



Orkney U3A



16th. March 2021

Dear Members,

This has been a very strange and challenging year for everyone due to Covid19, and finding the words to write this is difficult.

I was elected Chairman in 2020 and feel an absolute fraud as I seem to have contributed nothing to the role of Chairman.

As a result of us being unable to meet in person this meeting has had no agenda, as there is little to discuss. We have however had two resignations from committee members; Judy O'Connor and Trevor Kay. Phylida Wright has served three years and is standing down.

Despite numerous pleas for volunteers to fill these posts, only two people have agreed to fill the positions as committee members.

The following people are therefore continuing/elected on to the Orkney U3A Committee:

Chairman	as before	Barbara Todd	
Vice Chairman	as before	Judy Fryer	
Secretary	as before	Phylida Wright	
Treasurer	as before	Ronnie Johnston	
Meeting Secretary	Vacant		
Committee Members	as before	David Appleton	
	as before	Sally MacIntosh	
	New member	Kathleen Duncan	Proposed by Barbara Todd
	New member	John Mowat	Seconded by Sally MacIntosh
			Proposed by Phylida Wright
			Seconded by Barbara Todd

Judy O'Connor has agreed to continue to organise the Christmas Dinner this year.

Unfortunately, we were unable to meet during 2020 and into 2021, either at the library or in our groups. All speakers were cancelled, as was our annual Christmas dinner and any arranged social events or outings. As a result, I am afraid to say that I have few reports from any of the groups, although a few groups have met virtually. Here are their reports.

Music Appreciation Group One

The members of the Music Group were very keen to keep things going in some form as the first lockdown began to lengthen. It was quickly realised that Zoom would not be particularly useful for this purpose, but You Tube offered great potential, albeit lacking the personal contact that the group enjoyed. Pre-Covid, a theme had been chosen and members met on the first Monday of the month, each clasping several CDs. Under the new system the theme idea continued, but the group now each submitted several music choices to Glenys, who checked that each piece (which, unlike pre-Covid, could be of any length, rather than the usual five-six minutes) was available on You Tube, and then emailed the complete list to everyone. The idea was that members would sit down with the requisite cup of coffee at the beginning of every month, click on You Tube, and imagine that they were all enjoying listening to the same music at the same time! (And watching/listening on You Tube did have

its advantages: while everyone missed the company of being able to meet in person, and being able to discuss each piece of music, they were able to listen to complete symphonies, etc, rather than short excerpts - and they also discovered that the range of music and composers on You Tube seems almost limitless!)

Glenys Alsop.

Botany Group and Pending Moth Group

The Botany group has not met in the past year, social distancing being incompatible with communal plant identification We had planned a couple of days in Bettyhill last June but had to cancel. However, I have rebooked for this coming June and, if travel out of Orkney is allowed by then, we hope that will be a good outing with which to reboot the group. The planned Moth group has also not met for similar reasons. As none of those interested in joining it are expert I am still hoping to identify someone who is to take the lead.

Peter Slater

Photo Group One

Lockdown hit just before the AGM last year and suddenly our photography group could no longer go out together and take photographs once a month . Initially we continued with our monthly projects .Each member was invited to send 5 photos on a particular theme and they were coordinated by me into a show .This was passed around to all the members for perusal and comment .Projects included Nature ,Old and New ,Time ,Texture ,Food ,Rust or Rubbish ,Angles , Cloudscapes and inventively What I did in Lockdown .The most popular was Cold which coincided with the most snow that we have had for many years . Each Show usually had between 60 and 80 photos .

Half way through the year it was suggested that we had a Virtual Group Outing whereby a place would be suggested for the members to visit during the month to take photos .Five of these photos would be passed to me to put together again in a show for the members .Places visited were Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones ,St Marys ,Deerness ,Birsay and currently South Ronaldsay (excluding St Margaret's Hope). Deerness proved the most difficult to visit as we the snow drifts and ice rather precluded much driving that month so a lot of archive photos were the order of the day . Through out the year we have had excellent photos produced ,lots of comment on them and been stimulated to get out and take pictures at a time when a degree of torpor could have crept in .The group is in excellent heart and I thank all the members for their enthusiasm in helping us get through this crazy year .We will be back out as a group as soon as it is safe to do so .We look forward to meeting up face to face and discussing our photos over tea rather over the ether .

Tim Wright, Group Leader

Tuesday Music Group

This is a 'nil return' from the U3A Tuesday Music Group. We have not met for a year now, but hope to do so as soon as indoor groups are permitted, at which point new members would be most welcome. We have previously met on the second Tuesday of each month, time of meeting varied to accommodate members' other commitments.

Please contact me if you need any more information.

With best wishes,

Valerie Pomfret

I would like to extend a few BIG thank you wishes to the following people:

To Phylida Wright our secretary, who has battled on keeping me right and carrying on with U3A correspondence as required.

To Sal MacKintosh and David Appleton, our fantastic IT pair who have kept us all connected with

Emails, letters and other important issues.

To Ronnie Johnston, treasurer, who has kept the finances in order during this difficult time. Ronnie has attached the 2020 annual accounts, and this can be accessed on the U3A web page at [www.orkneycommunities.co.uk > u3a](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/u3a) click on Documents then Accounts

It has been agreed that there will be NO membership fees collected at present, until we can meet in person again.

To Tim Wright and the photographic group who have continued with virtual photography each month. It has been fun and challenging and kept us all amused by appreciating the beauty which is still around us even in times of lockdown. We are so lucky here to be able to open our door and enjoy the fresh air and tranquillity of Orkney.

To Tom Nimmo who challenges the birdie and photographic group with his monthly “Spot the Difference and name the Place” quiz.

To Glynis Alsop for managing to carry on with her Music Appreciation Group and discovering the benefits of You Tube, a brave lady indeed.

I am not going to thank myself, but I hope that I have given you some joy and a few laughs each week with my poetry. I never envisaged one year on that I'd still be churning out this prose.

Sadly a few members have died in the last year, and condolence cards were sent to the families on behalf of the U3A. They were: Jean Wood. Maureen Moore, Fraser Dixon. Also Brian Wright, husband to Jeannie Wright who is an active member of the U3A. Sincere apologies if I have missed anyone.

And finally, thanks to you all for staying with us during this last year. It has been hard, but once we are allowed to meet again, I hope that we can be stronger in spirit to re-group and go forward as a renewed and healthy U3A group.

Keep safe, healthy and cheery.

Barbara Todd
Chairman Orkney U3A