

# Newsletter Upper Bann

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



Anna Lynas (Helen Rawlings)

I met Anna at one of the very first meetings of Upper Bann U3A. The committee members were making tentative steps towards establishing the organisation in our area and Anna, a founder member was very enthusiastic.

She served on the committee as business secretary, proving to be most efficient in this role and in addition made useful, forthright suggestion.

I also met her at our poetry group and I remember being impressed by the effort she had made to bring us some appreciation of the the poetry of Sylvia Plath. I did not know then that she was suffering a lot of pain but despite this she organised a very entertaining quiz to wind up an AGM.

We recognise the work and time Anna devoted to Upper Bann U3A and we hope that she was rewarded by the knowledge that the original membership of thirty has mushroomed.

## French for Improvers

The U3A French Improvers group recently enjoyed a French-style brunch at Lurgan Town Hall. Each member brought along a typical French food and the result was delicious! The group said 'au revoir' and will return in September for more French lessons, and lots of craic, led by the very patient Helen Rawlings. Classes take place on Wednesday mornings from 10.00 to 12.00 hrs. (Report and photo by Dorothy Moore)



## Leanne is back!

Leanne Chapman who has given so much of her time to help us come to terms with modern technology, smart phones and ipads, will be back in Banbridge from 21<sup>st</sup> of May. She has asked me to establish whether or not there is a demand for further assistance. Her contact details for interested members are

Leanne Chapman  
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 T: 02840660922  
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## Watercolour group welcomed guest



Group Convenor, Anne McMinn reports on another successful course held in the Hub, Craigavon.

The Watercolour art club has again completed 8 weeks at our new venue 'The Hub' in Brownlow, a purpose built community centre with great facilities, a light filled modern building suitable for all activities.

Today was our last day before our summer break and it was with great anticipation that we welcomed our guest Grahame Booth, one of Northern Ireland's top Watercolorists.

Grahame has been teaching for 20 years and travels all over Ireland, England and Europe. He also contributes to lots of artists magazines on a national and international level, produces his own DVDs and recently published a book on Watercolour .

Grahame's demonstrations are great to watch as he has a very relaxed style. With super communication skills he talks you through the painting making it look simple .

But make no mistake it takes years of practice to become as expert a painter as Grahame, but in his encouraging way you do feel you could paint a masterpiece



Grahame's finished picture

We ended the day with afternoon tea, then the paints and brushes were packed away, but roll on September when we can lift our brushes again and create our own special paintings.

Many thanks to all the members in the art club for their

enthusiasm,commitment and all the laughs we have had along the way .

So , have a great summer....



**Quote of the month** Was our group leader lost when he was heard to ask "What are we doing here" as we walked around Lough Neagh?

# Upper Bann Newsletter

## Upper Bann's Nature Group

(Pat Flowerday)

The Nature group came out of hibernation this month. Our first outing was to Oxford Island on a truly glorious morning. Newly arrived warblers from Africa were



here for the summer and to raise a family. Male Blackcaps and Willow Warblers were advertising themselves with their beautiful songs which mingled with the more familiar sounds of our resident Chaffinches, Goldfinches and tits. We spent time just listening and admiring before moving on to the Kinnego hide for the ducks and grebes. There were several Tufted ducks, Pochards, Mallards, Little and Great Crested Grebes, all in splendid breeding plumage.

Before long we were treated to a magnificent display - a pair of Great Crested Grebes performing their courtship dance! It is one of nature's top spectacles. The picture below was taken a few days earlier by the highly talented James O'Neill.

Our walk to the Discovery Centre took us through the wooded area where a Great Spotted Woodpecker has often been seen, but alas, not by us. However, Lesser Celandine and Wood Anemones proliferated while Dog-tooth Violets and Bluebells were just beginning to show themselves. All in all, ten of us had a thoroughly enjoyable morning.

The next outing of the group is on Wednesday 9 May to Rowallane Gardens, where the rhododendrons and azaleas should be looking their best.

## Strident Strollers

The ever-popular Tuesday Strolls continue to attract new faces with a dozen or so faithful regulars. April has seen us strolling around Craigavon Lakes, Peatlands Park and Clare Glen. The icing on the cake is the after-stroll coffee where we get to know our new members and catch up on how others are faring.

Leading the group has had its ups and downs. We wish both Teresa and Hector a speedy and full recovery, while thanks must go to Janet for so willingly stepping into the breach.

The first Stroll of May is along the North Down Coastal Path on 1st May. Look out for the email giving details.



Peatlands Park

## Death of esteemed member

Edel Breen (nee Mc Conville) died on the night of Tuesday 24th April. Edel was a member of both the French group and the poetry group. She will be sadly missed.

# Upper Bann Newsletter

## Fifty mile – is that the best you can do?



David Thornton's intrepid cycling group headed off to Dungannon and The Moy via Maghery and managed to do a 50 mile cycle with the help of two coffee breaks.

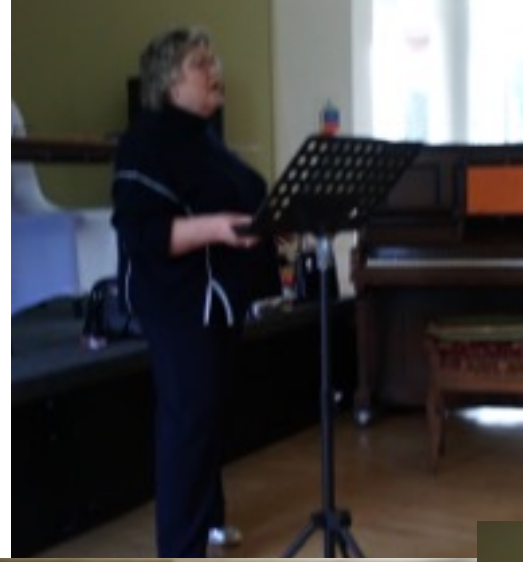
As the fitness levels increase, David has to find more and more challenging cycles to keep the group happy. Many thanks to David for a well organised trip.

## Monthly meeting went down a treat

The Poetry group with convenor Maureen McLoughlin and the Singalong group with convenor Diane Hillis, came together and drew up a programme of entertainment for the April monthly meeting. This event which was held in Portadown Golf Club was well attended. Refreshments were served and a very pleasant afternoon was had by all.

Song and poetry are good for the soul





Poetry and song, what a treat!!!

# Upper Bann Newsletter

## Volunteers required

My name is Deborah, I am Service Coordinator in the Lisburn Families Service in Positive Futures. We support people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Our service provides after school activities for children and young people between the ages of eight and nineteen, such as swimming, cooking, arts and crafts and a Buddy Group. We also provide scheme activities, usually day trips, over all school holidays. We rely heavily on volunteers in order to be able to offer the activities.

With this in mind I was wondering if perhaps any of your members would consider giving a couple of hours per week to help provide these opportunities for the children.

It is not easy for the young people we support to engage in the community and social groups the rest of us take for granted. They require extra support in order to have the same opportunities as their peers.

Would it be possible for you to send information out in your newsletter with my contact details please? I'd be happy to speak with anyone to give them more information. I would also be happy to speak at one of your monthly meetings if your members would prefer.

Volunteering with Positive Futures is a wonderful way to make a real difference to the lives of the people we support and their families. It is also a

way to socialise, meet new people and learn new skills. I know your members would have a wealth of knowledge and experience to offer us also.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information.

I would be very grateful for your help and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards

Deborah ([deborah.Dunlop@Positive-Futures.net](mailto:deborah.Dunlop@Positive-Futures.net))



## Six week dance course comes to an end

The very successful line dancing course ends on Friday 4th May. Participants have enjoyed their learning experience and look forward to future similar courses.

## Just facts

1. Did you know Norma Galway has come to the end of her very successful term in office as Chairperson of Upper Bann U3A? We would like to thank Norma for her hard work and dedication
2. Did you know the AGM will take place at May's Monthly Meeting in the Hub? A new committee will be elected and a new Chairperson will be appointed. It is hoped as many members as possible will attend.
3. Did you know that the Committee is planning a BBQ in June in Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor? This will be another great occasion with a treasure hunt, lots of fun and craic and food not to be missed