

NEWSLETTER UPPER BANN U3A

APRIL 2018



The spring has sprung or has it?

Spring 2018 in the Northern Hemisphere began on Tuesday - 20th March and ends on Thursday - 21st June. All dates are in United Kingdom Time.

BRIDGE CLUB

The Friday morning Bridge Club, held in Portadown Golf Club, continues to attract large numbers with approximately 50 members attending each week. Tom, who has the patience of Job, runs two groups - beginners and improvers. Lessons begin at 9.30 am. The starting time 10.00 am when there is no lesson.

A big thanks to Tom for all of his hard work and to Gordon, the convenor of the Group, who assists Tom in ensuring everything runs according to plan.

Lessons will reconvene after the Easter break. In the meantime don't forget to study your bridge notes as you munch on your chocolate eggs.



is



A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

I have been Chairman for two years and will resign at the next AGM on May 14th. It is time now for new blood and fresh eyes. I have really enjoyed myself over the last two years, met lots of new people and have learnt a lot. The enjoyment was largely due to the fact that behind me there is a highly efficient Treasurer, Secretary, Vice Chairman and Committee who do most of the work. They are supported by a group of highly conscientious and dependable convenors without whom there would be no U3A.

Over the last two years several changes have taken place. Three specific changes which affect us all are;

1. Membership is now £10 due in March of each year.
2. Many events have moved from Lurgan Town Hall to Craigavon Hub. This is largely due to better parking facilities at the Hub.
3. New activities have been introduced. A six week Spanish course has taken place, Yoga sessions increased to 2 sessions due to popular demand, a bonsai group is now formed, ballroom dancing has restarted (Friday at the Golf Club), board games and maths also at the Golf Club. Bridge continues to expand with now over sixty members. There are classes for both beginners and improvers every Friday at the Golf Club.

Our membership is currently at 275. We rely on new members to come forward and share their skills. U3A is a self-help organisation, enjoy our facilities, develop your "brain power" and participate in our activities.

According to the medical profession it is cognitive development; general fitness and socialising which will keep us from Alzheimers and that should stop us from blocking hospital beds.

On that cheerful final note, come and enjoy yourself and make some new friends.

Norma Galwa



Despite the fact we are fast approaching Easter, Santa was recently seen wandering aimlessly in the Kernan area of Portadown. If you have seen him please send information regarding his current whereabouts to Diana.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Monday, 14th MAY at 2,00 pm in the HUB.

As always the Committee needs new 'blood'. With 278 members there must be members who feel they would like to contribute ,

Please do not hesitate to approach Norma, Ruth or any committee member. New members are needed each year to keep our Upper Bann Club progressing forward. (Ruth McKinley)

THE BONSAI GROUP

(REPORT BY JOHN LAMBE)

The U3A Bonsai study group met again at Brownlow Hub on Tuesday 13th March at 1:30pm.

This time we discussed repotting of bonsai and composition of a good bonsai soil mix. We then moved on to a more practical session where we reported a Chinese Elm and a Kojo-no-mai which is a Japanese flowering cherry.

It was great to see some new faces who, like most of the group were complete beginners. We next meet on the 27th of March and again on the 10th of April when we will have the chairman of the Northern Ireland Bonsai Society Ian Young who will also be bringing dry goods such as pots,



DIGITAL DEVICE TRAINING



Twenty five member expressed an interest in attending Bleary Business and Community Centre. The purpose of the clinic was to give Upper Bann members the opportunity to work through problems they were experiencing on their digital devices. Leanne Chapman from the Banbridge branch of 02, once again volunteered her services before being moved, on a temporary basis, from the Banbridge office.

Unfortunately very few of the interested members were able to attend morning sessions, resulting in few morning slots and larger afternoon groupings. Leanne helped resolve many of the issues but unfortunately time did not permit everyone to resolve all problems.

Despite the time shortage there was very positive feedback from those who availed of the help. The following is an extract from an email I received from a couple who attended

"Again thank you so much for organising another successful afternoon with Leanne. She is such a treasure and nothing seems to trouble her. She always appears so cheerful and is always very helpful. We are so grateful to you again."

Thank you Ruth for your valuable help on the day. (Report and photographs Frances McKeown)



BOB'S WALKERS

A hardy group of walkers start the week with a brisk 5-6 mile walk every Monday morning. Bob Anderson leads the walks and ensures there is a varied programme, with a mix of country roads, footpaths and off-road walking. All the walks are easily accessible from the Craigavon area and a core group of about 20 U3A members regularly take part. We are very fortunate in our area that we have a great choice of walking opportunities in varied terrain. There is the peaceful Newry Canal towpath, the footpaths around Craigavon Lakes, country roads by the shore of Lough Neagh, walking paths at Oxford Island and Lurgan Park. Bob ensures we are never bored; there is always something to see and admire in every walk, and in fact no two walks are ever the same. Sometimes there is even the opportunity to socialise afterwards with a coffee and chat in a nearby café. The combination of fresh air, exercise and chatting to friends is wonderful and we look forward to our weekend email when we find out where the Monday walk will be this week!



(Report and photograph supplied by Dorothy Moore)





The final session of a six week dance course was held on Friday 23rd March. Over the six weeks the participants were taught the salsa and the slow waltz. Convenor Maureen Carroll commented "It was fun while learning and Norma was an excellent teacher". Norma will be available again in the autumn to teach the jive and the quick step, provided there is a demand.



KEEP DANCING

(Photos and report by Maureen Carroll)



On behalf of the Committee I would like to wish all Upper Bann U3A members a very happy Easter 2018 (Norma)





HAPPY EASTER TO
ALL U3A MEMBERS