

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

obanu3a@gmail.com

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Chair's Remarks

Enjoying the sun or hiding from it – I hope you are enjoying your Summer. We are now looking towards our Open Day and AGM at the beginning of September. If you have an idea for a new group or have been disappointed by one being full, this is your chance to advertise for like-minded folk. Please let David H know your ideas in the first instance.

Sue

Welcome to New Members

This month we welcome Alan, Denise, Fiona, Ian, Joan & Judith.

AGM and election of officers 1st September

The AGM of Oban u3a will take place at 11.30am on Tuesday, 1st September in the Corran Halls. All welcome. Formal notice will be emailed shortly.

All the present members of the Committee are prepared to stand for re-election but if you would like to nominate someone else, you will find a nomination form [here](#).

Oban u3a Open Day 1st September

10.30-11.30am in the Corran Halls.

Join us for a natter and a free cuppa and have a look at all the different groups currently on offer with the opportunity to discuss your options with the Convenor.

Hearing Research Project, University of Nottingham: Volunteers needed

Improve your hearing

Do you find it hard to follow speech in noisy settings or take part in conversations?

Would you like to take part in an online study aiming to improve two listening and thinking games for people with hearing loss? The University of Nottingham is recruiting participants for this study. Further information can be found [here](#).

u3a Week and National AGM

u3a week is scheduled for 19-27 September with the theme 'Expanding Horizons'. A brilliant line-up of online talks and events has been planned. Across u3a social channels people will be asked to expand their horizons and try something new just for fun. Members who are willing to take part and see what they might discover for the first time should contact communications@u3a.org.uk

The national u3a AGM is on 14 October to be held on-line (zoom) and in person in Manchester.

Member stories

You may remember that in the last issue, we mentioned that the Third Age Trust is seeking stories about how u3a has had a transformative effect on some members. It occurs to us that such stories could be of interest to readers of our own newsletter, or for our own publicity. Has u3a changed your life? Inspired you in a particular way? If so, please drop the editor an email.

Monthly Member Meeting

There's no talk this month, but as usual we meet for coffee at the Corran Halls on Tuesday 7th July at 10.30. New members are particularly welcome.

Oban u3a Group Reports (click the Group's name to go to its webpage):

[Art visits](#)

Mull Highland Games Art Prize Exhibition: Wed 1 Jul 2026 10:00 to Fri 31 Jul 2026 16:00, An Tobar, Tobermory. For the Mull Highland Games Art Prize and the Highland Art Prize you are all invited to enter a painting, photo, collage or other 2D work and/or any three-dimensional work in any medium.

Eve Campbell - Transit: Sat, 11 Jul 2026 18:00 to Fri, 11 Sept 2026 16:00, An Tobar, Tobermory. Transit takes us on a colourful passage through ancient Atlantic woodland and past small rocky islands, exploring the diverse nature of Scotland's coastal topography. Reflecting maritime history, including Loch Fyne skiffs, Clyde puffers, and the waterways that connected local communities in a collection of bold, vibrant textiles and mixed media pieces.

2026 Artmap Argyll Open Studios Trail : This takes place from Friday 21 August to Monday 31 August: click on the link to plan your visit.:

<https://artmapargyll.co.uk/open-studios/>

If you'd like to share a visit with other u3a members, please let Joy know.

[Astronomy](#)

Unfortunately the initial meeting of the Astronomy group has been postponed due to ill health. When we do meet, there will be a discussion on the various possible topics of astronomy and what seems to generate the most interest within the group. An outline will be presented, along with some documents to help the group get started observing as soon as possible.

With the sun still high in the skies this month, it's a good time to set up your observing kits for the autumn, talk about equipment, events upcoming of interest, monthly observation maps, and possibly do some observing of atmospherical optics and the ISS.

[Bridge Group](#)

Our numbers are slowly increasing. We now have one or two tables playing relaxed Bridge while our beginners get to grips with the game. If there are any more aspiring Bridge players out there – this is the time to challenge your little grey cells! Please let Sue P know if you are interested.

Last week we celebrated a very special day for one of our members - John has reached the grand old age of 25,000 days!



[Craft Group](#)

Craft group was cancelled in June; the next meeting will be on the 9th July.

Creative Writing Group

The Group is taking a break to allow our members' imagination to recover. We'll be meeting again in September – keep the brain ticking over and watch this space!



Discussion Group

Discussion group meeting as usual on 2nd and 16th of July with a possible new group starting up. Details to be reported at the Open Day.

Drama

The Drama Group is on its Summer break.

French Conversation Group

The Group is on their summer break from Friday 26th June until their next meeting on Friday 21st August, the week the schools go back.

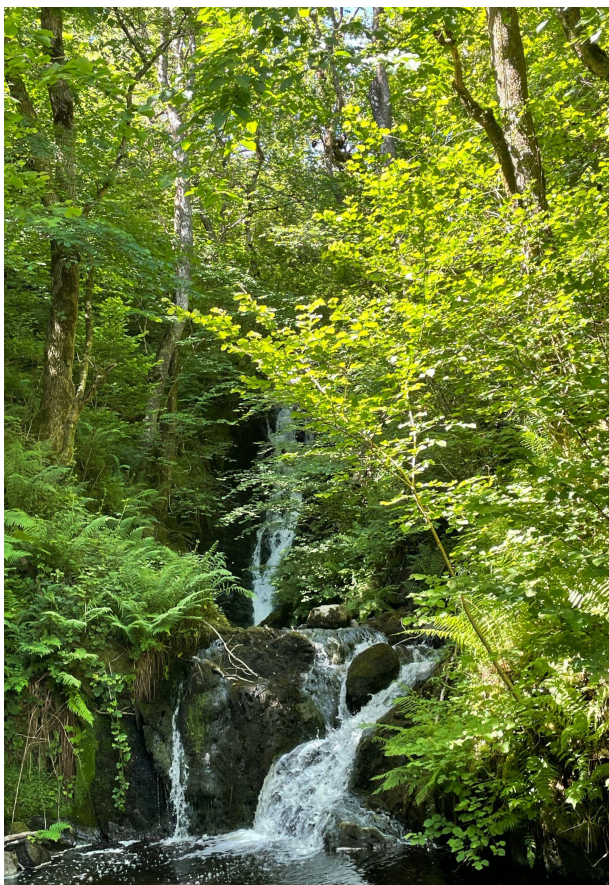
Gardens and Wildflower Group

June has not been kind to us where the weather is concerned, but some of us did make it to Dal an Eas unofficially - a fabulous place! Orchids in a meadow to die for, a lovely waterfall in a delightful woodland etc etc. Do make a point of visiting this garden on a beautiful sunny day and drink in the perfumes, enjoy the butterflies, and imagine the moths busy pollinating the butterfly orchids at night!!

Our visit to a garden on Lismore is postponed at the moment while we work out, from a u3a risk assessment point of view, if we can arrange to go at short notice when the weather suits!

'The Willows' in Connel behind the Oyster Inn is open on 4th and 5th July. Some of us are going to patronise that one, but not as an organised group. There will be a donation to charity.

David Croucher at the old nursery by the Furnace in Tynnuilt is keen for us to pay a visit. This is a woodland nursery that continues to develop and surprise us.



If you haven't been before when David is able to talk us through his planting, and then take us into the adjoining field etc looking at wild flowers, you are missing a treat!

We'll continue to try different days of the week, as our usual Monday afternoon is now populated with other u3a activities too.

There is a debate going on about u3a risk assessments for the moment. Let's hope it doesn't limit our activities.

Geology Group

Our next meeting will be in early October, following our field excursion in late September. Meanwhile our monthly contribution is about a continent in hiding!

The finding that there is an eighth continent, quite unknown until 30 years ago, and only recently properly defined, has yet to become common knowledge (see image below)

Zealandia has remained unknown for so long as it sits mainly below water in the Pacific Ocean, with only New Zealand and New Caledonia breaking the ocean surface. Possibly better described as the planet's largest microcontinent with an area of 5 million km², a bit less than Australia, it is based on a cratonic fragment from the break-up of Gondwana about 80 million years ago, but evidence shows that its origins go back to the supercontinent Rodinia (c.1 billion years ago) and some signs of a relation to the Earth's first continent Ur, from as early as 3.5 billion years ago.



Outline map of Zealandia with ocean covering removed: GSA Today, Volume 27 Issue 3 (March/April 2017), Article, pp. 27–35. [Zealandia: Earth's Hidden Continent](#). Nick Mortimer ([GNS Science](#)), Hamish Campbell et al. Drilling site annotation by Prof Stephen Pekar.

Note how the Alpine Fault system passes through the craton at the boundary between the Pacific Ocean Plate and the Australian Plate coinciding with New Zealand. This leads to considerable instability and volcanic activity, features of New Zealand from the Mount Taupo volcano and Lord Howe island to the considerable hydrothermal activity around Rotorua among others, and occasional devastating earthquakes.

[German Group](#)

The Group will reconvene in September.

[Mahjong Group](#)

We continue to meet every week over the summer. Happy to welcome any new members or anyone curious to see what it's all about.

2pm Royal Hotel, Oban every Monday.

Out and About Group

The Out and About group is going to the Rockfield Centre to see the National Theatre production of 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses' on Thursday 2nd July. They will have a meal beforehand in the Royal Hotel.

Another July outing is to have morning tea/coffee and cake at the new Appin tearoom in the old station building. There is also the option to visit the garden centre in Appin and for those not already full there is the option to lunch at the Creagan Inn.

Pickleball - Competitive

For the month of July and due to school bookings our Friday time slot will change for the following dates: 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st of July will be from 4:00pm to 5 PM. The 3/7/26 will be at normal time 09:00 to 10:30

Revised times for August are 7/8/26 09:00 to 10:30; 14/8/26 4pm to 5pm
Then from 21/8/26 all back to normal 09:00 to 10:30.

We now have an active membership of 27 and regularly play on four courts instead of three. Please contact the convenor if interested.

Pickleball - Recreational and Pickleball Plus

Monday, Wednesday and Friday Pickleball sessions in Atlantis will start at 4pm from week commencing 6 July for six weeks due to summer camps for kids running during the summer mornings. Startup Pickleball group will be on MONDAY 27th JULY 1600 - 1700

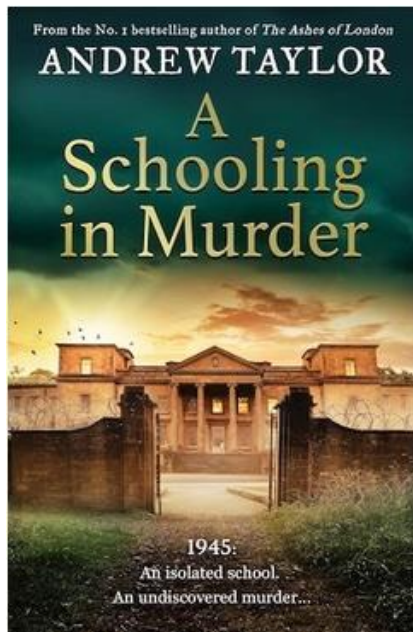
Poetry Reading Group

As we met on 30th June, there won't be a meeting in July. The next likely date (tbc) is Tuesday 4 August. More info to follow.

Reading Group 1 - General

We have yet to exchange views about 'The Blue Afternoon' by William Boyd, our June book..

Our next meeting is on the 27 July to discuss 'Riders' by Jilly Cooper.



Reading Group 2 - Crime

Andrew Taylor's 'A Schooling in Murder', set on the Welsh-English border in 1945 in a failing and isolated girl's school, was an interesting take on the country house murder. Narrated by the ghost of the victim, one of the school's more popular teachers, this twist prompted a lively discussion, but no consensus emerged as to whether it was an effective device. With too many red herrings, longer than necessary and thus lacking suspense, it did include nevertheless some astute characterisations. It was an easy read, although perhaps not one of this prolific author's best works.

Our next meeting is on 9th July, usual time, usual place to discuss Graeme Macrae Burnet's 'The Disappearance of Adèle Bedeau'.

Reading Group 3 - Fact and Fiction

'The Women' by Kristin Hannah (2024)

The Vietnam War lasted 20 years from 1955 until 1975 but the novel we discussed - 'The Women' - was an American historical fiction bestseller based on one woman's journey as a nurse serving with the Army Nursing Corps during the Vietnam War between 1965 and 1969.

We had mixed feelings about this book. Whilst we all agreed that it was clearly well-researched and tackled the very real topics of bigotry, intolerance and ignorance regarding women and their role in this conflict, it tipped over into a sentimental rather improbable love story. The first half of the book tells the story of Frankie's reason for joining up and serving in Vietnam. This part of the book brings home the horrors, in a visceral account, of the blood, gore and loss of life, a bit in the style of M*A*S*H, including the fragile, turbulent and unsustainable relationships built between the men and women serving.

In the second half, the protagonist Frankie McGrath, found her salvation through her close nursing colleagues who had been with her on the front in Vietnam and with whom she had shared war-time experiences. They understood the PTSD, drug dependence, alcoholism and depression better than anyone else and the strength of their support saved Frankie from herself. This aspect of the novel was an interesting insight into how the various agencies

disregarded and disparaged those many women who suffered so much from their time in Vietnam. It also shed light on the various treatments meted out to those with 'mental health' problems at that time.

We agreed that we learnt about the role of the many women who served during the height of the war. This was both enlightening and informative. We also revisited the political change that exploded across the States in 1965 after the drafting of thousands of young men, alongside the rise in student activism and the enormous public condemnation of this ongoing and ultimately failing conflict.

Our book for July is 'Penelope Unbound' by Mary Morrissy (2023)

[Reading Group 4](#)

The July meeting will be at 2pm on Thursday 30th July at Ganavan. The book for July is 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum' by Kate Atkinson.

[Reading Group Classic Reads](#)

Following the very enjoyable Jane Austen reads, some of us decided to continue with deep dives in other classical authors. Those interested might contact the convenor, Rosemary Power, for the latest developments.

[Science and Technology Group](#)

The 2025/26 season of Science Group meetings has now finished, and the group is taking the usual break for the summer. Activities will resume in September. Our thanks to all who have attended our meetings and helped deliver another successful season, especially the speakers who have presented a wide range of interesting and inspiring presentations.

During the summer we will start planning future activities and we welcome your thoughts and feedback. So please do let us know your suggestions, interests and possible contributions. All ideas are welcome! Please write to us at obanu3ascience@gmail.com

[Scottish History Group](#)

Scottish history will resume in the autumn. The plan is to invite speakers on various periods over the course of the winter months. There will be the delayed session on the 'Declaration of Arbroath'. More to follow in the next newsletter.

[El Grupo Español](#)

Continuamos a reunir durante el verano. Como el famoso Windmill Teatro, nunca estamos cerrados. Unas puntas:

- intenta a repartir ejemplares por el resto del grupo
- continua hacer sugerencias para dar mas variedad a nuestras sessions

No's vemos pronto

[Table Tennis Group](#)

As the summer months are a busy time for Group members, and Atlantis is booked for children's activities during the school holidays, play has currently been suspended and will resume on the 31st August. If you wish to join us please contact the Convenor - new members, whether experienced or not, are most welcome. We play on Mondays, between 2 and 3pm in the main hall at Atlantis.

[Ukulele Group](#)

How about joining us as we sing and play our ukuleles? We would like new members and hope you'll come along and be part of our friendly and welcoming group. We plan to meet throughout the year. No ukulele? Members have kindly offered to bring along ukuleles to get you started and tuition is at hand.

Be good to see you - Tuesday evenings, 7 till 9, Congregational Church, Tweeddale Street (Just up from Chalmers shop. Enter street level, middle door.)

[Walk and Lunch Group](#)

The Group is currently seeking a convenor.