

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2024



COFFEE MORNING

10am Thursday 25th April, St Clements Church Hall



CONVENER'S CHAT

It's a new year for the Dingwall & District u3a committee with the AGM all done and dusted and the new committee raring to go.

Unfortunately, the first piece of news I had was that the speaker on Eden Court, for our next General Meeting in April, had gone back to Australia so I am frantically looking for a new speaker. I am hoping that Maggie's Highland will be able to come. They missed their slot in January because of the snow when we had to cancel and they did say they would like to come at a future date.

I am hoping to start a lunch/coffee group that will meet once a month at different venues around the district to try all the delicacies the Highlands has to offer along with lots of craic.

The first meeting will be after Easter at the Beauuly Priory Hotel on Monday April 15th 11am, for coffee. Please let me know if you can come so I can book the places at the hotel. At that meeting we can decide on future dates and venues.

I have been enjoying some of the National u3a on-line talks especially the one on how the various parts of the brain effect our actions and behaviour!!! I am hoping I can feed some of this into the psychology group. I have just started up the Inverness and Black Isle craft group again and we had great fun making clocks and I would be happy to pass this onto our craft group at a future date.

I hope everyone had a Happy Easter, and here is hoping the cold weather disappears.

Jenny Brogden (Convener)

Committee members

Jenny Brogden – Convener
 Jeanie Lloyd – Secretary
 Louise James – Treasurer
 Kim Miller – Membership Secretary/Vice Covener
 Marion Wyatt – Group Co-ordinator
 Fiona Mackenzie – Media Co-ordinator

Dates for your Diary

GENERAL MEETINGS
 Thursday 18th April
 Thursday 16th May

COFFEE MORNING
 Thursday 25th April

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

WALKING GROUP

Resumption of our walking group activities this year was delayed until the end of January by a combination of ice, snow and rain. However, better weather before Xmas saw us complete a full schedule of outings. In October, a circuit around a section of the river Blackwater involved crossing two historic bridges including that designed by Major Caulfeild (General Wade's successor as Highland road-builder in chief) in 1767 (see photo 1). We followed this with a scenic autumnal stroll in Strathconon up to the dam across Loch Meig, from where there were beautiful views (photo 2), and our luck with the weather continued with more autumn colour on a walk along the Caledonian Canal to Dochgarroch (photo 3). In November, we explored the River Beaully across the water from Beaufort Castle, a nineteenth century pile built on the site of medieval Dounie Castle, seat of the Frasers of Lovat, and followed this with a circuit of the woodland beyond the outskirts of Dingwall; this route was handy for a pre-Xmas lunchtime at the Highland Farm Cafe. Finally, more Xmas refreshments were on hand, thanks to Marion and Michael, at their home, after a stroll around the neighbouring countryside.

Andrew



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NEW GROUPS

BOARD GAMES

We meet in the library at 2pm on alternative Fridays. At the moment we are playing Mahjong, but other games are available if numbers warrant it.

Contact **Fiona** for more details

LUNCH/COFFEE CLUB

A chance to meet up for a chat.... You will soon receive an invitation to our first meet-up for coffee at The Priory in Beaully

Contact **Jenny** for more details

THEATRE & CINEMA GROUP

Using WhatsApp we inform other members as to any notable film, music or theatre, inviting others to meet up. So far members have been to concerts, the theatre and the cinema.

Contact **Fiona** for more details

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

HISTORY



We meet now in the Conon Hotel at 2pm on the second Thursday of the month.

We enjoy lively discussions on a variety of topics. Recently we have looked into the history of banking and fresh water supply systems.

Our next topics will include sewage (to go with the fresh water) and the development of the Highland Medical service, a forerunner of the NHS.

New members are always welcome.

CRAFT

Our Craft Group meets twice a month, on a Wednesday morning, at the home of one of our members.

Our group is small, but we always spend a couple of relaxing hours, enjoying time to indulge in our chosen craft, and enjoying each other's company. One of our members enjoys spinning, and makes lovely garments from her own spun wool, while another is very good at crochet, and is very willing to help anyone who would like to develop this skill. Anyone who is interested is very welcome to join us.

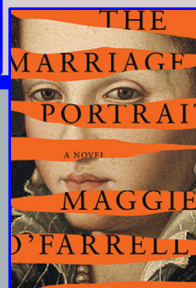
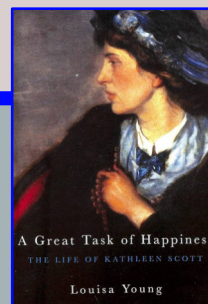
POETRY

Meeting in the Conon Hotel at 2pm on first Wednesday of the month.

We enjoy reading out poetry of our choosing and explore unusual topics such as ailments, the moon, and geese.



BOOK GROUP



Our next meeting will be on Thursday 25th April at 2pm when we will read *A Great Task of Happiness* by Louisa Young. Then on 23rd May it will be *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell... we usually continue over the summer if enough members are around.

Louise

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CALLIGRAPHY

Our small group has recently been trying out brush pens, which, it turns out, are not only used in Oriental writing, but offer an alternative to the more traditional Calligraphy methods and styles.

We are now fortunate to have occasional visits from Penny, a local Calligrapher, who has been wonderfully helpful in passing on some of her skills.

If you fancy trying it out, we can help you get started (also, you don't need to have good hand-writing to take up Calligraphy - my own is really dreadful!). We meet every fortnight on a Monday morning in the Dingwall library.

Gordon Gallacher

GERMAN

There are 7 of us. We still meet in the National Hotel at 10.30 on Thursday mornings and enjoy a coffee while we do our best to talk in German. I definitely believe we have improved over the months. It's not all talk! With Steve's knowledge of technology we were treated to some classical music. One of our members had a very special birthday on January 18th, so we booked lunch in the hotel, and brought in a cake with a candle to round off the meal.

Audrey



PLAY READING

We started the year with Twelfth Night. I think we all felt impressed with our efforts. We will now approach another session of Shakespeare with justified confidence.

Then we read Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit". It was great fun throwing ourselves into some very interesting character roles. One point of discussion was how the film ended differently from the play.

Our aim is to continue to explore a variety of plays – thriller, murder- mystery, farce, comedy, tragedy - in a comfortable and mutually supportive environment.

Susan



GENERAL MEETINGS

Our General Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 2PM in Castle Street Church Hall

All are welcome, so why don't you encourage a friend to join us? There is always free tea/coffee & biscuits!

Our next meetings:

Thursday 18th April, as mentioned in the Covenor's Chat, speaker to be confirmed.

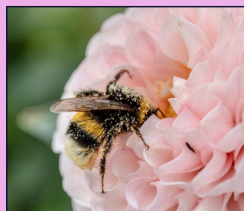
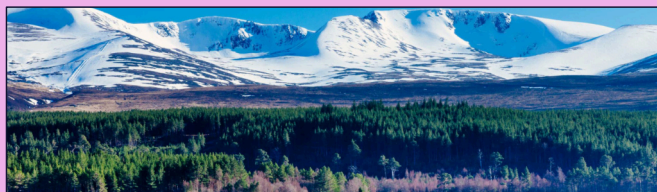
Thursday 16th May, when Anne Fraser from The Archive Centre in Inverness will speak to us.

*If you are aware of an interesting speaker, who you think the rest of us would enjoy, or would be interested in a talk on a specific subject, please contact **Fiona***

Some of our previous speakers



In February, Duncan Macdonald taught us much about the Cairngorm National Park through his job as a Cairngorm Ranger



In March, Jeanie Sutherland took us into the world of the bee, explaining how we can encourage bees to our gardens.

We were able to taste the different honey made from bees in different areas.

She also brought cake (made with honey) for us to enjoy with our cup of coffee....Delish!



CURRENT AFFAIRS

We would like to start up a discussion group focusing on current affairs. How we decide on topics will be up to the members. The idea is to encourage lively discussion so that different points of view can be aired. If there is sufficient interest we will decide on the date and venue - probably not until September. So far, a Monday afternoon is a front - runner but not yet fixed. Please get in touch with **Louise** if you would like to express an interest

The table below shows all the different groups and when they meet up.

If you would like more details of any of the groups, please contact **Marion**

GROUP	WHEN	
Art Appreciation	Tuesday p.m.	2 nd Tuesday of month
Board Games	Friday p.m.	1 st & 3 rd Friday
Book Group	Thursday p.m.	4 th Thursday of month
Calligraphy	Monday a.m.	Fortnightly
Crafts	Wednesday a.m.	Fortnightly
Creative Writing	Thursday p.m.	1 st Thursday of month
Current Affairs	TBA	
French Conversation	Tuesday p.m.	Weekly
Golf	Tuesday a.m.	Fortnightly
Geology for Beginners	Monday p.m.	4 th Monday of month
German Conversation	Thursday a.m.	Weekly
Lunch/Coffee Club	TBA	
Photography	Thursday a.m.	4 th Thursday of month
History	Thursday p.m.	2 nd Thursday of month
Play Reading	Wednesday p.m.	Fortnightly
Poetry	Wednesday p.m.	1 st Wednesday of month
Practising Art	Monday p.m.	1 st Monday of month
Psychology	Tuesday p.m.	3 rd Tuesday of month
Spanish Conervation	Tuesday p.m.	Weekly
Theatre & Cinema Group	WhatsApp group	
Walking Group	Tuesday a.m.	Fortnightly

**“Anyone who stops learning is old,
whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone
who keeps learning stays young.”**
HENRY FORD



THANKS

To Michael and Andrew for the photographs, and all the group leaders who contributed to this newsletter



CONTACTS