

# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



## COFFEE MORNING

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September, St Clements Church Hall



## CONVENOR'S CHAT

It's Summer and we have had the longest day but the weather hasn't been too summery, with only glimpses of blue skies and warmth. Let's hope it improves for the school holidays and everyone can get down to the beach and enjoy the fun.

The u3a does have a break during the summer so the latest General Meeting will be the last till September 19<sup>th</sup> when we start the new season. Planning has started for the new programme for general meetings but as I mentioned in the recent letter suggestions from you are very welcome.

Since the last newsletter the coffee / lunch group is now off the ground with visits to Priory Hotel, Beauly, Dalmore Farm shop, Alness and Highland Farm Café, Dingwall. The next one will be in September. Do join us.

National u3a Week, September 21st-29th, is an annual event to showcase the activities, learning and fun which takes place across the u3a every day. There is more information about our contribution later in this Newsletter.

On October 14<sup>th</sup> we will be taking part in the Black Isle Gathering at Fortrose Leisure Centre so come along to support the volunteers looking after the stall and have fun seeing all things Black Isle.

Have a great Summer

Jenny(Convenor)

### General Meetings

Our General Meetings are open to all, so please come along and bring a friend. We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 2PM, in the Castle Street Church Hall. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September

### Committee members

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

## The Archive Centre, Inverness

We have a visit to The Archive Centre, Wednesday July 10th at 11.

**If you haven't already told her, let Fiona know you are coming.**

We will meet at 10:50 outside the centre

# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

## PLAY READING

We joined Inspector Goole in his investigation of the Birling family members and the connection to each one of them to the recent suicide of a young woman. We followed these people as they were put on trial facing accusations of cruelty, selfishness, snobbery, self-interest. "An Inspector Calls" presented us with a very powerful message on the human condition.

The previously mentioned character traits were also explored in G B Shaw's "Pygmalion", but in a somewhat lighter tone. Our readers met the challenge of adopting Cockney accents very competently!

For our final session before the Summer break we had great fun with a Dad's Army script.

We return to our play reading sessions in September.

There is now a waiting list for Play Reading. (We need to keep the number manageable so we can accommodate everyone around the table in the group member's home!) I will provide an update if this situation changes.

*Susan Cooper*

## HISTORY

History has an engaging group looking at the evolution of certain aspects of society.

These include banking, witches and witch - finding in Scotland, fresh water supplies in Highlands and recently the development of the Highland Medical Service as a forerunner of NHS.

Personal family history stories also discussed - always welcoming new members.

## GOLF

The golf group is now in its second year with a regular, enthusiastic and improving players. Currently, the group stands at nine players.

Playing ability varies, some members play regularly on the Muir of Ord course, whilst others are improving their skills. All players benefit greatly from excellent tuition of Michael Field, a retired P.G.A. coach and U3A member. When Michael is unavailable, Mel Brydon (group leader) sets tasks to help us improve. Enjoyment is a large part of our meets.

Our thanks go to John Forbes, the Muir of Ord golf club manager for allowing us to use the club's practice ground.

We meet on alternative Tuesdays and new group members would be made very welcome, whatever their ability at golf.



# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

## WALKING GROUP

Regular fortnightly walks resumed in February despite weather issues, with a trip to Dunglass Island managing to avoid Contin river flooding and a landslide on the Brahan back road!

Spring conditions arrived for our next outing above a little visited section of the River Orrin (photo 1).

Next, an exploration of paths along and above the Reelig Glen, home to some of the tallest trees in Scotland, was followed by a new walk around Loch Moy (photo 2). Hereabouts, a little while before Culloden, about 1,500 government troops who were chasing Charles Stuart were tricked into retreating to Inverness by just a handful of Jacobite servants of Lady Mackintosh of Moy Hall.

Come April, the sun shone for a walk into the Fannich estate, with snow-capped peaks in the background (photo3), and we followed this by a new route through the forest above Loch Ussie to a viewpoint overlooking Strathconon.

Walking will continue into the summer.



# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

## GERMAN

There are 6 of us in the group. We meet in the National Hotel Dingwall on Thursdays at 10.30 and start with coffee. (With the loyalty card the 6<sup>th</sup> coffee is free and after another 4 stamps you get a free cake and coffee! )We sometimes use articles from German magazines and we also use LEARN GERMAN WITH STORIES. These have different levels of difficulty. Many are based on the character of Dino and his friends. The group includes some talented people. A musical guy has taught us a lot about different music genres through the centuries, along with lots of little musical clips. Another guy has taught us facts about German scientists.

We may make lots of mistakes but we have lots of fun!

We would welcome anyone interested in joining the group.

## CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy is a visual art that involves fine writing, usually with a broad-tip pen, or a brush. It is an ancient craft that flourished in the main from the early Medieval period. The writing styles which were developed from then are still used today, and can be found in some formal documents.

Viewing a finished piece, no matter how small, can be hugely satisfying - so why not give it a try? Poor handwriting? - Not a problem (anyway, it could hardly be worse than mine!)

Calligraphy is very different from handwriting. The latter is often rushed, as well as utilitarian - jotting down a shopping list perhaps, or a short note left on the kitchen table, etc. As such it is often not pretty. And the writing tends to be cursive, with the pen rarely being lifted from the page. On the other hand, Calligraphy is about focus and precision, the pen is lifted often, and we slow right down.

If you're interested, please contact Gordon (Group Leader) via the website.

## BOARD GAMES

This is a new group, who has met a few times now. We have 9 members, although with holidays and other commitments, we seldom have all 9 in attendance. Different games are played, depending on numbers and interests. However, we have been playing Mahjong, Scrabble, The Shakespeare Game, Solar Trader, Magnetic Chess and Mhing.

We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month in the library at 2pm.  
If you are interested in joining us, please contact the group leader (Fiona) through the Website



# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

I will be setting up an initial meeting in September, of a Current Affairs Group - we will probably meet on a Monday afternoon, but this is to be confirmed. I will send out an email in August with proposed first meeting date and venue.

If you're interested in what's going on around you in this confusing world, and want to unpick a topic with a group of open-minded folk, why not let me know via the website, and I will add your name to my list.

*Louise*

## POETRY

Poetry continues to have interesting topics such as people and identity.

We discuss poetry from around the world and any type including the blurred boundary with forms of prose.

All are welcome to our lively discussions.

## BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will continue over the summer on the fourth Thursday afternoon of the month - unless summer holidays intervene and our band of readers decide to enjoy some good weather outdoors!

The title for June was **The House of Doors by Tan Twan Eng**, set in Malaya (as it was) in the early 20th century. It's a tale that blends fact and fiction around the author Somerset Maugham's time in the far east where he learns of a strange murder case and an attempted uprising against China ...all grist to the mill for a fiction writer. Our next meeting will be on July 25<sup>th</sup> when the chosen book is **Days Without End by Sebastian Barry**. Followed by **Erebus by Michael Palin** on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Further titles will be added to my Webpage entry. New members always welcome - just come equipped with title suggestions.

## CRAFT

It is great to see our Craft Group continuing to grow, with new members bringing their crafting skills to the group, which they are willing to share with the other members. Craft making is such a wide field, and crafts of any sort are welcome. Some of us sew, some knit, some crochet, some do patch work, some dressmaking, and we have one member very knowledgeable about weaving. We each do what we enjoy, but we are open to all new ideas, and even if you don't have a particular favourite, but would like to learn, we'd love to have you join us. We spend a most convivial two hours together once a fortnight on a Wednesday morning...great chat, great company and always great fun. On our most recent meeting we even had the pleasure of a stroll around Bab's lovely garden.. in the sunshine!

*Marion*



# NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

## COFFEE/LUNCH CLUB

As Jenny has already mentioned, the Coffee/Lunch club has met a few times. It was decided to meet for coffee, with those who wanted staying on for lunch. The venue for each meet up is decided month to month. We won't be meeting now until September

## THEATRE & CINEMA GROUP

This WhatsApp group is proving quite useful. We now have 11 members, and people have met up frequently to visit musical and dramatic events. Everyone shares what's on and people can decide if they would be interested in going along. We may venture as far as Pitlochry this summer (armed with our trusty bus pass)!

## U3A WEEK

U3A WEEK 21-28 SEPTEMBER

Find out more : <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/u3a-week>

We will be having a coffee morning on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September

Our Interest Boards will be in the Library all week, so if you are in the Library at that time, please offer any help if needed

We hope to do more to encourage new members. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

Any groups fancy doing something *Al Fresco*?

## HAVE YOU SEEN OUR NEW WEBSITE?

Please check it out:

<https://dingwall.u3asite.uk>

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 check out the website.

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

\*Golf & Walking groups alternate with one another. Please contact Mel (golf) or Andrew (walking) to check when they are happening

## THANKS

To Marion, Mel, Michael & Andrew for the photographs, and all the Group Leaders who contributed to this newsletter



## CONTACTS