

# U3A Newsletter

UPPER BANN

U3A

Merry  
Christmas  
2017

December

2017

Greetings

[www.upperbannu3a.com](http://www.upperbannu3a.com)



## Painting in Portballintrae

Recently three of our members went painting in the Portballintrae area. This course was organised by Grahame Booth who is based in Belfast. He travels world wide teaching watercolour .

Based in the lovely Village Hall we got started bright and early with everyone hoping that the weather would hold up and we could get out into the fresh air. There's something very special about 'en Plein air painting'. You may ask, what's so special about painting outdoors!!! Well, provided it's not 'bucketing-down' it's being at one with nature. When you eventually choose your spot, after traipsing for miles, or maybe not, you settle down and finally get those pencils and brushes out.

Now, I call that heaven!! It's a 'so glad to be alive' moment and indeed we had many of those while in Portballintrae. Grahame has a natural instinct for painting and he is a very attentive teacher. No matter how bad you think your painting is he will always look for the positive aspects.

Roll on many more days painting in our glorious countryside (Report and photographs supplied by Anne McMinn, convenor)



# UPPER BANN U3A

*DECEMBER 2017*

*[www.upperbannu3a.com](http://www.upperbannu3a.com)*

# Nature Corner

**WOW** (Report and photos - Pat Flowerday)

**WoW** - this is what an extraordinary nature reserve in the heart of the Belfast Harbour Estate is called. As you enter the building, your first reaction in WOW. Window on Wildlife is its full name. A lovely heated room with full window frontage overlooks a freshwater lake with a wealth of wildlife arrayed in front of you. What makes it extraordinary is its setting. Ferries and container ships ply constantly just beyond the boundary and against the backdrop of the Belfast Hills.

Some one hundred species of wildlife are present throughout the year. The best time to visit is when the tide in Belfast Lough is rising as this 'pushes' the birds onto the reserve where they can be seen, at very close range, from the comfort of seats furnished with telescopes and binoculars and an RSPB volunteer to help with identification.

An elite foursome visited recently and were treated to excellent views of Black-tailed Godwits, Shelducks, Shovellers, Teal, Mallard, Lapwing, Buzzard and hard-working Konik ponies. What a treat. Despite the leisurely morning, lunch beckoned and where better to go than nearby Ikea and delicious Swedish meat balls!

## MURMURINGS IN BELFAST 2017

(Report and photo by Julius Caesar)

What an enjoyable early evening we had going down to Belfast on the train, and across to Albert Bridge to see the fantastic starling murmuration.

It was a wonderful sight observing them gradually collect together and fly around for about half an hour before they suddenly dropped and swooped down to their resting places "underneath the arches" of the bridge.

Our arrival was timed perfectly to enable us all to witness this artistry in the air, and we thank Pat for once again organising another trip to be remembered.







# The Board Game Group has fun on Thursday mornings

*Come along to Portadown Golf Club where there is a welcome on the mat.  
For further information contact [jeanmmillar@btinternet.com](mailto:jeanmmillar@btinternet.com)*



# CYCLING - A VERY POPULAR ACTIVITY

We had a great cycle out towards Maghery on Tuesday 7th November. Cycling is getting very popular, thirteen members in today's group. Another magical mystery tour ably led by Mike Taggart. We had some beautiful sunshine and some lovely views of Lough Neagh, returning via the excellent new Apple Patch restaurant at Scotch Street. About 27 miles/43 km so a good workout with one or two moderate hills!

(Report and photos Paul Burrows)



Craigavon & Banbridge Volunteer Bureau

12 November 2015 - €

Craigavon Area Talking Newspaper Association (CATNA)

Are looking for volunteers to edit the weekly newspapers ready for the recording teams.

Teams (usually 4 people) collect two copies of the Portadown Times and Lurgan Mail from a local newsagent and then cut out all the articles, edit them and put them in labelled baskets ready for the recording teams.

The papers are usually ready about 2pm on a Thursday and teams arrange a time to meet with the editing completed by 6.30pm ready for the recording teams.

Most teams work in a 4 week rota however a few come along every other week.

The teams are based in Portadown and use a room on the first floor of a building with no lift.

Full training is given and support is available.

Further info Brian @ 02838342741



## PORTADOWN ROTARY QUIZ

The Rotary Quiz will be on Friday 2 February 2018 Portadown Golf Club. Quiz Master will be Mansell Bleakley (sometimes of the Misfits Team).

Please put the date in your diary.

Teams of any size are welcome. Entrance is £5 per person.

Another opportunity to socialise and enjoy fellowship is to join some Club members or bring your friends for a meal before the Quiz say 6 to 6.30pm would allow sufficient time. This can be arranged via Portadown Golf Club nearer the time.



# VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

Volunteer for Home-Start  
and make a difference to  
a family in your community

...your questions answered

## What is Home-Start?

Home-Start is a national charity available in hundreds of local communities. We recruit and train volunteers to help families with young children. Our volunteers, who know about being a parent, support other parents by visiting them in their own homes for a couple of hours each week. We also run support groups and hold social events for families.

## What kind of families would I be helping?

All kinds of families can find it hard to cope for all sorts of reasons, maybe because of the illness or disability of a child or because of a parent's post-natal illness, bereavement or loneliness. At Home-Start we support any parent with at least one child under five who asks for our help. Our supported families, like our volunteers, come from all walks of life.

## Can my support and friendship really make a difference?

Yes. All parents know that those early years before school are vital in a child's life and at Home-Start we believe parents have the key role in creating a secure childhood for their children. It's just that sometimes they need a bit of help... **your** help.



## As a volunteer what would I actually do?

Usually you visit a family in their own home, once a week for a couple of hours. How you help is really down to the family. Volunteers support parents as they learn to cope, improve their confidence and build better lives for their children. Simple things make a big difference: listening, getting out of the house, or helping sort a problem a parent can't face alone.

## Do I need any qualifications to be a volunteer?

The only real 'qualification' is experience of bringing up children. Friendliness and a caring attitude are essential as well as an understanding of the pressures of parenting. We value people who don't judge others; people who will respect the fact that they have been invited into a family's home; people who will treat a mother or father as an equal.

## Do volunteers get any training?

Yes. The recruitment, induction, training and support of all our volunteers is really important. You will be supported during your training and throughout your contact with families. Home-Start's highly rated Preparation Course is also accredited by CERTA. If your Home-Start offers this accreditation you will be able to gain credits and get formal recognition of your training.

## What would I get out of volunteering for Home-Start?

Knowing you have helped; a boost to your self-esteem and confidence; even a foot on the ladder towards a job. See what Philippa says in her story...

## Can I help without visiting families?

Yes. Local Home-Starts also need volunteers to help run family groups and social activities and to help raise funds. They also need volunteer trustees to help manage their work.



Philippa, a mother of three and a Home-Start volunteer...

“ Home-Start appealed to me because it was a charity devoted to the family. I felt I had a great deal of experience in this and therefore something to offer.

When I met my first family I immediately wanted to help. Although I was asked to give practical help, it soon became apparent that the mother needed emotional support as well. It took some months for her to talk about this, and it really felt like a breakthrough.

The most obvious reward is the sense of helping people. Being a volunteer can occasionally be emotionally draining, but there are also poignant moments: for example when a child in your Home-Start family tells you he loves you, or the mother says she doesn't know how she would manage without you, it feels wonderful.

As a Home-Start volunteer I never feel isolated. I am part of a team and know that if I encounter any difficulties I can contact my Home-Start organiser at any time for support. I have found being a volunteer for Home-Start an extremely positive experience.

WHEN A CHILD TELLS YOU HE LOVES YOU... IT FEELS WONDERFUL

Read more volunteer stories:  
[www.home-start.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.home-start.org.uk/volunteer)

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH REMINDER

The annual Christmas Lunch will take place in Portadown Golf Club on Wednesday, 6th December at 12.30. Menu choices and payment are required before Friday 24th November.

Please select a starter, a main course and a sweet. Put your choices, along with your cheque in an envelope with your name on the front. Cheques should be made payable to Upper Bann U3A.

Envelopes can be given to Norma Galway or Ruth McKinley at Bridge on Friday mornings. Alternatively post to Norma Galway, 11a Brompton Park, Derryhale, Craigavon BT62 3SP.

Looking forward to a lovely lunch with good company and a lot of craic. Wear your dancing shoes for some fun after the lunch.

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH MENU

Winter vegetable/barley broth  
Chicken tempura/sweet chilli sauce  
Melon and pineapple/ginger syrup

Roast turkey and Ham, with stuffing  
Slow roasted topside of beef  
Grilled atlantic salmon/provencale sauce  
Roast vegetable pasta, tomatoe/basil sauce

**All served with creamy mash, roast potatoes and roasted vegetables.**

Malteaser cheesecake and fresh cream  
Christmas pudding, custard/fresh cream  
Hot chocolate fudge cake, ice cream and raspberry sauce

**Choose one from each section**



# The Strident Strollers - An Update



## BONSAI GROUP

Plans are underway to start a bonsai group. The first meeting will take place the second week in January in The Hub Craigavon. Details of day and time to follow.

If you have not yet indicated your interest but would like to join please forward your name to [fmckeown@ionology.com](mailto:fmckeown@ionology.com)



## THE STROLLERS UPDATE!

The Strident Strollers enjoyed a variety of venues since the last write-up. The end of October saw us in the ever-popular Lurgan Park, with coffee in Brownlow House, where the manager himself came to talk to us (I don't think we'd been reported for rowdiness, though Diana was with us that day and we're not renowned for being sedate!)

Craigavon Lakes was our first November stroll followed by Oxford Island, where our usual good weather turned on us. Being well prepared, we carried on despite the 'soft' rain. The lovely Clare Glen was our next destination. Our final walk on 28 November is the Scarva towpath, which we have timed in order to support the Christmas Fayre at Bullers afterwards.

