



Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter



April 2025

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FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

I like it when the clocks got forward by an hour and we come onto British Summer Time, apart, of course, for one hours lost sleep. The lighter evenings mean that we can go for that nice walk after tea, or spend more time in the garden if we are so inclined. The recent dry, sunny weather makes being outside so much more pleasurable.

I would like to thank Andy Crisp for his fascinating talk on the Horse in Art. Andy included a number of very interesting images in his talk. The one that struck me the most was the cave painting from the Pech Merle Cave, of horses from 30,000 BCE. The painting was so realistic which certainly suggests that our ancient ancestors knew a thing or two about the horse. Andy's talk certainly showed that the horse has featured prominently in Art over the centuries. We, of course, have two prime examples of the Horse in Public Art locally with the marvellous Kelpies.

If you have got a taste for writing through the competition being run by the Falkirk Writers' Circle you might be interested to know that the u3a are also running a new essay competition. This new Essay Writing Competition has now launched and the u3a believe it is a competition that a range of groups can get involved in from science, English and history and beyond. u3a members are invited to research, write and submit an essay of up to 1000 words that can 'make the case for a person, policy, invention or idea having a positive impact on society.' Submissions are open now until **12 pm on Friday, 9th May 2025**, with prizes for the winner and runners up. For more details of the competition click on the following link: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/?view=article&id=2164&catid=201>

Just an early reminder that the Falkirk and District u3a will hold its AGM on 3rd June 2025 at 2.30 pm at St Francis Xavier Church Hall. All members are welcome. The agenda, minutes and papers for the meeting will be issued in May. Please can I make a special plea to ask if you would consider acting as a trustee? There is always plenty of work to do running a local u3a branch, and as the old saying goes, 'many hands make lighter work.'

Finally, may I wish every Falkirk and District member, and their families, a very happy and restful Easter holiday.

Peter Kahan

A mindfulness thought

"Nothing is worth more than this day. You cannot relive yesterday. Tomorrow is still beyond your reach." – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



Questions from "The Horse in Art"

After my talk at the last Open Meeting a number of questions arose from the floor to which I did not have an immediate answer. Consequently, I promised to make the answers available here in the April Newsletter.

Where can the Horkstow Mosaic be seen?

This is the mosaic panel showing a chariot race excavated from the Romano-British villa at Horkstow in Lincolnshire. This and other mosaics discovered at the site remained in situ until 1927 when they were relocated to the British Museum. In 1976 they were moved to a permanent home at the Hull and East Riding Museum and the Museum's own presentation online can be found here: [Roman Mosaics – Hull Museums and Galleries](#)

Where is the Luttrell Psalter?

The Luttrell Psalter is the fourteenth century manuscript that offered an illustration of a horse-drawn harrow. The manuscript is in the collection of the British Museum/British Library, and you can view a digitised presentation of the entire manuscript here: [Luttrell Psalter : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

Early paint and the polychroming of ancient sculptures

This question proved to be a real challenge and led me down yes, a rabbit hole all of its own! However, I did find this website which has a wealth of material relating to ancient sculptures.

[Gods in Color – Golden Edition](#)

I'd like to thank you all once again for letting me do the talk, and also for your patience in awaiting these answers!

Andy Crisp

Easter Crafting Event

Five of us had a fun afternoon at our Easter Crafting Event.

We started the afternoon by making a successful variety of origami corner bookmarks which needed no cutting, only a bit of folding, and a lot of concentration.

We moved on to making woolen Easter chicks and rabbits from odds and ends of wool. They made excellent hats for crème eggs. Each hat had its own character.

We finished the session by making pop-up peonies for cards. These were trickier to make with lots of folding, cutting and glueing but everyone managed to complete a peony. We ran out of time so we did not manage to complete the front of our cards, but we took some bits and pieces of card away with us to finish our card at home.

A most enjoyable and successful event.



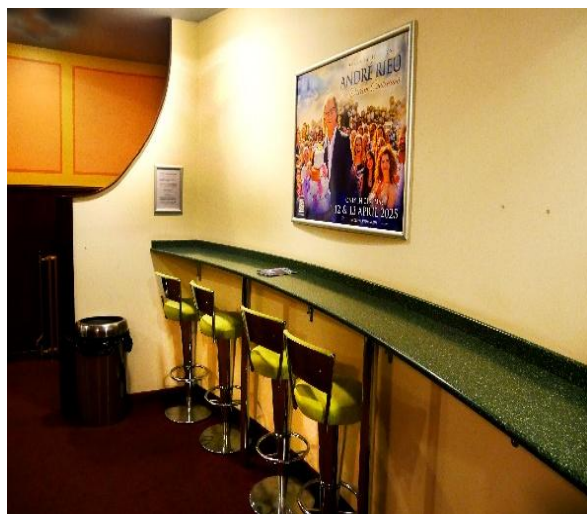
Interest Group News

Theatre Group 2

Some members of our theatre group attended the Lyceum in March to see the world premiere of 'Wild Rose' set in Glasgow's country music scene. Among the cast was Blythe Duff from 'Taggart' and an excellent live band provided the music on stage. As usual the stage setting was very clever and used to visit several locations including Cornton Vale prison and Glasgow's Grand Ole Opry. The entire production was first class and well worth seeing, even if you're not into country music.

Photography Group at the Hippodrome

The photography Group visited the Bo'ness Hippodrome for their March outing. As part of their Hip-Fest, a guide from the team at Falkirk Council took us on a tour around the inside of the Hippodrome, Scotland's oldest purpose-built cinema (established 1912). The tour included a 15-minute film about the magnificent restoration undertaken to restore the Hippodrome to its pre-Art Deco glory, and then we had a chance to get behind-the-scenes with an exclusive opportunity to visit the projection box. As usual many photographs were taken, and some have been posted on the group's Flickr page. A small selection of these photographs is shown below.



The group's Flickr page can be found at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/198298700@N04/>

Scrabble Club

Here are the meanings of the five new words in the March 2025 Newsletter taken from the Collins English Dictionary.

avast – nautical stop! cease!

dunt – 1. a blow; thump 2. the injury caused by such a blow

lam – to thrash or beat or to make a sweeping stroke or blow

thine – of, belonging to, or associated in some way with you (thou)

thine eyes or thine is the greatest burden

wiry – 1. (of people or animals) slender but strong in constitution,

2. made of or resembling wire, esp. in stiffness wiry hair,

3. (of a sound) produced by or as if by a vibrating wire

Here is a slightly different challenge for you this month. Can you think of 5 words which contain all 5 vowels a, e, i, o and u. Some examples of such words will be given in next month's Newsletter. All the best.

Maths Teasers

How did you get on with last month's maths teasers? Well, I hope. However, if you did not manage to solve them, please see below the two questions restated and the solutions to the questions.

Problems

Question 1

Determine the value of x in the following equation.

$$\frac{\sqrt{3x}}{x} = 6$$

Solution

The first step in solving the question is to square both sides of the equation as follows:

$$\frac{3x}{x^2} = 36$$

Which simplifies to

$$\frac{3}{x} = 36$$

Or

$$x = \frac{3}{36} = \frac{1}{12}$$

Question 2

Laura makes and sells fruit smoothies. She intends to buy kiwi fruit in bulk.

She considers the following two options:

- Option 1: 35 kiwi fruit for £5.95
- Option 2: 45 kiwi fruit for £8.10

Determine which option offers the best value for money.

Solution

The problem is a little easier if we convert the pounds and pence into pence. Thus, £5.95 becomes 595p and £8.10 becomes 810p.

To see which the better option is we do the following:

$$\text{Option 1} \quad \frac{595}{35} = 17p \text{ per Kiwi fruit}$$

$$\text{Option 2} \quad \frac{810}{45} = 18p \text{ per Kiwi fruit}$$

So, Option 1 is the best.

April Maths Teasers

Here are two more maths teasers for you to try during April. The solutions to the two questions will be provided in the May 2025 Newsletter.

Question 1

Determine the value of the following expression:

$$(3 + 3)^2 \div 3 + 4$$

The second question is taken from the 2023 National 5 Applications of Mathematics Paper 2 (Calculator).

Question 2

Colin had a new hot tub installed in his garden.

It normally takes a team of 4 workers 12 hours to complete the task. The company sent an additional worker to help complete the task. All workers work at the same rate.

The workers started at 08:00 and they took a 30 minute break for lunch.

Determine the time they finished installing the hot tub.

Gardening Guru

This is a busy month for the gardener. The start of the month has been warm with lots of sunshine but don't reach for the tender plants yet as there are still overnight frosts.

You can start sowing tender annuals like Alyssum, Lobelia and Cosmos in the greenhouse or on a warm windowsill. Raising your own annuals from seed is much cheaper than buying plug plants. Once the seeds have germinated 'pot on' into larger pots. Put the young plants outside during the day to 'harden off' but they will need to be protected from overnight frosts.

Now is the time to start sowing short rows of beetroot, lettuce, spring onions and radish. Sow seeds every couple of weeks from now on to give a good succession of salad plants. Carrots can be sown now too. Sow carrot seeds thinly in rows about 1cm deep. Cover the crop with mesh or similar to deter carrot fly.

Don't forget to care for your house plants. Increase watering to every few days and feed once a month.