Chair’s report

Another busy year for our U3A which has continued to grow from strength to strength welcoming new members and further establishing itself in the local and wider community.

As I have now completed my 2 year term of office as Chairperson I can take some time to reflect and relax (maybe). My retirement began almost 8 years ago just about the same time as our U3A was in its fledgling process. It was the perfect "Age" to join a new association and the rest as they say is history!

New friendships were forged and opportunities to learn via group participation were taken.

Our motto genuinely rings true ‘Live, Learn, Laugh’ so continue to share this with your friends and invite them to join and experience this 3rd Age.

In 2017 - 2018 our committee have worked hard to ensure an excellent syllabus, Group Leaders have ensured that groups run smoothly and last but not least our Members keep the cogs in the wheel going round!

Good luck to the new committee and I look forward to seeing you all in September

"Thank you for the U3A and all you’ve given"

Loraine

On behalf of Lanark and District U3A I would like to thank Loraine for her two years as Chairperson. Not only the last two years but for her entire time on the Committee which amounts to seven years. During her time as Chairperson she has worked tirelessly for the good of our organisation. She has done a lot to promote the U3A to the people of South Lanarkshire and beyond. Another of her pet aims was to help to increase the number of Interest Groups which now stands at just under 30. Her presence on the Committee will be missed but as she herself says ‘it is time to relax’

Nelson Waters

2018 / 2019 — General Meeting information

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Thanks to Marian Price for putting the program together.
Lesley Gair, a founder member, told members that she was organising a day outing to the Isle of Arran on 9 May 2018 for Lanark & District’s Summer Day Out. “Great”, said the members and 53 of them hastily signed up for the outing. The bus was full.

Well, to say that our outing turned out to be a ‘Fawlty Towers’ Day was a script that couldn’t have been written.

From the outset, Lesley received communications from Cal-Mac that the ferry may not be operating due to a faulty part, on one of the ferries, thereby resulting in disruption to sailings. Cal-Mac informed Lesley that she would not know if the boat was sailing until midnight prior to the outing. “You’re not on” replied our Party Organiser – we need to know we are sailing or else we need to re-think where we are going. This resulted in Lesley having to compile a Plan 2 in case the ferry did not operate. However, Lesley received word that the ferry was sailing so she heaved a huge sigh of relief – what is that saying “Don’t count your chickens before they hatch”?

Had the summer weather arrived by 9 May? Unfortunately, not! However, our members are not daunted by poor weather forecasts so off we sailed to Arran. We arrived at Ardrossan Harbour early enough to perhaps catch the earlier ferry – well, not according to the ‘Jobs-worth’ Cal-Mac worker operating the entrance barrier. “You’re booked for the 11 am ferry” she pointed out.....OK, we’ll go and have a coffee in the lounge and wait.
After coffee, we then got onto the boat. Rosemary Train (former Chairperson) grabbed a table for Pat, myself, Rona and Anne, “we should get a good view of the crossing while sitting here”, said Rosemary. Well, we all laughed because we were situated beside the red funnel and that is all we saw – the wine went down a treat though.

By the time we got to Arran, the rain had started and our first port of call was the Heritage Museum. This was very interesting.

Isn’t the Scottish summer lovely?

It was while we were at the Heritage Museum we heard that a mains water pipe had burst in Brodick so some places were without water.

Really? – it was raining!!

The next port of call was to visit Arran Aromatics, Arran Cheeses and have lunch in Janie’s Café.

Lesley had organised Soup/Sandwiches for everyone but, unfortunately, Janie had gone on holiday and her staff did their best to supply our lunch but this was a chaotic experience.

The next item on the itinerary was to visit The Castle Gardens but, by this time, the heavens had opened and most members did not fancy this (don’t blame them).....so, a change of plan was initiated. For those who wanted to go shopping, we then went back to Brodick to drop those members off. The rest of us stayed on the bus and the Driver was only too pleased to drive around the top of the island to show us the coastline and the scenic route Arran offered. We did see seals and other wildlife which was very pleasing.

Meanwhile, the shoppers in Brodick, found that the shops were only open for a short while (remember that mains water burst?).....well, Rona and Anne said they all had a laugh and ended up in the one of the hotels ordering prosecco and chips! That’s the way to do it, ladies.

Lanark & District U3A certainly boosted the local economy – we carried home souvenirs, cheeses and Arran Aromatics produce.

The surprise came at the end when we all received a £6 rebate. So, not a bad day out for £19. Well done, Lesley.

Written by Anne Hood
Photographs by Derek Chalmers
Lanark & District U3A members enjoy a day out with a difference.

Animers seems to come round faster every year and this year was no exception. This was our third year taking part in the procession and we are getting more ambitious each time. Year one, we walked round carrying placards with information about the U3A groups, last year we all sat on a lorry decorated very simply A Day at the Seaside. This year it was Mary Poppins, with many carefully produced drawings of all the characters from the show and some very beautiful costumes.

We had a dedicated group of helpers dressing the lorry, getting up early and meeting at Loraine’s at 8.30 in the morning. Our singing and dancing encouraged the crowd to join with us and throwing sweets to the children went down very well.

(Even better than A Spoonful of Sugar!)

After the procession, we all went to Lanark Golf Club to enjoy a lovely lunch prepared by Paul who never lets us down.

Next year? No we’re not doing it again! But what about Grease?
We’ve got a readymade Sandra and possibly a John Travolta.
How about the car? Well.........Maybe!
GROUP REPORTS

The newsletter has reports about different groups and what they have been doing lately.

These are from the Singing group, Sugar Craft, Ukulele, Walking group, Circle Dancing, Scrabble, Gardening, Badminton, Humour, Pub Lunch and Discussion, Croquet, Theatre, Photography and the Poetry groups.

Thank you to all for your input.

Singing group

The Singing Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month from 3pm until 4.15pm in the Jerviswood Hall, at Lanark Memorial Hall. The group will continue over the Summer months with the exception of July when Rebecca our musical leader is on holiday in America.

Our group is a relaxed singing group for fun and enjoyment and new members would be most welcome to come and join us!

We recently performed at the U3A Annual General Meeting on the 15th May 2018.
The Group sang 'Lean on me' and 'On Top of the World'.

We all enjoyed our performance led by our musical leader Rebecca Keay. We received some positive feedback from U3A members, after our performance which was most encouraging.

We are relaxing over the Summer months singing Beatles songs, You raise me up and I'd like to Teach the World to Sing.

We have no plans to perform again at present but hopefully nearer the end of the year we may sing again for our U3A members!
This new group started on Monday 5th February with a small number of members and a hope of more to come. They meet weekly on Monday mornings at Doreen's house in Law.

During the first couple of weeks, the members worked with minimal tools and crafted the shapes with their hands, solely using sugarpaste. They have now acquired enough tools for everyone to use so petals etc. can be cut in order to make flowers. During the period up to Easter, the members made Easter novelties with Cadbury's eggs. More recently members have sculpted magnificent roses. The students have had many laughs with the way their attempts have turned out, not always looking like they should, but ready to be admired, nevertheless.

It is hoped this group will go from strength to strength as the members are having great fun and the initiative is giving their teacher, Doreen, a new lease of life in being able to help others with her passion for sugar crafting.

Doreen is ready to take on some new recruits so why not give some time to learning this

Contact details: Telephone—01555 750295  Email—doreen.v.dixon@gmail.com

Group Leader
Doreen Dixon
Walking group

We pride ourselves on walking every month, whatever the weather. This year has been a challenge.

In March even the path round Lanark Loch was too treacherous. A circuit of the racecourse in snow (below) heated us up.

In April only three courageous souls – Robin, Jean, and Derek – braved the Beast from the East for a short trek in the arctic wastes of Chatelherault.

May brought the spring, and saw us crossing the Clyde twice on a circuit from Garrion to Cambusnethan Priory, through farmland and bluebell woods. The short walkers meandered instead through Mauldslie with three dogs.

In June we will walk at the Kerse, Lesmahagow, with lunch at the Truck Stop.

Our walks are local, short, and social – we enjoy the company, and usually have lunch together afterwards.

To receive monthly invitations to walk, email a4rmstrong@yahoo.co.uk.

We walk on the first Wednesday of the month.

UKULELE GROUP

The ukulele group is still going strong, and our twice monthly tutorials have carried on even though our tutor Ian was away on holiday. We still arranged to meet up and have our own practice sessions.

We also managed a joint session with the Biggar U3A ukulele group which was a very good meeting with our neighbours. Although they are more advanced than us we tried our best to keep up and certainly did not look like we were out of place.

Who knows we might even be ready to play out a tune for Christmas.

Emma Dawson

This photo was taken at our tutor’s house when we joined together with Biggar U3A Group
Circle Dancing

The Circle Dancing group has just completed its second year and since starting with a modest attendance of around eight members, it now has an average attendance of sixteen members although there can be up to twenty-four in attendance. It is growing in popularity because those who come along to try it out, find that it is gentle, enjoyable exercise for both body and mind. The dances are set to music from around the world and the nature of the music contributes immensely to everyone’s enjoyment.

Occasionally, if someone is unable to dance, they just come along to sit and listen to the music while the rest of us entertain them with our antics!

Our teacher, Jo, is passionate about Circle Dancing and chooses dances each week based on the current season, celebration, or national commemorative day eg: we learned a feisty dance in remembrance of the Suffragette movement, which was great fun!

Recently some of the group took part in showcasing Circle Dancing at Lanark’s Flowerfest in Castlebank Park. This was most successful, with Jo persuading, or maybe it was more like coercing, unsuspecting members of the public to join in the dances.

In order that we would not be deprived of the lovely sunshine & warmth, of late, we held our final class of the session outdoors. The space just outside the back door of the Memorial Hall is really suitable for outdoor dancing and we all had a wonderful time dancing in the sun & gentle breeze. What more could anyone want, it was just perfect!

We restart classes at 10.30am on Friday 14th September and if this little report has whetted your appetite, then you can read more about Circle Dancing on our website at www.u3a-lanarkxyz

We are a fun loving, friendly bunch who do not make mistakes, only "variations" says Jo!

Do come along in September and try Circle Dancing for yourself, you won’t regret it!

Men, we desperately need you, it's called, "Circle Dancing for All."

Meanwhile, keep dancing........ throughout the summer! Margaret Dunlop
SCRABBLE (CARLUKE)

The Carluke Scrabble Group continues to be a very popular event every week of the year. In the U3A we talk about ‘Living Laughing Learning’ and we certainly do all three in abundance. The break, between the two games, for tea/coffee and CAKE, (also in abundance), enables us to have a good old blether before returning to the task of trying to win the game.

There is a great deal of friendly rivalry amongst the players but the losers are just as happy and invigorated as those who won the two games. Meeting in each other’s houses, as opposed to using a local hall, to play Scrabble adds to the camaraderie within the Group.

Nelson Waters

GARDENING GROUP REPORT

As I write this the sun is streaming down and our gardens are full of colour. We gardeners are a happy bunch (pun intended!) just now.

Highlights of the last few months have included a visit to a Garden Centre near Edinburgh where we attended a talk on both suitable planting schemes for our Scottish gardens and hints for easy-care gardening. We rushed home to plant our purchases before we forgot what we'd just learnt!

Also a visit to Clydesdale Community Initiatives in Lanark - a Social Enterprise venture where gardening is one of the activities - was impressive; volunteers are always needed to help at The Sensory Garden near the Race Course.

The rest of the summer is being taken up with visits to local gardens open under Scotland's Gardens Scheme. One, in Uddingston, is an Allotments Scheme so fruit and veg will make a change from flowers.

We are also going to see some of our Group's gardens and have an opportunity to chat; share our gardening experiences over a cup of tea and cake and, hopefully, continue to enjoy a sunny summer.

For information on our Autumn Programme, please email me at carobbins@talktalk.net

Christine Robbins

Badminton group

The Badminton group continues to meet every Thursday morning from 10 to 12 in the Lanark YMCA. We are enjoying playing in the newly redecorated hall complete with re-varnished floor. The new line markings help to solve disputes about whether a shot is in or out! Our members are enthusiastic with a range of abilities and we’re grateful to our more experienced players for their help and encouragement. We’re a friendly group and there is usually quite a bit of fun and laughter at our sessions which we then follow with a coffee. We have decided to carry on playing over the summer holidays.

Here are some of our members enjoying their session.

Fiona MacGregor
Pub Lunch and Discussion

The Pub Lunch and Discussion (PLAD) group wound up the year’s programme on Friday June 1st with an invitation to members to select their favourite pieces of music for discussion (and some listening!). Of course, this is a topic impossible to cover in an hour in any great detail but we tried!

Following a weather-induced cancellation in March, we resumed in April, asking and debating whether "there are now too many tourists"? This attracted a bumper turnout of over 20.

May's discussion sought views on whether members reckoned we were gradually becoming a more secular society.

After the summer break, the PLAD Group resumes on Friday 7th September, same venue (Crown Inn, Lanark) and same time (1230 for 1300 hrs) with new or potential members very welcome.

Ken Liddell

Theatre Group

We have mostly attended local Shows/ Musicals this session which has allowed easy access and opportunities to support our local restaurants

New Programme will be available soon. I will link with Memorial Hall’s and Music in Lanark's programmes to offer variety to suit all tastes.

However I already have tickets for Shine’s " Half a Sixpence " for the Saturday matinee in September

Please confirm asap if you want to attend

It would be good to have another person who might like to organise trips to see plays on a monthly basis

If you are that person, contact me and we can meet up and discuss further.

Thank you to all who attend regularly or occasionally I always enjoy your company and look forward to seeing you in August.

Loraine

Croquet

Croquet has been on the go for a few weeks now and we have enough people returning to continue with 2 courts.

The Cartland Bridge Hotel is, once again, allowing us to use the front grass for our games and it is lovely to be able to go indoors for a refreshment afterwards.

We will be very happy to include any new members who would like to join us, there is no need to know the game as help will be given, it is not a difficult game to play and gives exercise without too much effort.

We meet at the Cartland at 2pm on Sunday afternoons.

If you feel like "having a go" then contact Lesley on 01555 66 4403.

Humour Group

We continue to meet in the Clydesdale Inn on the last Tuesday of the month where we watch a Dvd selected by one of our members.

Variety is the spice of life and we always enjoy and chortle at the jokes and antics that the comedian’s performance offers - just like the Dish of the Day we like some more than others but always leave with a smile on our faces.

To finish our session we went to see Comedy - "Yes, Minister " at The Corn Exchange, Biggar, preceded by Meal at The Elphinstone Hotel. Most enjoyable and convivial evening!

First date for new session is Tuesday, 21st August (28th not being suitable ) 10.15am at the Clydesdale Inn.

New and familiar faces will always be made very welcome and remember to bring your sense of humour with you!

loraine
Photography group

The Photography Group met in February in The Jerviswood Hall at Lanark Memorial Hall for a studio shoot with studio lights and white background. This was to give the Group a chance to shoot in a studio environment. This all went well with positive feedback and good portrait shots taken.

I would like to thank Ruth Thomson for being our very patient model for the shoot

April saw our Group visiting Peebles, the weather on the day was dry but overcast but did brighten up towards the end of the shoot!

We walked along to Neidpath Castle where we took photographs, however it was obscured by trees and we then were happy to take some photographs by the banks of the river Tweed.

Finally we arrived back in Peebles where we took more photographs of the town then went for coffee!

In May the Group went to Summerlee Museum of Industrial Life in Coatbridge.

This is a collection of working tram cars and steam trains on exhibition, as well as the relics of the mining and Industrial era.

The Group took photographs of the exhibits and then went into the indoor museum which has some interesting exhibits and the all important cafe for our morning coffee!!

Then it was off to the Monklands canal to take some scenic shots there. It was an interesting and most enjoyable day.

Finally June saw the Group visiting Jupiter Artland adjacent to East Calder. Unfortunately the weather was overcast with grey skies but this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Group!! This is a very photographic place to visit with lots of artistic landscapes and sculptures. We set off into the wooded area to find random sculptures such as a giant shotgun leaning against a tree!!

Then we went to the sculptured grassland area with a pond in the centre which was great for photographs. Finally adjacent to that there was a scenic boathouse at the water which produced a lovely reflection for photographs.

The Photography Group meets on the 1st Monday of the month and will continue to run over the Summer months. I would like to thank Jane Thomson for taking on the role of Deputy Group Leader and for her support. Additionally we would like to welcome Helen McCall, a new member who recently joined U3A and then the Photography Group.

If you would like to join the Group or require further information, contact derekchalmers@hotmail.co.uk
Poetry Reading group

We love poetry.
Isn’t it great when you come across a poem that speaks to you like this one maybe, by a former American poet laureate.

Forgetfulness by Billy Collins

The name of the author is the first to go followed obediently by the title, the plot, the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel which suddenly becomes one you have never read, never even heard of,

as if, one by one, the memories you used to harbor decided to retire to the southern hemisphere of the brain, to a little fishing village where there are no phones.

Long ago you kissed the names of the nine muses goodbye and watched the quadratic equation pack its bag, and even now as you memorize the order of the planets,

something else is slipping away, a state flower perhaps, the address of an uncle, the capital of Paraguay.

Whatever it is you are struggling to remember, it is not poised on the tip of your tongue or even lurking in some obscure corner of your spleen.

It has floated away down a dark mythological river whose name begins with an L as far as you can recall well on your own way to oblivion where you will join those who have even forgotten how to swim and how to ride a bicycle.

No wonder you rise in the middle of the night to look up the date of a famous battle in a book on war. No wonder the moon in the window seems to have drifted out of a love poem that you used to know by heart.

As your newly elected Chairman I would like to say that I hope you are all having a good holiday.

Of course some of you, and that includes myself, are either leading or attending Groups but in general it’s the holiday time.

I look forward to seeing you at the first General Meeting on

Wednesday, 19th September.

Nelson Waters.

Some Light reading.

The Surgeon!

A motor mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a BMW M3 when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop.

The cardiologist was there waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage,

"Hey Doc, want to take a look at this?"

The cardiologist, a bit surprised walked over to where the mechanic was working on the BMW.

The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked,

"So Doc, look at this engine. I opened its heart, took the valves out, repaired or replaced anything damaged, and then put everything back in, and when I finished, it worked just like new.

So how is that I make £40,000 a year and you make £1.7M when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, leaned over and whispered,

"Try doing it with the engine running."

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

Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Publicity group — Nelson Waters, Irene McDougall, Jan McNulty and Jim Allan.