



Fearnoch, Chris Adie

Happy New Year everyone!

I hope that you have all enjoyed the festive season. The talk at our January meeting is very appropriate to follow the overindulgence of the last two weeks.

Most groups are busy with activities again this month and others will restart in February or March. It is wonderful that we start the new year with a new group: Calligraphy. I am amazed that it is already full. Well done Gill!

We will continue with hybrid meetings for our talks at monthly meetings for members who are isolating at home. but from January onwards we will use Jitsi Meet rather than Zoom which, sadly, the Corran Halls forbid us to use. We are determined to continue with hybrid meetings for as long as they are needed.

Bob

NATIONAL NEWS

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Zoom event:

Sandra Whitnell (Tweeddale u3a), the national subject advisor for local history, has arranged for HES to put on a Zoom event, exclusive to U3A members, on Thursday 16 February from 2.30pm to 4.30pm.

HES cares for over 300 properties. The event will feature behind the scenes insights from specialists: archaeologists, conservationists, researchers and others will describe the challenges and highlights of caring for our national heritage.

If there's enough demand, HES will run further sessions focussing on useful skills for local history and Scottish history groups.

If members would like to receive notification when tickets become available, please email Sandra on Sandra_Whitnell@icloud.com or keep an eye on her subject page:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects/local-history>

Third Age Matters newsletter:

We all receive copies of *Third Age Matters* by post* as part of our subscription. But do you know that the Third Age Trust also produces an electronic newsletter? It is distributed by email and contains interesting information and resources. To get seamless access, you need to set up an account: at the very bottom of the homepage of u3a.org.uk, under Useful Links, click on either Member Login or My Account and the option to create an account will be offered; you also need to complete the form for the newsletter which is near the bottom of the homepage.

*The only electronic version of *Third Age Matters* is a Screenreader version, text only and is intended for the visually impaired.

LOCAL NEWS

January talk:

“How a Low Carb Approach Can Help Avoid Health Issues”

Moira Newiss, Nutritional Therapist and Wellbeing Coach

10:30 coffee, 11:00 talk; Tuesday 10 January 2023; Corran Halls.

Moira will tell us how sugar and carbohydrates drive addiction, weight gain and chronic disease.

The talk will be available as a hybrid meeting using Jitsi Meet (rather than Zoom). Details will be sent to members by email.

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. If you renewed your membership you will have received a membership card last autumn. If you are not sure, please contact Graham Cameron at obanu3amemsec@gmail.com.

Calligraphy Group:

The first meeting of this new group will be on Thursday 12 January at 10.30am in the Glencruitten church hall (Gallery Room). Although the group is full, if you are interested but haven't already been in touch, let Gill Moore know through the address at the bottom of the page and she will add you to the waiting list.



Craft Group:

The Craft group meets to start, continue or finish a variety of projects. Weaving, knitting, tapestry, sewing up small books and embroidery were the different crafts being done by individuals last year.

Creative Writing Group:



The Creative writing group meets twice a month, mostly on Kerrera. Some winter meetings have been in/around Oban because of winter ferry times.

What changes will the new year bring to your life? Are you thinking about making resolutions? Why not let your creative side out and come join us? We have room for two more members and this might be your only chance to become a part of a most entertaining and quirky bunch of folks. We promise to make you welcome and will ply you with freshly roasted coffee and home baking. So, let those creative

juices flow and take the next step to a more creative you.

Discussion Group:

We will meet in the Royal Hotel at 2.30pm on Thursday 5 and Thursday 19 January. All welcome.

French Conversation Group:

The French Conversation Group meets weekly on Fridays, mostly during school term time, at 2pm in the Lancaster Hotel. On Friday 6 January we will welcome everyone back for catch-up conversation and reading in French. New members will be welcome, but please remember this group isn't suitable for beginners. À vendredi.



Gardens and Wild Flowers Group:

The person who was our local lichens guru has moved to Cornwall so the search is on for another! Meantime, look up BSBI New Year Plant Hunt and participate if you possible can. It asks us to find as many plants in flower as we can in the first day or two of the year. Well, at least gorse is obliging! Look in sheltered, south-facing sunny places!



Dot Dahl

Geology Group:

Our next meeting (weather permitting) is on Tuesday 10 January at 1.45pm in the Ambo Room at the Church Centre as usual. (This is the postponed session from December)

Life and the Atmosphere Re-Visited:

We have looked at this several times over the past 12 years, and the story of the relation between the related evolutions of life and atmosphere has itself evolved! What is certain (and not much is) is that we would not be here if early life had not created the atmosphere we now enjoy.

German Group:

The group is flourishing! We meet at Graham's house on Thursdays at 10:00 to 11:30. Our first meeting in 2023 is on Thursday 12 January.



I'm delighted to report that, since last month, we have grown to eight members. Come and join us. No-one would ever mistake me for a native speaker, but I'm delighted to say that I'm not the only member to have lived in Germany. We welcome beginners, who will certainly not be intimidated by our level of expertise, and we'd also welcome experts from whom we can learn. We chat, read some simple short stories, and watch videos. Sometimes we do some grammar. We are light-hearted, and have some fun along the way.

Mahjong Group:

We are looking forward to our first game of the year on Monday 9 January at 2pm. We meet at the Royal Hotel, have a coffee and a chat with our game and usually play until about 4pm. Mah-jong is a most enjoyable game and it's not difficult to learn the basics. We are always happy to welcome new people.





Out and About Group:

The group will visit the cinema to see Andre Rieu live from Dublin on Sunday 8 January at 3pm.

Poetry Group:

In 2023, the group is going to continue to meet on Monday afternoons, as this seems to suit most people best. Our first meeting of the year is on Monday 9th January at 2pm at Joy's house. Please do let Joy know any suggestions for inclusion in the January anthology on the theme of 'Nature'; also if you have any ideas for future themes. The anthology will be sent out soon after the meeting. If you'd like more information on this group, please contact Joy through the email address at the bottom of the page.



Reading Group 1:

We met together early in December for a group lunch and also exchanged views about our December book, *A Month in the Country* by J L Carr. It was a short read, beautifully written which evoked life in a small village, reminiscent, to some extent, of our childhoods. It was enjoyed. The group meets on the last Monday of the month in members' homes.



Reading Group 2 (Crime):

The next meeting is on Thursday 12 January at 5pm - venue to be confirmed. The book for review is *The Cutting Room* by Louise Welsh.



Reading Group 3 (Fact & Fiction):

The group meets in members' houses on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 2.30pm. In December we discussed *The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris. It was well received by most of us, although not necessarily enjoyed, given the subject matter. The discussion was made lively because we didn't all share the same views. Most of us found it difficult to put down and were very invested in learning the outcome for each well-drawn character, or pair of characters. Although grim, it was a good read and there was some humour to relieve the horrors. Criticisms included that the author was too self-absorbed and revelling in the horror to create believable events and the narrow story needed context. Most of us felt that it was a competent and complex piece of writing for a young author's first work. Words used to describe the tale were: redemption, human capacity to love and to hate; the difficulties of emancipation; racism; ignorance.

Science Group:

There will be no meetings in January as Bob will be on holiday. We will resume in February and have a series of meetings until Easter.

Scottish History Group:

Scottish History meets in the library on the second Tuesday of the month. The topic for Tuesday 10 January is the Isle of Canna, with three contributors offering different angles.

Spanish Group:

The Spanish group meets in the Lancaster Hotel at 11am on Wednesdays. We have some structured, prepared sections and we also try our best to have conversations. All levels of Spanish speakers, including beginners, are welcome.



Table Tennis Group:

A warm welcome to all who would like to come along and join our group on Mondays at 2pm in the games hall at the Atlantis sports centre. No experience is necessary! The hour-long session is usually followed by a cup of tea in the café. We resume on 9 January.

Walk and Lunch Group:

The group will hopefully resume activities in March, weather permitting.



Dot Dahl