



Falkirk and District U3A Newsletter

December 2019



Editor – John Giovanacci

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From the Chair

After missing a couple of editions I am pleased to be able to contact our members again with this newsletter, as John Giovanacci has kindly stepped in as editor. The main purpose of the newsletter is to enable members to communicate with each other, so if you have any interesting articles, or, for example, the interest group you are in is planning something exciting, please write a couple of paragraphs and send it to John to share with all of our U3A. John also looks after our Facebook page, which is updated with interesting articles.

We are currently reviewing how we use local media, and Morven Mack has started to send a synopsis of our open meetings to the Falkirk Herald, who print it in the community pages. In addition to our notice of the meetings this is useful free exposure, and will hopefully attract new members, something we are always trying to do. Related to this I recall a couple of meetings ago some members indicated a willingness to post leaflets in their local area. Anybody who is willing to do this should contact me, as I am overseeing a group looking at recruitment opportunities.

As you will know our hard working Trustees volunteer to undertake their important role running our U3A, and a vacancy has arisen on the committee for the important role of Secretary. The main tasks for this role are related to the monthly Trustees meeting, and handling the limited correspondence we receive. It is not overly time consuming but is a vital role we need to fill asap, and gives a good oversight on how U3A operates. If you would like to find out more, or volunteer, please speak to any of the Trustees. Without volunteers our U3A would simply not function, so I hope more of you will come forward to help in any way.

Many of you may have read about the U3A day on 3rd June 2020, to enable U3As across the country to celebrate the learning, activity and fun that happens every day in U3As across the country.

The purpose of the day is to:

- raise the profile of your U3A so, collectively, there is more awareness nationally
- help challenge negative perceptions of older adults
- invite other Third Aged to learn how U3A supports the lives of retired people

I would invite anybody who wishes to help with celebrating the Falkirk & District U3A to get in contact with any of the Trustees.

As this is the last newsletter before Christmas I would like to wish everybody a merry Christmas and a happy new year, and I hope to see many of you at the festive celebration on December 3rd.

Glenn

Your New Editor

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am John Giovanacci, I became a member of U3A in September 2018 when I also took on the role of Group Leader of the newly formed Film Group. I volunteered earlier this year to oversee the Facebook page and it seems that this ties in nicely with filling the void of Editor since Bruce Cannon stepped aside. I have a hard act to follow but hope that I can continue the excellent work that Bruce did in putting together an interesting and informative bulletin for all members. As Glenn has mentioned I encourage members to contact me if they have anything of interest they may want included in future Newsletters and also welcome any feedback on the content.

I would also take this opportunity to ask any member who uses Facebook to join our Facebook page to be kept up to date with news from various sources and I would also ask Group Leaders to send me any photos or information about their Groups which I can post on the page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FalkirkandDistrictU3A/>

Happy reading and best wishes for the Festive Season.

John

Meet Our Neighbours

Have you ever wondered what's happening in other U3As and how we compare with them? I thought it would be good to catch up with some of our neighbouring U3As and to start off with I spoke to Lynn Hoey, Chair and Sadie Seath, Membership Secretary of Fife U3A.

I asked them how many years their U3A had been going, how many members and interest groups they currently have and if one particular Group has exceeded expectations.

Lynn: 'We celebrated our 25th anniversary last year, we currently have 191 members and 23 interest groups with another one expected to start shortly.'

Sadie: 'I would say the Travel Group has exceeded expectations and has at least 20 members. It is proving to be exceptionally popular. Suggestions come from members and Sean is so good at places for us to visit, as well as finding out the best deals for us.'

I went on to ask Lynn what she thought was the biggest challenge facing their U3A in continuing as a successful organisation.

Lynn: 'We are very aware that there is a lack of knowledge amongst the public as to what U3A is and hence how to continue to attract new members, especially men. We also struggle to get a full committee.'

I mentioned the National U3A Day which is next June and asked Lynn if Fife were planning anything special for that day.

Lynn: 'At the moment we have agreed only in principle to do something on 3rd June, so if you have any suggestions, ideas or plans we would be delighted to hear them!'

As Fife covers a large geographic area I asked them if they had ever considered splitting into more than one U3A.

Lynn: 'Yes, Fife is a large area but there is a Cupar U3A which attracts members from N.E. Fife. There was some discussion about perhaps trying to set up a U3A to cover the West Fife villages but I do not think it came to anything. In reality our members come from the area between Rosyth and Largo in the main. Our monthly meetings are held in Kirkcaldy which is deemed quite central with good transport links.'

Sadie: 'A Dunfermline group has been talked about but no one is keen to actually do the admin work.'

Lastly I asked them what our members need to see the next time they cross the Kincardine Bridge into Fife and if they could suggest any hidden gems.

Lynn: 'Gosh your last question is a hard one!! Our beaches, parks, castles, palaces, abbeys, fishing villages, lochs. My colleagues might suggest other gems!!'

Sadie: 'Our hidden gem must be the new Queensferry Crossing. Maybe not hidden as such but beautiful. Dunfermline itself is historical having the ancient Kings of Scotland seat. The Fife coast as well as the East Neuk has so much to offer.'

Many thanks to Lynn and Sadie for sharing this information with us.

John

U3A In Scotland Summer School

The next Summer School will be held on Tuesday 18th to Thursday 20th August 2020 at Stirling Court Hotel on the campus of Stirling University.

This is the perfect opportunity for us to take part in this event with minimal travel involved and the chance to meet up with fellow Third Agers from all parts of Scotland.

Please follow this link <https://u3asites.org.uk/scotland/page/79029> to find out more details about the courses that will be available and booking details.

Group Chat

Dinner Club – Go West! John Muir is happy to report that 12 members of The Dinner Club are travelling to Glasgow for both Christmas Dinner and to take in a few of the City's magnificent buildings.

Starting in George Square, they will visit both the outside and inside of the former bank now aptly called the Counting House. This magnificent building has one of the most impressive banking halls and cupolas in Scotland, with most of the grandeur retained when it became a JD Wetherspoons. Suitably refreshed, we will move down Queen Street to Royal Exchange Square. Here, they will dine at the Grill on the Square which is part of the private member's club, No29 the Square.

Lunch Club – Danny Pace reports that the group enjoyed an excellent lunch at the Carronbridge Inn in Carronshore on Tuesday 12th November which 14 members attended, the food was plentiful and very well presented.

The next outing will be to the Gambero Rosso on 10th December at the usual time 12.00 for 12.30 start. This will be the Club's Christmas Outing. Danny will be informing all the group by (E-mail) with further details.

Film Group – October's film was the 1943 Hitchcock classic 'Shadow Of A Doubt' which has everything you expect from the master of suspense. It's easy to see why Hitchcock rates this as his own favourite film. November's film has been selected by Doreen and it's one of her favourite films called 'I Know Where I'm Going' a 1945 film directed by the talented pair of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. It's set mostly in the Hebrides and is a charming romantic drama. The end of December is a busy time and I had not planned on showing a film, in any case I have received an email from the Champion at Morrison's to say the room would have been unavailable on the last Friday of December.

John

Christmas Crackers (answers at bottom of page)

Riddle

What is greater than God,
more evil than the Devil,
the poor have it,
the rich don't need it,
and if you eat it, you'll die?

Name this film star



Diary Dates – December

Tuesday 3rd

Open Meeting in St Francis Xavier Church Hall @ 2.30pm – Christmas Festivities including live music by The Strummers and so much more.

Thursday 12th

General Election – the last December General Election was in 1923.

Last posting dates for Christmas

2nd class – Wednesday 18th 1st class – Friday 20th



Answers: Nothing & Kim Novak