



## Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter

November 2023

Editor – John Giovanacci

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### FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

Unfortunately, we had to have a change of plan for our November Open Meeting. We were very pleased that Peter Kahan stepped in with an interesting talk on the History of Czechoslovakia. I certainly learned a lot about the influences of the European Empires surrounding the country and how one country eventually became two, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

We are now approaching Christmas and the talk reminded me of the carol, 'Good King Wenceslas' This is based on the life of Saint Wenceslas who was born in Bohemia, which is now the Czech Republic. The carol tells the story of his journey, braving harsh winter weather and deep snow, to give alms to a poor peasant on what we call Boxing Day, the day after Christmas Day. Today, he is considered a Saint and should you visit Prague, you will see his statue in Wenceslas Square. However, in the carol, poetic licence refers to him as King, but he was actually a Duke.

**Remember** our Christmas meeting is on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December** NOT the usual first Tuesday of the month. The Committee are working hard behind the scenes to make it a fun packed day and we have already booked a local singer/musician, Wil Treeby, who comes highly recommended, and who some of you may have seen at the Allotment Café in the Howgate where he has been doing a regular Saturday morning set over the last few months.

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

Louise Westall

### A Plea from the Chair

As most of you will be aware our Membership Secretary, Susan Crisp, has resigned due to ill health. We are in **urgent** need of a member to take over this position. The details of the role can be found on our website, [Falkirk & District u3a: Officer Roles \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk) If you feel you could take this on, please contact me [l.westall@btinternet.com](mailto:l.westall@btinternet.com) or any other Committee Member.

### Gardening

The garden is now settling down for winter, but cyclamen and roses are still flowering. Lightly prune roses to stop them rocking in the wind. You can give them a final prune next Spring. It is not too late to plant tulips and crocuses for a show next Spring. Cut down perennials but don't leave the garden too tidy so birds can enjoy any seeds left on the plants. Remember to regularly fill up the bird feeder. No matter what the weather, it can be a joy to watch the birds coming to feed.

Gardening Guru

## Interest Groups News

### Film Group

I have shown 2 films so far in the new session and I am happy to say that both were enjoyed by all. First up was the 2012 film **Hitchcock**, starring Anthony Hopkins as Alfred Hitchcock and Helen Mirren as his wife Alma, which explores their relationship during the making of his famous (or should that be infamous) film Psycho. Next up was a low budget film from 2007 called **Once** which is set in Dublin, about a busker who meets a Czech immigrant and together they connect through music and their own broken relationships. A very good and understated film which won an Oscar for best original song.

This month I will be showing an excellent French-Canadian film from 2011 called **Monsieur Lazhar** which is about an Algerian immigrant who takes up a post in a Montreal primary school after the tragic loss of a much-loved teacher.

John Giovanacci

### Scrabble Club

Here are some new words Scrabble Club members have discovered in recent matches: *seamier, tor, zel, qua* and *diol*. Do you know the meanings of these words?

Peter Kahan

## Local News and Events

As the title suggests here is some local information which has been brought to my attention which I would like to share with you.

### Words for Wellbeing Groups

Falkirk Libraries have started running free Words for Wellbeing groups, the groups are intended to support mental health and wellbeing by encouraging people to get out of the house and enabling them to socialise in a safe space.

The groups differ from traditional book groups in that no homework is required. You can just come along on the day, the group facilitator will read a short piece of fiction, non-fiction, poetry or song lyrics and then participants can discuss how they feel about it. These are just a conversation starter and there is no pressure for anyone to contribute, but it is hoped that gradually, people will feel comfortable discussing the reading, chatting about how it made them feel or even sharing prose or poetry that they like. It is intended that each group will involve up to 12 people and there will be tea/coffee and biscuits available. The groups are free as are the refreshments.

#### **Open to anyone**

the groups are open to anyone and may be of benefit to those feeling isolated after events of the last couple of years. There are a variety of people taking part, including some looking to meet new people and some with mental health issues who want to get out and socialise. Participants will be able to meet with new people and chat in a supportive, friendly space. This means they can get out the house, have tea and biscuits, socialise with other people, and make new friends. They will also have the option of joining the library, which will give them access to books on health and wellbeing. The Words for Wellbeing Groups run in libraries every two weeks for about 60 minutes per meeting.

The groups will be run by trained, friendly and supportive library staff members. For more information or to register interest you can contact [gavin.johnstone@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.johnstone@falkirk.gov.uk) or call your local library.

## New Library Opening Hours

**Bo'ness, Falkirk & Larbert** – Monday – 10am till 8pm, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday – 10am till 5pm, Saturday 10am till 3pm

**Bonnybridge, Denny, Grangemouth & Meadowbank** – Monday, Tuesday, Friday – 10am till 5pm, Thursday – 10am till 8pm, Saturday – 10am till 3pm

**Slamannan** – Monday, Tuesday – 10am till 2pm, Thursday 2 till 7pm, Friday – 2 till 5pm, Saturday – 10am till 1pm

All Libraries are closed on Wednesday and Sunday

## Parking at Cineworld

The operator of the car park at Cineworld Falkirk, UKCPS, will be making some changes to the car park regulations.

As of this week, Cineworld customers parking in the cinema car park for over 4 hours will need to validate their parking by providing their vehicle registration number along with their booking details on the validation device in the cinema.

The validation device is located on the concession counter in the cinema. All you need to do is confirm your vehicle registration plate number along with your booking reference details to a team member and your parking will be validated for up to 8 hours.

Jennifer Kightley - [jenniferkightley@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferkightley@gmail.com)

## Maths Teaser

Did you remember how to do compound interest and reverse percentage questions? Don't worry if you did not, as the problems plus solution are presented below.

### Question 1

A caravan was bought for £20,000. It depreciated by 11% in the first year. It then depreciated by a further 6% each year over the next two years. Calculate the value of the caravan three years after it was bought.

The first thing to note is that the caravan is depreciating in all three years. In the first year the caravan depreciates by 11%, so it is only worth 89% or 0.89 of its initial value. In the next two years the caravan depreciates by a further 6%, being worth only 94% or 0.94 of its previous value.

Thus, the value of the caravan after three years can be found as follows:

$$\text{Caravan value} = £20,000 \times 0.89 \times 0.94^2 = \mathbf{£15,728.08}$$

### Question 2

Nadim bought a flat last year. The value of the flat has increased by 8% and it is now worth £94,500. Calculate how much Nadim paid for the flat.

The value of the flat has increased by 8% and is now worth £94,500. Thus,

$$108\% = £94,500$$

$$1\% = \frac{94,500}{108} = £875$$

$$100\% = £875 \times 100 = £87,500$$

Thus, Nadim paid **£87,500** for the flat.

This month's problem is taken from the 2023 National 5 Applications of Mathematics (Non-Calculator) Paper. All the very best.

### Problem

Geoffrey shared his savings between his three children, Sophie, Ed and Lucy. The money was shared in the ratio 7 : 2 : 6. Sophie received £3304. Calculate how much money Geoffrey gave his three children in total.

Peter Kahan ([peterkahan@hotmail.com](mailto:peterkahan@hotmail.com))

### 60 Years Ago

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November will mark 60 years since the assassination of the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, John F Kennedy, in Dallas, Texas, at the age of 46.



On a happier note, the film Charade was released 60 years ago on December 5<sup>th</sup> 1963. It's a delightful romp with Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn's sparkling chemistry at the centre of some perfectly orchestrated mayhem.

