

UPPER BANN U3A AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

September 2019

upperbannu3a.com

SUMMER NEWS

SUMMER BARBECUE



At the end of June we travelled to Kilbroney Park once more for our Summer Barbecue. The day didn't start well as the coach we had booked failed to show up. But this set-back just showed how resourceful our members are! With a lot of car-sharing we all managed to travel down to Rostrevor, and had a wonderful day. Firstly, the weather was kind to us. And the food was superb as always thanks to Maureen, our able chefs and the many volunteers who provided delicious salads and desserts.

Tom Young excelled himself once more by setting a challenging treasure hunt, although there was some concern that a



large group of members left the Park for the village and many took some time to return! First prize went to a large group of wily members who put their heads together to unravel Tom's knotty clues.

So thank you to Tom, thanks to all the committee members for their hard work and thanks to the members who provided so much tasty food. Thank you also to the drivers who rescued the day!

RETIRING GROUP LEADERS

This summer three of our Group Leaders stepped down after several years of dedicated work. Each initiated their group, seeing it grow in strength and numbers.

Diane Hillis started up Sing Along, a very popular group with many members who find that singing enhances their mood. The group will meet in September to find a successor to Diane - difficult shoes to fill! But there are a wealth of musical talents in the group who can perhaps share the musical accompaniment to the singing voices!

Gordon Lunn started out the Bridge Group some years ago and has been supported by a band of volunteers in running this popular group. Tom Young has taught the members from the start, and members have learned bridge basics right up to Tom's challenging 'improvers' lessons. Sam Barr is taking beginners lessons for bridge newbies wanting to join in. Tom Horridge is the new Group Leader, ably supported by the Bridge Sub-committee, a band of volunteers who take the register, collect fees and provide the all important biscuits!

Anne McMinn started the Watercolour Art Group and has a band of enthusiastic artists who enjoy getting together every week. This group is well established, and it is hoped that the members will continue coming together to paint regularly and share ideas.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Date: Third Monday in the month.

Time: 2pm

Venue: Brownlow
Community Hub.
Free parking.

Cost: £1

A chance to get together for a chat over a cup of tea or coffee after listening to a talk by our guest speaker.

Autumn Programme

16 SEPTEMBER

Keith Jackson, Ulster Bank.

Friends Against Scams

Keith will highlight the different ways criminals target people and what we can do to protect ourselves and others against being the next victim of a scam.

21 OCTOBER

Martin McDowell

Using DNA to trace Family History

Martin, from The North of Ireland Family History Society, will talk on how DNA can help in tracing family history and relatives at home and around the world.

18 NOVEMBER

Ian Enlander

The Wildlife and Landscapes of New Zealand

Following his recent trip there, Ian will talk about the beautiful landscapes and diverse wildlife of New Zealand.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE GROUPS!

Some of the U3A groups have kept going throughout the summer months, such as the walking and nature groups, the cycling groups and the Bridge Group. But now it's that time of year when most of our other groups re-start after the summer break.

You may be familiar with many of the groups and be active members of some. If, however, you are new to U3A or are interested in taking on new interests here are details on some of our current groups:

BONSAI



The U3A bonsai group is a small yet active and extremely friendly group. It meets on the **last Tuesday of the month from 1pm to 3pm** and new members are always welcome.

Bonsai reconvenes on the last Tuesday of September 2019. The group caters for everyone from complete beginner upwards, and regularly includes guest speakers and opportunities to visit gardening events that include bonsai displays.

Further details are available from: jlambephoto@gmail.com

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

Some of our groups are closed as they are fully subscribed. This is due to a limit on either room size or equipment availability. For example our cycle groups hire bikes, the number of which are limited. But please contact our Cycle Group Leaders and ask to be put on their waiting lists. Our Yoga Group is also closed due to high demand for places

OPEN

CLOSED

But most of our groups are open to all. If you are interested give the group leader a ring and talk to them about joining up.

U3A THEATRE OUTINGS

We aim to provide at least 3 outings per year, including a trip to Dublin, usually after Christmas. We also go to the Grand `Opera House and the Lyric in Belfast. Outings are usually to matinees, which allow people to lunch before or eat after the show. It's a pleasant, social day out and as a group outing no one will be sitting on their own. Most members use their smart pass for free travel. It is the responsibility of each member to get to and from the theatres. Group leaders only retake responsibility for booking tickets. We support Portadown Drama Festival each March in the Town Hall, which offers amateur drama groups from around Ireland. Season tickets are available.

Information is sent out via email prior to each outing.

Look out for emails from Ruth about upcoming outings!

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

U3A PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The photography group started in April 2019. The group meets the third Thursday of each month at 10am, meeting in the car park, when a list of names is recorded and a decision is taken as to how long we spend in the area. Each photographer decides what they want to photograph.

Autumn dates and locations:
19th September Portmore Lough
24th October Lough Gall Park
28th November Discovery Centre Lough Neagh.

A reminder of date location and directions will be sent out prior to each event. Eileen O'Rourke at emmorourke21@hotmail.co.uk

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

STRIDENT STROLLERS



Strollers meet every Tuesday at 10.00 am throughout the year at the chosen venue for that day (emailed in advance). The stroll, which takes about an hour, is off-road, usually in picturesque parkland on paths on fairly level ground. After the stroll, the group heads for a local cafe for coffee and chat. Members are responsible for ensuring they are correctly dressed and are fit enough to participate.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

Just come along and join in!

NATURE GROUP

This group meets on **one or two Wednesdays each month** to observe and learn about our local flora and fauna. Our main focus is on birds although we vary it to include butterflies, red squirrels, wild flowers and other wildlife. Places where wildlife congregates are chosen, such as nature reserves, tidal estuaries and parks and gardens. Emails are sent out a few days prior to the trip and we take turns at car-sharing.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!



POETRY GROUP

The Poetry Group meet on the **first Monday of the month from 2-4pm** in The Hub, Brownlow.

Each month we look at a specific poet (modern or classical) or a specific subject chosen by poets (seasons, love, war). We help each other to understand the words, sharing interpretations and memories, both happy and sad. Meetings are relaxed with tea/coffee half way. So, whether you are new to poetry, would like to learn a little or have always enjoyed the subject, come along. NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

STOP PRESS!

HEALTH & WELLBEING GROUP

This new group is meeting on Wednesday 4 September at 2pm in Portadown Golf Club.

Members will be looking at physical and mental health issues and exploring a range of traditional and complimentary options. For more information contact Heather Loudon at h.louden@sky.com

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!



FRUSTRATED?

Are you frustrated because the group you want to join is full? Why not consider starting up your own duplicate group? We have 3 cycle groups and two walking groups, but there is always demand for more.

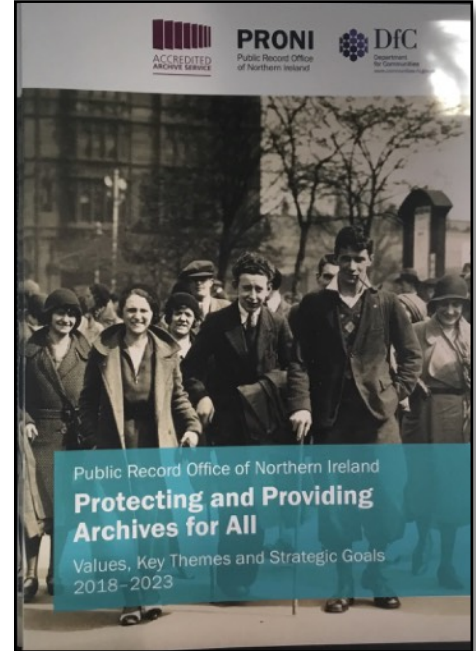
All of our group leaders are enthusiastic amateurs! We are always looking for new group leaders. If you have an interest in a subject or activity we don't currently offer why not consider starting your own group? One of our members has recently started up a Health and Wellbeing Group which has attracted a great deal of interest.



It may seem daunting to set up and run a new group, but we have a very friendly Groups Coordinator, Michael Cardwell, who will provide any new group with lots of help and advice. He will help you to contact the members to find out who may be interested in your subject or activity. He will then set up the first meeting and give you advice on how to run your group. It is often a good idea to have a team of helpers within the group to share roles like taking the register or fee if you have room hire costs

GENEALOGY / FAMILY HISTORY

This group meets up at regular intervals throughout the year. To date around 41 people have been exploring their ancestry, helping each other with information and resources along the way.



The sessions usually involve taking members through available online resources and those which require a personal visit to one of the archival sites eg the Public Record Office Northern Ireland, (PRONI), the General Record Office Northern Ireland (GRONI), the National Library Ireland (NLI), Armagh Irish Studies Library, as well as other specialist historical organisations.

There will be a session for complete beginners in September. Notification of meetings and visits will be sent out by general email. If you haven't already taken part and have an interest in looking at your family history please contact Geraldine McIvor at geraldine.mcivor@gmail.com

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

MATHS FOR FUN

The first meeting of the new season will be on **30 September at 10 am**.

We are a small enthusiastic group who meet at Portadown Golf Club generally every fortnight on Mondays from 10 am to noon. The format is that a 'homework' is sent out to members a week in advance to stimulate the grey cells. Typically this consists of a set of puzzles (see examples below), a couple of Calcdoku (a form of Sudoku) teasers and other topics of interest, largely determined by group request.

We are very keen to recruit new members so please come along and share in the fun - we are quite normal really! A small contribution of £2 is levied each meeting to cover room hire and administrative costs.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

BRIDGE GROUP



Bridge Group meets every Friday Morning in Portadown Golf Club.

Bridge lessons re-start on 6 September at 9.30am.

Sam Barr runs the beginners lessons, and Tom Young runs the improvers lessons for those members with an understanding of the bidding and play. Thanks to Tom and Sam for their endless patience in helping members to improve!

After a lesson lasting around 45 minutes we play a friendly competition with much debate about the right play and even more chat. We break mid-morning for a well earned tea/coffee and biscuits.










NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

See if you are cut out for Maths for Fun by trying to solve these puzzles:

What is the area of the fourth rectangle below if the numbers represent the other respective areas?

| | |
|----|----|
| 12 | 15 |
| 8 | ? |

What is the value of the unlabeled row?

| | | | |
|--|--|--|----|
|  |  |  | ? |
|  |  |  | 15 |
|  |  |  | 13 |
| 23 | 17 | 8 | |

GOLF GROUP

This new group aims to visit a variety of golf courses throughout the year. The day, time of playing and green fees will vary depending on course availability.

If you are interested in joining the group please contact Laura McAdam for more information at laura842@live.com
NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

FRENCH FOR IMPROVERS

Re-starts on 12 September

This group is for those who already have a knowledge of French. We meet on Wednesdays in Lurgan Town Hall from 10 am to 12 noon.

We prefer to limit the number of members to twelve, and we have some spaces available at the moment.

For more information please contact Helen Rawlings at dhrawlings@btinternet.com

BOARD GAMES AND CHESS

Both the Board Games and Chess Groups meeting at the same time in Portadown Golf Club on **Thursdays at 10 am**.

Both groups welcome new members. On offer are games such as draughts as well as chess of course! You don't need any prior knowledge of board games or chess. Just come along and join in or contact Jean Millar at jeanmillar@btinternet.com

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

LUNCHEON CLUB

The Luncheon Club meets on the **last Thursday in the month at 1pm**. The choice of eatery changes every month for variety, and the cost is usually around £10 to £12 per person.

If you want to attend you contact the group leader Norma Galway by either email or phone to book your place so that she can book the tables with each venue.

Contact Norma on 02838871757 or norma2.galway@gmail.com

This club is open to all.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

MONDAY WALK

Bob's weekly walking group **re-starts on Monday 9 September at 10am**. The walks are usually 4 to 6 miles and end at about 12 noon. Routes vary and emails are sent out weekly with details of how to get there. Some routes are roadside part of the way.

Members are individually responsible for ensuring that they are fit enough and appropriately dressed for the route and weather on the day.

So why not come along and join in! Walking is a great way to get fit and meet new people.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

SING ALONG

Diane Hillis was the leader of this popular group from its start-up until May this year when she retired from the post.

The group re-starts on Tuesday 24 September at 10.15 am in Portadown Golf Club.

We hear from so many of you that you love coming together to raise your voices. **There are currently 38 members of this group and its future rests in your hands!**

If a new group leader (together with a group of helpers) cannot be found from the membership then the group **WILL FOLD**. Some members think that it is the responsibility of the U3A committee to find a new leader, but this is not the case! In the U3A members form interest groups which are run by the members, for the members.

Diane is a very hard act to follow both in terms of an accompanist and an organiser. **But these roles don't all have to be performed by one person. They can be shared!**

Perhaps the music can be shared between those in the group with talent (you know who you are!). Someone else could volunteer to take the register, another to collect fees, another to copy words and music. The group leader would be the figurehead of the group, but would share the workload with the team.

So if you want your group to continue come along on 24 September. If you don't want it to continue then stay at home. It would be very sad to see the group end, but it cannot continue without impetus from its group members. The members ARE the group!

WATERCOLOURS



The watercolour Art Group has been led from the start by Anne McMinn, who has recently retired from the role. All the members are accomplished artists who are used to working under their own steam, but who enjoy coming together to share skills and experiences.

There is currently no re-start date for this group.

If you are a member of this group and want it to continue then the group members need to convene to choose a new group leader.

In the same way as with Sing Along, your group's future is in your collective hands! Duties can be shared within the group or delegated to one person. That is for the group members to decide.



AND FINALLY...

*In recent years this Newsletter has been produced by **Frances McKeown**. Frances has been a previous Chair, was a long-time committee member and continues to be an all-round helper and supporter of Upper Bann. Frances we thank you.*



You will probably noticed that this rag is not the polished article that you have been used to in the past.

There are no fancy page surrounds and background artwork. (This stand-in editor doesn't know how to do any of that fancy stuff!) If there's anyone out there who speaks desktop publishing please let me know!

This Newsletter is intended to keep all members, particularly new members, informed about what is happening in our groups, and which groups welcome new members. As you can see we are a welcoming lot!

So take a look at your diary and see if you have time on your hands to take up a new pursuit or learn a new skill.