

REPORTS FROM MEETINGS 2021-22

28th April 2022 6th MONTHLY OPEN MEETING and AGM

Biggar and District u3a held their sixth monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 28th April in Biggar Bowling Club Hall. It was attended by about 20 members. The Chair, Tony North, welcomed the members and conducted the AGM when our new treasurer, Victor Hawker, was nominated and voted onto the committee. He also asked for nominations for the post of Webmaster and Publicity secretary as well as a Speakers secretary for the 2023 / 2024 season. No one was nominated. The Chair then thanked departing committee members Stewart Houston, Tom Mitchell and Jack Egdell for their service on the committee.

He then introduced the guest speaker, Sarah Gerrish, who gave them a talk on "Furniture and Wooden Artefact Coservation ".

Sarah is a freelance furniture conservator who had spent 15 years in the National Museum of Scotland conserving artefacts and overseeing their installation in the newly constructed museum building. She explained the differences between conservation and restoration and showed illustrations of her work. Since becoming freelance she has worked for the National Trust for Scotland, Abbotsford House, Historic Environment Scotland and many other respected organisations.

Following a range of 'questions from the members', Sarah Gerrish was thanked for her interesting and entertaining talk on behalf of the members.

31st March 2022 5th MONTHLY OPEN MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held their fifth monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 31st March in Biggar Bowling Club Hall. It was not well attended, due to the atrocious snowy weather. The Chair, Tony North, welcomed the members and introduced the guest speaker, John Russel, who gave them a talk on "Vehicles Telematic".

24th February 2022 4th MONTHLY OPEN MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held their fourth monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 24th February in Biggar Bowling Club Hall. It was quite well attended, considering the atrocious snowy weather. The Chair, Tony North, welcomed the members and introduced the guest speaker, Peter Robinson, who gave them a talk on "Scottish Canals – Past, Present and Future ".

Peter is Head of Engineering for Scottish Canals and is a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

Those in attendance were given an illustrated presentation on the history and development of the Scottish canal system over the last 200 years through to the construction of the Millennium Link, the Falkirk Wheel and the Stockingfield Bridge in Glasgow which had just been completed that week.

Peter also explained how the canal in Glasgow has been incorporated into a new flood prevention system to enable construction developments to take place in North Glasgow.

He also touched on the proposed future control of the water levels in Loch Ness to enable pumped storage hydro schemes to operate much more efficiently thus saving CO2 emissions as a result.

Following a range of 'questions from the members', Peter Robinson was thanked for his interesting and entertaining talk by Jack Egdeell on behalf of the members.

25th November 2021 3rd MONTHLY OPEN MEETING

Biggar and District u3a held their THIRD monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 25th November in Biggar Bowling Club Hall. It was attended by 50 members.

The Chair, Tony North, welcomed the members and introduced the guest speaker, Peter Gardiner, who gave a talk on "An Historical Look at Police Photography and Scenes of Crime".

Peter, who is a member of our Biggar u3a, told the members about his thirty years as a member of Edinburgh Police in the Identification Branch.

Those in attendance were given an illustrated presentation on the use of photography at the scenes of the crimes and the use of fingerprints to identify those present at the scene. He showed examples of actual photographs taken historically and some fingerprints which had been used to identify the criminals. He explained about the uniqueness of each person's fingerprints and the number of matching points required to prove identity beyond reasonable doubt. He said that even identical twins would have different unique fingerprints. With the advent of digital photography and the widespread use of computers this identification process had become much less labour intensive than during his service. He also touched on the need to record the scene at road and air accidents.

Following a range of 'questions from the members', Peter Gardiner was thanked for his interesting talk by Victor Hawker on behalf of the members.

28th October 2021 2nd MONTHLY OPEN MEETING.

Biggar and District u3a held their SECOND monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 28th October in Biggar Bowling Club Hall. It was attended by a courageous 22 members on a desperately wet afternoon! The Chair welcomed the members and introduced the guest speaker, Iain Nelson, who gave a talk on "Mission Aviation Fellowship".

Those in attendance were treated to an excellent presentation on the "birth" of Mission Aviation Fellowship by two ex RAF pilots who had seen the opportunity to bring desperately needed assistance to underdeveloped parts of the world where health care was practically none existent and lives were short. They now fly a large fleet of small aircraft, necessary because they operate in areas with only grass or hard packed soil airstrips, think Western Isles pre today, therefore small is essential.

They work with over 200 partners in that they supply flight assistance to others such as Oxfam, Medicare etc as this allows medical staff and supplies to get to the most remote areas some of which are not possible by road in a short time. They also transfer many items which improve the situation like water pumps etc thus helping the health of the

villagers. MAF is funded solely by donations, large and small, and when you know the aircraft cost from 1.5 to 4.5 million US Dollars, and the pilots have to contribute to the costs, then there is the maintenance, it is a credit to the organization that they can achieve such results without outside help.

Following the usual 'questions from the members', Iain Nelson was thanked for his interesting talk and for navigating his way from Hamilton in such dreadful conditions.

30th September 2021 1st MONTHLY OPEN MEETING.

Biggar and District u3a held their FIRST monthly open meeting of 2021 / 2022 season on Thursday 30th September in Biggar Bowling Club hall. It was very well attended by the members together with nine new members, resulting in an attendance in excess of 70.

The Chair, Tony North, welcomed the members to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker, Jim Moynagh who gave a talk on " The Beekeeping Year" Jim is a member of Glasgow and District, Lanarkshire and Scotland beekeeping associations and is a Lanark resident.

His illustrated talk was a fascinating insight into the life of a hive of bees over the course of a year. The hive would contain 1 queen bee, 5,000 to 80,000 workers and up to 100 drones. They live together in a well organised community which needs to be fed, watered and protected against the varroa mites at various points during the year. A beekeeper is kept very busy.

Jim delivered his talk in a clear and interesting manner and you would not have guessed that this was his first ever talk about the beekeeping year.

The meeting was then opened to more than a few member's questions and the vote of thanks was then given by Speakers Secretary, Stewart Houston.