

REPORTS FROM MEETINGS 2019-20

27th February 2020 5th MONTHLY OPEN MEETING.

Biggar and District U3A held their fifth monthly open meeting of the 2019/20 season on Thursday 27th February. It was well attended by the members.

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker, James Kirk, who gave a talk on " The Hanseatic City of Lubeck ". James had travelled from his home in Straiton, Ayrshire.

He explained that his many visits to Lubeck had been made necessary through his company's supervision of a manufacturing licence granted to a local factory. This had developed in him a great affection for the city and although he is now retired he still pays visits each year.

He took the members on a guided tour of the city's many churches and museums by way of a slide show. He highlighted various aspects of Lubeck's history from the years of the Hanseatic League right up to present day via the second world war and the re-unification of East and West Germany. German Chancellor Willy Brandt was born in Lubeck.

The meeting was opened up to member's questions and the vote of thanks was then given by u3a Chairperson, Stewart Houston.

30th January 2020 4th MONTHLY OPEN MEETING.

Biggar and District u3a held their FIRST monthly open meeting of 2020 which was very well attended by the members.

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced the guest speakers, Linda Mclean & Carol Ann Hanna who gave a talk on " The South Lanarkshire Waste Disposal Scheme ". . Linda and Carol are based at the Hamilton and Blantyre Recycling Centre as Education Officers.

They stated that 150,000 households currently were each producing around 1 tonne of waste per year. Prior to the introduction of the 'blue bins' only 6% of this waste was recycled, mainly through bottle banks. However that figure has since risen to more than 50% although some 80,000 tonnes of waste still goes to landfill.

They then clarified which items should be disposed of in each of the coloured bins. This was a very confusing subject because each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland has it's own rules on recycling. These rules are usually dependent upon each council's waste processor and what materials they can accept. This means that some items which are marked as 'recyclable' cannot always be accepted by the processor.

The meeting was then opened to member's questions, resulting in the largest number of questions ever raised at a monthly meeting. Linda's and Carol's talk was very informative and enjoyed by all present and the vote of thanks was then given to them by u3a Secretary Rose Rose.

Thursday 12th December 2019, BIGGAR AND DISTRICT u3a CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed about sixty members to Lanark Golf Club for the Annual Christmas Lunch. At the end of the lunch everyone agreed that it had been a resounding success with fine food and good service and it was very good value for money.

A big thank you was duly given to Gloria Mitchell for her organisation and hard work ----- .

28th November 2019 3rd MONTHLY OPEN MEETING.

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker, Brian Curle, who gave them an illustrated talk on 'The Queensferry Crossing'. Brian is well known locally as a speaker and he had previously given the branch a talk on the Forth Bridge. Brian is also involved in the running of Biggar Little Cinema.

Brian began his talk with background information about the Forth Road Bridge and the need for a replacement crossing due to the steadily increasing traffic volumes and also due to the degradation of the cables on the road bridge. He then spoke about the various types of bridge design and the decision to go with a cable-stayed design.

He then centred his talk on the construction phase of the new bridge and illustrated it with appropriate slides and video. The competition to find a name for the new bridge produced a shortlist of possible names and the ensuing public vote decided on 'The Queensferry Crossing'. The bridge completion was delayed by very bad weather and it was opened to traffic in August 2017, almost 12 months late.

Brian's talk was very informative and enjoyed by all present and the vote of thanks was then given to him by u3a committee member Jack Egdell.

31st October 2019 2nd MONTHLY OPEN MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held their second monthly open meeting of the new season on Thursday 31st October. It was very well attended by 65 members.

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker, David MacDonald, who gave the members an illustrated talk on 'Coatbridge Confectionary'. David is a historian with North Lanarkshire Culture and Leisure Department and is based at Summerlee Heritage Museum in Coatbridge. David centred his talk on three confectionary companies based in Lanarkshire. They were Lees' in Coatbridge, Tunnock's in Uddingston and King's in Wishaw. His talk was very informative and injected with some of his Belfast humour. He said that the original macaroon bars had been made to use up surplus stocks of potatoes. Teacakes and snowballs were the subject of courtroom battles to have them classified as cakes rather than biscuits for V.A.T. purposes, which entailed a top judge having a tasting session in the jury room before deciding that snowballs were indeed cakes.

David's talk was enjoyed by all present and the vote of thanks was then given to him by u3a committee treasurer Tom Mitchell.

26th September 2019 1st MONTHLY OPEN MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held their first monthly open meeting of the new season on Thursday 26th September. It was very well attended with very few empty seats in the room. The current active membership is 148 with 9 new members having joined at the recent open day.

The Chair, Stewart Houston, welcomed the members to this first open meeting of the 2019/2020 session and introduced the guest speaker, Ted Bowen, who is indeed a member of the U3A in Biggar. Ted is well known in Biggar as an artist, an ex-silversmith and an ex-teacher who had re-located to Biggar some 13 years ago from Birmingham. Hence the subject matter of his entertaining presentation entitled "Talk Brummie". Ted began with some anecdotes about his own experiences trying to understand some of the Scottish words and sayings when he first arrived in Biggar. He then listed some famous Brummie people which included Alfred Bird who invented custard powder and George Cadbury of chocolate fame. He then gave an illustrated glossary of Brummie words and sayings filled with humorous references to his own 'growing up' in Birmingham. He then closed his talk with a tale about 'bunking off' school with his mates which was full of newly learned Brummie words. The vote of thanks was then given to Ted by u3a committee member Tony North.

14th September 2019 OPEN DAY MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held an Open Day Meeting on Saturday 14th September, in the Municipal Hall in Biggar, from 10am until noon. The main purpose of this meeting was to let local people know what the U3A is all about and what activities will be available over the coming year.

There were u3a members present from each of the activity groups to illustrate what's available and where and when to find them taking place.

The meeting was very successful with new members joining u3a and existing members extending their own involvement into further groups.