

Charity Number SC021683

## October 2023 Newsletter

### 30th Anniversary Trip to Kirkcudbright



*Members of u3a Dumfries arriving at the Kirkcudbright Galleries on Thursday 7th September on the trip to mark the 30th anniversary of the Dumfries organisation. (Photo: Ronnie Galloway)*

About fifty members of u3a Dumfries made the coach trip to the Kirkcudbright Galleries on September 7th to see two of the temporary exhibitions at the gallery – *Eardley Explored: The Art of Joan Eardley (with photography by Audrey Walker)* in Gallery Two; and *Sandstone Steps*, in the Mitchell Gallery, a transatlantic collaboration between Hugh Bryden of Roncadora Press of Dumfries and Maddy Rosenberg of Central Booking in New York.

*Eardley Explored* presented oil paintings by the late Scottish artist, Joan Eardley, intermixed with photographs of the artist at work by

photographer Audrey Walker. Several of the paintings were of children in the poorer communities of Glasgow, painted when Eardley had a studio there in the late 1940s and again in the early 1960s, but there were also examples of the work she did based in rural and coastal Scotland – in and around the village of Catterline in Aberdeenshire. Joan Eardley died in August 1963.

The *Sandstone Steps* project developed from the idea of following the nineteenth- and twentieth-century journeys across the Atlantic by sandstone from the quarries around Dumfries, which helped to create the splendid architecture of New York and New York State, as in the ‘Million Dollar Staircase’ in the city of Albany.

Hugh Bryden and Maddy Rosenberg were both on hand to explain their collaboration, mainly developed through the creation of artists’ books in the form of ‘sculptural boxes, incorporating visual art, poetry and music’.

The trip concluded with afternoon tea at the Arden House Hotel in Kirkcudbright and the return home to Dumfries.



*Dumfries poet and artist Hugh Bryden of Roncadora Press and artist and curator Maddy Rosenberg of Central Booking of New York at Kirkcudbright Galleries, with some of their work displayed. (Photo: Ronnie Galloway)*

# Group Updates

## Byways and Beyond Group



The Byways and Beyond walking group recently went on an impromptu Norwegian themed walk. Following the recent visit of a Norwegian group and the gifting of the stone commemorating the kindness and hospitality shown to the Norwegian people who came to Dumfries during WW2. one of our members suggested we go and see the stone. Then another suggestion followed that we walk along to see the Norwegian graves in Troqueer Cemetery.

We all agreed the stone made an impressive monument and was attractively placed in its circular bed. The Norwegian graves were beautiful and extremely well kept. All were decorated with wreaths and the rows of graves were fronted by beautiful rose beds in full bloom. Well worth a visit! Luckily Chris had her camera handy!

Our walk (a short one this time) ended with crossing the Kirkpatrick MacMillan Bridge and making our way through Castledykes Park and up to the Crichton for a coffee before returning to Brooms Road for our cars.

## Garden Group – What We Got Up To in 2023

*Mary Waugh writes about this year's Garden Group activities.*



*Part of the gardens at Craigieburn House beyond Moffat.*

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Looking out on a wet and windswept September scene, my thoughts immediately migrated to calmer and drier times earlier, featuring memorable garden visits

Our calendar of visits started in April on home ground with a visit to Crichton Rock garden. Guided by the head gardener, we left with more of an insight into the thinking behind this often ignored gem on our doorstep.

May took us beyond Moffat to Craigieburn House on the Selkirk road. The five acre garden there offers a colourful Himalayan approach. Some of the background to it was explained by the head gardener who shared some stories with us. This was an enthralling visit, whetting our appetite for our next garden.

Our visit in June to Dunscore featured three very different approaches to gardening. Starting with two gardens near the Dalgonar Bridge. The first, at Springvale, looks onto the River Cairn and takes advantage of this location in an imaginative and innovative way. This was followed by a visit to the next door neighbours at Riggfoot, whose more extensive garden also overlooks the river but is more bohemian in approach. In contrast to this, Cats Craig at Dunscore oozes a traditionally-presented well-maintained order. The wide range of plants, flowers and shrubs thrive here despite a relatively exposed location.

The experience of visiting two neighbouring gardens was repeated in July with two gardens at Stockarton, near Kirkcudbright. The first one, Stockarton, features a collection of shrubs and small trees as well as a small loch. Its neighbour, the Waterhouse Garden, is a cottage-style garden which is densely planted and terraced. Both were very worthwhile visits.

August took the group to Gatelawbridge, Thornhill, where the featured gardens, Highland Cottage and Stables Cottage were impressive for different reasons. The former showed the art of gardening in a well-planned cottage garden, whilst the latter, which featured herbaceous borders, a pond and a woodland walk, impressed with its variety and scale.

Taking advantage of the early September sunshine, the visit to Clonyard Farm was a delight for all who were there. This location features a full range of informal gardens, woodland walks, two lochs and a crannog.

The year is rounded off with a visit to the formal garden at Craichlaw, Kirkcowan, in October, a talk at Threave Gardens in November, and, of course, our year-end lunch in December.

*The group is currently at its limit of members and may need to start a waiting list. Do not, however, let this dissuade you from making an enquiry if you have an interest in gardening and gardens. You can contact Mary Waugh at [marypwaugh@gmail.com](mailto:marypwaugh@gmail.com)*

## **Etymology Group**

Etymology Group leader Alverie Weighill reports that the group reconvened on Tuesday 14th September. The group meets in the Criffel Room at North-West Resource Centre from 10.30am to 12.30pm on the second Thursday of each month and will continue to meet until 11th April, 2024. The group currently has 10 members, so has room for more.

*Alverie can be contacted on [valerieweighill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:valerieweighill@yahoo.co.uk)*

## **Scrabble Group**

Scrabble Group leader Esther McKee reports that the Scrabble Group resumed after the summer on Monday, 25th September. The group meets from 2pm until 4pm on the fourth Monday of each month in the Aberlour North West Resource Centre at Lincluden.

*New members are welcome. Esther can be contacted on 01848 330563 or via [esther.mckee@outlook.com](mailto:esther.mckee@outlook.com)*

## **Your u3a Committee Needs YOU!**

Several actual and impending resignations from the u3a Dumfries committee – for ill health or family commitments – means that there will need to be new members recruited to the committee at the 2024 AGM in March next year. Without new recruits it is possible the organisation may not be able to continue to fulfil its legal obligations and keep the organisation going.

There is also the question of being able to spread the work across a larger number of people, in order that a handful of people are not faced with increasing amounts of work.

PLEASE consider putting yourself forward for a place on the committee. The more people step forward the smaller amount of work each committee member has to do. If you would like to know more contact Margaret Moffat at [u3adumfrieschair@gmail.com](mailto:u3adumfrieschair@gmail.com) or Jeremy Shearmur at [secretary.u3adumfries@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.u3adumfries@gmail.com)

## **Future Newsletters**

Items for future newsletters should be sent to:

[newsletter.u3adumfries@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.u3adumfries@gmail.com)

*Please note the next newsletter will be out in early November.*

## **Keep up to date with Dumfries u3a by visiting:**

<https://u3asites.org.uk/Dumfries>