and efficiently. They share the prize with **Carolyn Bertozzi**, who took click chemistry to a new dimension and began using it to map cells. Her bioorthogonal reactions are now contributing to more targeted cancer treatments, among many other applications.
All will be explained clearly – We hope!

29th March
Bob Batty
Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine 2022

Svante Pääbo was awarded the prize for accomplishing something that might seem impossible: sequencing the genome of the Neanderthal, an extinct relative of present-day humans, for making the sensational discovery of a previously unknown hominin, Denisova and that gene transfer had occurred

Scottish History

The Scottish History group continues on the second Tuesday of the month, 14 March, at 14.30 in the library. This time the subject will be 'How the Isles became Scottish'. A quick journey through the run-up to the Battle of Largs and the sale of the Isles by Norway to Scotland (who never paid in full).

Spanish Group:

Que Viva el Grupo

The Spanish group continues to thrive and has recently expanded to include new members. The best sessions occur when there is a wide range of activities in a section of the meeting called 'compartimento' in which we share ideas. For example, recently we have listened to Spanish songs, studied lyrics, analysed portraits, solved riddles, amended our mission statement, read stories and listened to broadcasts. If any of that sounds advanced or intimidating, it is not. Each member of the group can contribute at their own level as the majority of activities provide for differentiation. Equally important is the attitude of the members who are patient, open, friendly and welcoming.

Tony 'El Capitan' Beckett



Table Tennis Group:

This group meets at 2pm on Mondays, in the games hall of Atlantis Leisure. After an athletic hour we adjourn to the café for herbal tea/ cappuccino/cake...each according to need!

We welcome new members of any level of experience (or none). Our approach is lighthearted but we definitely aim to improve.

For more info, contact group convener, Rosemary, via the email at the foot of the page.

Walk and Lunch Group:

We plan to restart in April - unless someone would like to propose a walk for March! See below for a reminder of how enjoyable a sunny summer walk can be.

