**THEATRE GROUP**

The Theatre Group was one of the original groups formed when U3A was set up in Falkirk.

At our first Meeting we found that the majority of those present wanted to participate in a Group, obviously had an interest in the theatre, would like to go to the theatre regularly but had no one to go with. Discussion showed that preferences were wide but there was an eagerness to try something new to extend their interest.

Our first organised trip was to the Kings Theatre in Edinburgh for the Behind the Stage Tour. Well worth the visit as it certainly whetted the enthusiasm. Several months’ later we did the Stage Tour at the Festival Theatre, also in Edinburgh, different and with the addition of superstitions and ghost stories delivered by a retired actor with an obvious love for the place and a gift of delivery!

Up till the first lockdown we met as a group over a coffee at the Café in Torwood Garden Centre on the third Tuesday of the month at 10.30am to discuss what we have attended and to plan future visits.

We spread theatre visits all over the Central Belt – Theatre Royal. Glasgow, Cumbernauld Theatre, Barony Theatre, Bo`ness, Coach House Theatre, Alloa, MacRobert in Stirling, Falkirk Town Hall, Kings Theatre, Edinburgh, Playhouse, Edinburgh, Festival Theatre, Edinburgh.

We have sampled theatre delivered by small Dramatic Clubs, Community Groups through to touring `Big City` productions.

We have found that Cineworld locally has widened our world to Shakespeare and some London productions through their regular screenings. These screenings provide background, talks by the Director, selection and assembly of costume and sets and after-show discussion by members of the cast. An extremely useful tool.

Before the lockdowns we had our regular Torwood meetings and went on Theatre visits as and when they occurred. Of course Theatres have been closed. Television has provided “National Theatre at Home” and Lloyd Weber donated “The Show goes on” with six of his hit shows. Over the months it has been surprising just how many varied productions have been presented.

We obviously could not meet on the third Tuesdays as before, but have kept in touch with fortnightly meetings on Zoom.

For the future we will resume Theatre visits, but our monthly meeting venue may have to change.

We have kept membership to 10 people – the most convenient number, we have found, for bookings, ticket purchase, travel and monthly coffees at Torwood.