



## Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter



April 2024

Editor – John Giovanacci – [publicity@falkirku3a.uk](mailto:publicity@falkirku3a.uk)

### FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

This month came in with rain and winds. However, the daffodils are in full bloom now which certainly brightens me up as I drive around the district. Let's hope that the weather improves for the rest of the month, and we have warmer, drier weather.

At this month's Open Meeting we heard of the plight of the hedgehog which is now an endangered species. Moira Grant gave us an insight into their disappearance from our gardens and how we can help them. There was lots of hilarity during the quiz - and some finger counting. Did you know that there are eight different colours of Smarties? I certainly didn't.

Our new draft Financial Policy should be on our website and ready for members to read and give their comments later this month.

As you will know, your Trustees have been trying to recruit new members for the committee. Our constitution only allows a member to stay in one post on the Trustees' Committee for three years resulting in most of the Trustees having to leave their present positions. We hope some may stay on in different posts but at least four members will be retiring. We have some nominations but still need more. Could you join the trustees?

May you all continue to LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE with Falkirk & District u3a.

Louise Westall

### Gardening Guru

April is the month when everything seems to happen at once in the garden. The blossom is out in force with flowering cherries and fruit trees giving a great show.

Now is the time when the grass needs cutting but don't make your first cut too low and don't be tempted to plant out tender perennials or bedding plants yet. The garden centres may be full of these plants but a sudden frost can kill them all. Keep your money in your pockets for a few weeks yet.

### Interest Group News

#### Film Group

We all enjoyed the Hitchcock film **Rope** and since it's a relatively short film there was plenty of time for a lively discussion afterwards. This month I am showing a much more recent film called **Sometimes Always Never** from 2018 starring Bill Nighy as a scrabble obsessed father. I wonder if any of our own Scrabble Club could identify with his eccentricities and obsession?

John Giovanacci

## Scrabble Club

You may remember that in last month's Newsletter I explained that one of the members of the club had kindly provided us with a list of words which included words that begin with 'q' but do not have 'u' straight after the 'q.' How many words could you come up with? Here are some examples with their meanings according to the Collins English Dictionary:

*qalamdan* – (a variant of kalamdan) 'a Persian pen-box'

*qawwali* – 'an Islamic religious song, esp. in Asia'

*qindar* – 'an Albanian monetary unit worth one hundredth of a lek'

*qwerty* – 'a **QWERTY** keyboard on a typewriter or computer is the standard English language keyboard, on which the top line of keys begins with the letters q, w, e, r, t, and y.'

*qorma* - (or Korma) 'any of a variety of Indian dishes consisting of meat or vegetables braised with water, stock, yogurt, or cream'

*qigongs* – 'a system of breathing and exercise designed to benefit both physical and mental health'

Here are some more words we have discovered at our recent Scrabble games which you might like to investigate the meaning of: *ava*, *dox*, *geed*, *haj*, *loge*, *tice*. Definitions will be provided next month.

Peter Kahan

## Family History

At last month's meeting at Klondyke Garden Centre we discussed mining in our families. There has been mining in Scotland since Roman times. The red bings known as the Five Sisters which can be seen on the way to Edinburgh are a relic from the days of shale mining in West Lothian. In the last few centuries Falkirk was at the centre of the coal mining industry and many group members have ancestors who were involved in mining.

Louise Westall

## Maths Teaser

Did you try last month's Maths teaser? I hope you did. The question involved working out someone's weekly wages and expenses, and how much money they could save every week to buy a new tablet computer. A useful problem to be able to solve regardless of one's age. The question plus solution now follows.

### Question

Seonaid is saving up to buy a tablet computer costing £388.

She earns £7.30 per hour and works for 30 hours each week. Seonaid is paid at the end of each week. She pays £5.32 in Income Tax and £7.68 in National Insurance each week. Her living expenses are £86 per week.

Seonaid saves half of the money that she has left over each week towards a tablet computer.

How many weeks will it take her to save up enough money to buy the computer?

## Solution

Seonaid's weekly wage is  $30 \times £7.30$  per hour = £219.

Seonaid's weekly outgoings are £5.32 (Income Tax) + £7.68 (NI) + £86 (living expenses) = £99.

The weekly amount left over after all expenses have been paid is  $£219 - £99 = £120$ .

Seonaid saves half of this money to put towards a tablet computer (that is £60).

The number of weeks Seonaid has to save money to buy the tablet computer is  $£388/60 = 6.47$  weeks which we round up to **7 weeks**.

This month's maths teaser is taken from the SQA's, 2023 National 5 Applications of Mathematics Paper 2 (A calculator may be used). Best of luck.

## Question

A lake had a volume of 14,730,000 litres.

Due to decreasing rainfall the volume of the lake is expected to decrease by 2.8% annually.

Calculate the expected volume of the lake after 3 years. Give your answer to 3 significant figures.

Peter Kahan

## Appeal to Group Organisers



*People huv tae know* (Isa, Still Game)

Please let us know what's going on in your Group by sending me something for inclusion in the next edition. I'm sure members are keen to know what is happening in the many varied Groups, the majority of which we never ever hear about on the Newsletter. For example, what interesting routes have the Themed Walks Group been going on? what have the potty professors in the Science Matters Group been discussing? where have the Litter Picking Group been tidying up? what shows have the Theatre Groups seen, Hamilton maybe?

You never know this might even encourage new members to join your Group.

Deadline for submission of articles, including photos if possible, and no matter how small in detail, is 12<sup>th</sup> of month by email to me.

John Giovanacci - [publicity@falkirk3a.uk](mailto:publicity@falkirk3a.uk)