

# Lanark & District U3A

## Newsletter



Living  
Laughing  
Learning

March 2017

Issue 9

### *Spring Greetings from your Chair*

**'Whuppity Scoorie'** on 1st March is when youngsters and adults celebrate the advent of Spring by running around St Nicholas Church three times while waving home made paper balls wrapped in string - quite a sight to behold!

It is an old tradition but it is still religiously held. I did briefly imagine all our U3A members running around with the kids and then decided we should all just pray for the warmer days of Spring! Remember the date for next year.

Christmas and New Year Activities are but a distant memory - our Christmas lunch was most convivial and we were royally entertained by members of Lanark and District's Choral Union, many thanks to them and also their pianist Mary Perryman.



January is the month to remember Rabbin Burns. At our meeting we did so with an Extravaganza of Burns entertainment headed by Jamie, our wonderful piper, a Lanark Grammar pupil ; singing, dancing and recitations were provided by his fellow pupils - the Sparkling Diamonds who were terrific. Rosemary Train, Christine O'Neill and Stewart Houston ensured that the adults entertained us too. My thanks must go to everyone who contributed to the success of the afternoon.

In February Lorna Seath, local Physiotherapist at Beechtree Clinic, demonstrated positioning and exercises to assist us in growing older more easily if not, gracefully! Unfortunately aches and pains appear from nowhere after a certain age. I am sure that we will all follow Lorna's advice. Well done to Lorna who was firm but sympathetic in her presentation delivered with humour as well as expertise. I hope you are keeping up with the exercises - remember your posture when sitting!

In March we look forward to hearing about local place names and their meanings. Peter Drummond is our expert in this field and I am sure that we will learn about a few gems from Peter.

Our many groups continue to meet with regularity allowing us to socialise while we learn or keep fit. Please check the board and your emails to ensure that you are up to date with our busy schedule. Support your Group Leaders as much as you can

New Groups can always be started. It could be YOU who starts the next one , please think about it and contact me if you want to discuss further

I would ask that you might consider joining our Committee for a year or two, we always need new blood and it is not too onerous.

Our U3A is successful and is dependant on us all to maintain and grow. My thanks to all who volunteer in any way and I wish everyone A Happy Springtime and successful Easter Bonnet Parades!

*Lorraine*

## ROYAL BURGH OF LANARK DINNER 2017.

The Burgh Dinner was this year held on 7th January in the Cartland Bridge Hotel.

This year 9 members of Lanark and District U3A attended what was to be a most pleasant refined evening. We met for pre dinner drinks at 6.15pm and moved on to the dinner at 7.00pm. There is a little tale connected with that part of the evening which I am quite sure may be mentioned at one of our meetings and I am pretty sure that our lovely Chairman may well be the person who spills the beans.

The formal part of the evening began with Ex Lord Cornet Gordon Gray saying grace. It was quite delightful to find that the Loyal Toast was made by the Depute Lord Lieutenant Millar Stoddart. As most of you will know Millar has been rather ill in recent months, I feel sure that we will all wish Millar every happiness in the coming year as his recovery continues and trust that once again he returns to public life to enjoy his position as Depute Lord Lieutenant.

The Toast to the Royal Burgh of Lanark was given by Rev. Canon Andrew Sheridan of Christ Church. His presentation was very informative, entertaining and witty. He even made some comparisons between Carluke and Lanark to the delight of the audience. Being a Carlukian he couldn't resist. The Toast to the Ladies was given by David Orr a retired RAF Officer and the reply, keeping the RAF theme was given by ex RAF Medical Officer, Dr Susan Dixon G.P.



The evening then moved up a gear and we were kept laughing while we listened to the Man of Humour Peter Brown, a retired Banker. The speech was amazingly funny and ensured that at the end of the evening we left the Cartland feeling extremely happy. May I just say that the extremely good feeling was added to by the fact that the U3A table was a lovely mix of extremely friendly people. It is also quite possible that the total enjoyment of the evening was due, just a little, to some wine!

The Vote of Thanks was given by the Chairman of the Royal Burgh of Lanark Community Council Frank Gunning. May I offer my personal thanks to Loraine who yet again was responsible for arranging the evening for the U3A members to get together in a most convivial way. Thank you Loraine!

This was a most enjoyable evening and if I may make a suggestion it would be "Why don't you come along next year?"

*ELIZABETH McLACHLAN*

## Burns Extravaganza

The January general meeting was when we held our Burns Extravaganza .

The Memorial Hall was filled with laughter, music, dance and poetry presented by both Lanark Grammar School pupils and the speakers on the day.

It was a well attended, humorous and light hearted afternoon.





### Step up! - a confession

I joined U3A after a friend told me about it. I soon got to know folk and joined a couple of groups, then another couple. I wished I had more free time, to enjoy the many activities on offer. There was always something new to look forward to.

It was only after a year or so, that it struck me - all these activities I was enjoying were being provided by the efforts of my fellow members, I was contributing my £15 a year, and thinking I was doing my bit, but I was actually enjoying the fruits of many other folks' labours.

Like most folk, I'm not one for putting myself forward. But when somebody asked me to help organise an event, I said yes. And when somebody else asked me to join the Committee, I said yes to that too.

Committee members don't stay in the job forever – only for three years. And it's positively unhealthy for an activity group to have the same group leader for years and years. So if somebody asks you if you'd consider stepping up to take some responsibility, say yes if you can. Even better, you could volunteer before you are asked! If they haven't asked you, it's not because they don't think you're up to it – it's that they're fed up of being knocked back, or they don't want to make *you* feel bad about saying no.

It's not for life, and you'll be giving something back in return for all the enjoyment, friendship and support you've had (and will have in the future) from U3A. Next time you see an opportunity, consider yourself for the job. Step up!

### **Group News**

#### ***Interested in joining?***

#### **Cooking classes**

If you'd like to come along and join a cooking class and learn different cooking ideas then this might just be the class for you.

The class takes place @ 159 Hyndford Rd and will run every second Thursday afternoon from 2 pm.

Please bring an apron and money to cover the cost of ingredients each week. Places will be on a first come first served basis and it will be a block of 6.

My phone no is 01555 665487 if you wish to contact me regarding places.  
*Mary Berkley*

#### **Curling in the YMCA**

**This has been stopped due to lack of interest.**

**CROQUET**, hopefully will start again in May, when the weather is a little warmer and ground drier.

Old and new members will be welcome, help will be given with this not too strenuous, if competitive game!

All going well, this will again be at the Cartland Bridge Hotel. However, more information will be given at the April meeting of the U3A.

Further information available from Lesley Gair.

*Lesley Gair*

#### **Walking Group**

In January, some of us walked round Lanark Loch (one mile) and others walked down to Robiesland and back up by the Beeches. Lunch was at the Inn on the Loch.

February saw us at Chatelherault, for either the five mile Green Bridge walk, or a 90-minute stroll to see the old oaks.

Our March walks went from Crossford, with a choice of a forty minute stroll along the Clyde Walkway and back, or a six mile climb up to Braidwood and back down Fiddler's Gill.

Thanks to Christine, Jane, Robin, and John for leading walks.

*Anne Armstrong*





## Poetry Reading Group — New Blood Wanted

No, not the Vampires group, the Poetry Reading Group are looking for new members.

We meet on a Thursday, once a month.

We read and analyse the latest poetry, revisit familiar favourites and tear them to bits.

Do you find yourself on a Sunday afternoon listening to Roger McGough's poetry programme?

Does great poetry speak to you?

Do you ever catch yourself reading poetry out loud when there's nobody else there?

Do you enjoy being read to?

The Poetry Reading Group do all the above. We also meet and read our favourite poems to each other.

What do we read? Any poems we personally have enjoyed reading, and want to share.

We enjoy being introduced to the work of poets we didn't know.

We occasionally visit the poetry readings of famous people - Carol Ann Duffy, Jackie Kay at Biggar last year.

If interested, contact Anne Armstrong [a4rmstrong@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:a4rmstrong@yahoo.co.uk)

## Reading Poetry Poetry Reading

in your small hands  
you hold this poem  
you become  
a wizard  
a horse  
a girl  
on a windy day  
in an ancient land  
walking each word  
listening  
you sink slowly  
out of yourself  
you are  
breathlessly  
called gratefully  
into a world  
one poet dreamed

## SOCIAL CYCLING GROUP

Since November the cycling group has been on its winter break, following a very successful season of cycling: due to some pleasant autumn weather we continued to enjoy two rides a month up to the end of October

Now we are about to begin our 2017 season of cycling. We have agreed to hold our rides on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month (March to October), starting at 1.30 pm. We meet at different locations for suitable routes of between 10-15 miles – we are doing a couple of shorter distances for the start of the season

Last year we had up to 15 people on our contact list, with usually 5 or 6 taking part in each ride.

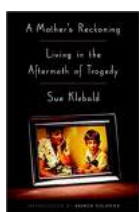
The rides are at an easy pace, very relaxed, with rest stops along the way and a chat over tea/coffee usually at the end.

Hopefully a few more may join us this year: all you need is a road-worthy bike and basic ability to cycle.

We usually manage to find very quiet roads and tracks in pleasant countryside. If interested or would like to know more about the group you can email me on: [jlfoster40@btinternet.com](mailto:jlfoster40@btinternet.com)

John Foster

## Book Group



In January, the Group read and discussed "**A Mother's Reckoning**" by Sue Klebold.

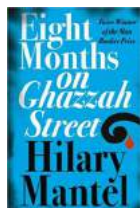
It was a rather harrowing read as she was the mother of Dylan Klebold, one of the two Columbine school killers. As a mother who called her son her "golden boy" she struggles to come to terms with this monster she is forced to face.

In February, the Group read and discussed

"**Eight Months on Ghazzah Street**" by Hilary Mantel.

This book left us all feeling relieved that we live in a democratic country where women have rights and independence.

*Rosemary Train*



## Humour Group

We continue to meet in Clydesdale Inn on the last Tuesday of the month at 10.15am. ( unless otherwise advised ) Group members take it in turn to bring along Dvd of his/her choice and some nibbles and we all buy tea/ coffee

Recently we watched Don't Rock the Boat very funny spin on Radio Caroline and its demise, we listened to one of Pam Ayres' Cds which was amusing - her anecdotes reveal her observations which are honest and very witty. Next we will watch Angel's Share recommended as a film to lift the spirits and make us chortle.

Come along and join us

" When you're smiling, the whole world smiles with you! "

Contact Loraine 07964041374/ 01555 662809

## New Study of Obesity Looks for Larger Test Group Weren't they fat enough?

## GARDENING GROUP

The last three months have been fairly quiet as expected in the winter.

We had our Christmas Lunch on 10th January and it was not Christmas fare but a good time was had by all.

The quiz which we had at the February Meeting was won by Elspeth Yuill. It caused a mixture of hilarity, a feeling of inadequacy in the area of naming flowers and, of course, back to our school days, trying to see what our neighbour was putting down for certain questions.

This was particularly noticeable with two ladies who shall remain nameless!!!

As usual we spend part of each Meeting trying to sort out each other's gardening problems and sharing their successes.

I, as Group Leader, would like to make an appeal to my members. Since taking on more responsibilities as Vice Chairman I am finding that I am spending rather too much of my time with my various responsibilities. My plea is that if any of my Gardening Group colleagues feel you could help by shadowing me for a few months with a view to taking over the Group please do speak to me about it. After three and a half years at the helm I feel it is time to direct my efforts in other directions.

*Nelson Waters*

THE LUNCH GROUP IS AS STRONG AS EVER.

WE JOINED THE REST OF THE MEMBERS AT OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT NEW LANARK HOTEL AND ALL HAD A LOVELY TIME AND THE ENTERTAINMENT WAS REALLY GOOD

IN JANUARY WE AGAIN HAD NEARLY 30 AT THE RIVERSIDE, ROSEBANK, THE MEAL WAS REALLY LOVELY AND SINCE IT WAS BURNS DAY THE OWNER HAD MADE ALL OF US A LOVELY LITTLE TUBE OF SWEETS WITH A WRAPPER ROUND WITH LANARK & DISTRICT U3A BURNS DAY LUNCH 2017 AND A PICTURE OF BURNS ON IT. EVERYONE WAS REALLY THRILLED THAT HE HAD WENT TO THAT TROUBLE.

BEFORE WE KNEW IT FEBRUARY HAD ARRIVED SO IT WAS TIME TO PUT THE THINKING CAPS ON AGAIN. WE DECIDED TO GO TO THE RADSTONE HOTEL LARKHALL WHERE WE HAD ANOTHER LOVELY LUNCH, BUT NO FREEBEES THIS TIME

MARCH WE DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT SO WE ARE GOING TO AN INDIAN BUFFET IT IS CHEAP AND CHEERFUL BUT I DON'T KNOW AT THIS MOMENT HOW MANY WILL LIKE TO GO. WILL LET YOU KNOW NEXT TIME.

*Janette Rankin*

## Pub Lunch and Discussion Group

The Pub Lunch and Discussion (PLAD) Group enjoyed healthy turnouts (15 – 20 is the norm) at the regular (1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month) meet ups for food and talk at the Crown Inn, Hope Street, Lanark (1230 – 1400hrs). We spend the last hour discussing and debating the topic of the day.

At the December meeting, the seasonal discussion was centered on the tendency for the commercial aspects of Christmas to be celebrated earlier each year by retail and advertising interests.

In January, we tackled the messy problem of litter, how we felt about it and what should be done (if anything) to tackle the problem and the miscreants.

February saw us, in the wake of the recent Presidential inauguration and the machinations of the Brexit process, debating how events might unfold in 2017, as a consequence of both, on both sides of the Atlantic.

Coming up in March are "The Honours System" and, in April, "My Heroes and Villains".

The Crown has proved to be an excellent venue for our discussions and the £4 lunch of soup, rolls, coffee and biscuits is great value. If you can spare a couple of hours once a month, in convivial company, and enjoy lively discussion, please contact me as below and you will be made most welcome.

Ken Liddell

Tel : 01555 663822 OR 07415 904081



## Badminton—Essential Information

Group Leader - Martin Yuill

Come along and join in—No experience necessary

**Email** - martin.yuill@btinternet.com

**When** - Weekly - Thursday 10:00am - 12:00

School term time only

**Where** - YMCA Hall Bloomgate Lanark

**Cost** - £3 per session

## Circle Dancing

The Circle Dancing group, which began last Autumn, is now well-established and thriving. Since January, attendance has averaged at around twelve per session although, overall, more than twenty members are on the roll. The group is ably led by Jo Freeman, one of only a handful of Circle Dancing teachers in Scotland. Jo is passionate about Circle Dancing and is thrilled to have the opportunity to lead this new U3A group, which meets in the Memorial Hall on the second and fourth Friday of each month from 10.30am until 12.00pm.

Circle Dancing involves gentle exercise of the body & mind as members learn simple step sequences to a variety of most enjoyable music from around the world. Jo constantly reminds us that there are no mistakes, just variations, so this genre is totally inclusive of all abilities. It has to be said that due to the variations, which often occur, there is frequent hilarity & lots of fun. However, when a dance goes really well, there is no better feeling when one realises they've totally cracked it!

If you are wondering if this group might suit you, then do come along to a session and try it out.

We would be delighted to welcome you to this relaxed, friendly and enthusiastic group and due to the interactive nature of the dancing, it's a great way to get to know fellow U3A members!

*Margaret Dunlop (Group Leader)*

## Theatre

Rosemary's critique of the play

### "Gone but not Forgotten"

On the last night of February, a group of U3A members attended the play, 'Gone but not Forgotten' in the Memorial Hall, including Michelle McManus as one of the cast.

It was hilarious, peppered with lots of droll Scottish humour and occasional lapses into maudlin' song as the cast grew more inebriated, mourning the death of their father.

The priest grew more indiscreet, revealing all the neighbours' Confessional secrets as he freely imbibed the whisky.

It was a super enactment, full of side-splitting jokes and wonderful acting!

" What an amazing evening we had listening to the **Johnny Cash Tribute Band**. An emotional rollercoaster of all the old hits from the 50s right up to 2002!

A very professional and accurate account of the' man in black's career - people dancing in the aisles - wonderful! "

*Patricia Kellas*



*All 350 members in the audience were treated to a wonderful and prolific selection of music capturing the different expressions of Scottish regional fiddle music from Orkney, Shetland, Inverness and Nairn to the Borders and the west coast.*

*The foot tapping (and stomping!) hand clapping and head nodding were evident throughout the hall. It was noisy and fun. Even the tune titles such as Freya's Fancy, The Ox, The Pig and The Cambridge Catastrophe raised a smile.*

*A bit of history and a few tongue-in-cheek tales and jokes added to the overall enjoyment. What had started out 17 years ago as a one-off project has developed into a much respected band for all music lovers with or without much knowledge of fiddle music.*

*It was a truly memorable evening.*

*Eileen Gibson*

## Red Tape Holds Up Bridges.

You mean there's something  
stronger than duct tape?



Hopefully  
NOT  
this one.



## The University of the Third Age—truly a Worldwide Organisation



### U3A Exchange Group to Mauritius February 2017

In February I was lucky enough to be part of the self-funded U3A UK exchange group to Mauritius. The U3A Mauritius has only been established for a couple of years and the founder was keen to learn more about how the U3A UK works.

There were nine U3A members in the group from different parts of the UK, including one from Northern Ireland and myself from Scotland.

We were hosted by different families who made us very welcome, taking us to interesting places on the island and explaining the Mauritian culture and traditions to us. Their pride in their island was plain to see.

The main languages are Creole, French and English. Most of the people that we met spoke English fluently so it did not matter if our French was a bit rusty!

We attended the opening of new U3As, a choir group, an ICT group and various other U3A functions. The leaders of our group did a good job with their presentations about the UK U3A and how it functions which the exchange group also found interesting.

Eight of us opted to stay for a second week which gave us the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful beaches and the kindness and hospitality of the Mauritians. It was a great experience and I would certainly recommend Mauritius for a holiday. We only hope that we can make the experience as memorable for the Mauritians who come to the UK next year for the return visit.

*Francine Ruane*

#### General Meetings for the rest of the 2016 / 17 year

##### Wednesday, April 19th

Speaker: Ian Thomson  
Subject: 'VIP and Royal Security'

##### Wednesday, May 17th

##### Annual General Meeting

Speaker: Phoebe Weller  
Subject: 'The Roving Fromagiere'

#### **In the 1950s and 60s, kids had....**

No house phone  
Black and white telly  
Only three channels on that telly  
Second-hand clothes  
No money  
The slipper across your backside  
The cane across your hand  
Sunday school  
No fast food  
No family car  
No footy kit for school  
Free dinners  
Coal fires  
Coats as blankets in winter



**Did they care?  
Did they heck!!  
They got on with life and lived it to the full!**

British Life in Pictures 1940 to 1980

Contributions from anyone who has something to say, be it about the U3A as a whole, one of the groups or as an individual are welcome. Please send items for inclusion, by email, to Nelson Waters at [nelsonwaters@btinternet.com](mailto:nelsonwaters@btinternet.com)

**Thanks to everyone who contributed.**