



Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter



December 2024

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FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members

I do hope that your preparations for Christmas and the New Year are going well. I am very fortunate that I go to my daughter's on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. I am certainly well fed on all three days, and it is great to spend quality time with my daughter, son-in-law, and two of my grandchildren. However, many older people (and not so older people) have to spend Christmas on their own which is very sad. We also know that many families struggle with the cost of Christmas given the many pressures on family budgets. I am sure that all of us will do what we can to support people in need at Christmas.

As I mentioned in the November Newsletter, at the 2024 AGM of the Third Age Trust on 16th October a special resolution was agreed introducing a new Council as an addition to the Board which will take on a more strategic focus. The implementation of the new Council and Board is now very much in progress. Here are some key dates:

Monday, 18th November 2024 – Nominations open

Thursday, 19th December 2024 – Nominations close

Monday, 13th January 2025 – Voting opens

Friday, 21st February 2025 – Voting closes

I will continue to keep you updated on Council and Board developments.

A new report, entitled 'Learn to Live: A blueprint for better health and wellbeing' has been published by the u3a. The report was launched on 1st October which was the International Day of Older People. The report sets out the value of a low-cost, non-formal learning model in aiding better health and wellbeing and promoting a healthy and active ageing. It is certainly a worthwhile report to read. You can find a copy of the [full report here](#).

In conclusion, on behalf of the trustees of the Falkirk and District u3a I would like to wish all our members and their families a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Peter Kahan

Gardening Guru

I do hope you have protected any frost tender plants. Pelargoniums should have been taken inside by now. They won't need a lot of attention during the winter months as long as they are kept warm and will make great bedding plants again next year.

Poinsettias are a favourite around Christmas. Christmas cacti are also lovely on a side table with their bright pink dangling flowers. If you have either of these, don't over water them and keep them out of any drafts.

On a milder day, go outside and do a bit of winter pruning. Save the prunings to put in a vase or use them to make a Christmas wreath for the front door.

Check any stored vegetables to ensure that they are all healthy. One rotten potato can infect all the others in the bag that touch it - but do enjoy your own produce on the Christmas dinner table.

Coffee Morning

In the lead up to Christmas the coffee morning group decided to lunch early for Christmas! During the last week of November, we enjoyed the Christmas lunch offered by Klondyke Garden Centre, Polmont. Andy prepared a quiz and even whistled a music round!



We meet every second Thursday morning 10.30am at Klondyke Garden Centre. The first meeting of 2025 will be on January 2nd, all are welcome. For more information, please email me at coffeemorning@falkirk3a.uk

Susan Crisp

Family History

Our group looked at inheritance last month. We discovered that you need a whole new vocabulary to understand it, including testamentary, testamentary, retours, eiks and cautioners - not to mention the difference between movable property and immovable property which is sometimes referred to as heritable property. Earlier wills were also written in Latin often in illegible handwriting.

We also discovered that Scottish inheritance rules differ from England and Wales. Probate and Bona Vacantia only apply in England and Wales. Instead, Scottish wills are confirmed by Sheriff Courts.

The December meeting should be less taxing as we have a look at bygone Christmases and discuss future meetings while enjoying a cup of tea or coffee and perhaps a mince pie.

Louise Westall

Scrabble Club

The Scrabble Club continues to discover new words. Here are some more new words that you may wish to explore the meaning of: *gad, nome, nomen, oba, salade and vav*. The meaning of these words will be given in the next Newsletter.

You may have heard that the Oxford University Press has named its word of the year as 'brain rot'. But what is 'brain rot'? What are its symptoms? And perhaps most importantly can it be cured? Answers in next Month's Newsletter.

Maths Teaser

How did you find the math teaser in the last edition of the Newsletter? I received feedback from one member who got the question correct. If you did not have an opportunity to do the problem, a restatement of the problem and the solution are shown below.

Problem

The November problem was based on a question in the 2024 National Qualifications 5 Applications of Mathematics Paper 1 (non-calculator). It is a very practical logistics problem.

Tabitha is a van driver for a supermarket that provides home deliveries.

Orders are packed into rectangular boxes for home delivery to customers.

The dimensions of each box and the internal dimensions of the van are shown below.

Dimensions of each box

Length – 60 cm

Width – 40 cm

Height – 20 cm

Internal dimensions of the van

Length – 4.1 m

Width – 1.9 m

Height – 2.2 m

Calculate the maximum number of boxes that will fit in the van.

Solution

I find the best way to solve these problems is to use a table. There are three options as regards loading the boxes into the van. These are as follows:

Option 1 – the lengths of the boxes (60cm) are laid along the length (410cm) of the van.

Option 2 – the widths of the boxes (40cm) are laid along the length (410cm) of the van.

Option 3 – the heights of the boxes (20cm) are laid along the length (410cm) of the van.

Dimensions of the van	Length of van (4.1m or 410cm) No. of boxes	Width of van (1.9m or 190cm) No. of boxes	Height of van (2.2m or 220cm) No. of boxes	Total No. of boxes
Option 1	6	4	11	$= 6 \times 4 \times 11 = 264$
Option 2	10	3	11	$= 10 \times 3 \times 11 = 330$
Option 3	20	4	3	$= 20 \times 4 \times 3 = 240$

On the basis of the calculations shown in the table, Option 2 allows the maximum number of boxes to be fitted into the van.

Problems

I know you will have some time to kill over the Christmas holidays so here are two questions you might like to try.

Question 1

The question shown below was taken from the 2022 National 5 Mathematics 2 Examination paper. A calculator can be used to answer questions in this paper. Can you remember how to solve simultaneous equations? All the best.

Moir buys 4 mangoes and 3 apples at a fruit shop.
The total cost is £4.25.

(a) Write down an equation to illustrate this information.

Sami buys 5 mangoes and 2 apples in the same fruit shop.
The total cost is £4.70.

(b) Write down an equation to illustrate this information.

(c) Calculate, algebraically, the cost of a mango and the cost of an apple.

Question 2

I found the following question on-line.

Solve the following equation for s .

$$16^{2-s^2} = \frac{1}{2}$$

Hint: remember that **16 can be represented as 2^4**

XXXXX Christmas Open Meeting XXXXX

Here's Malcolm Cowie and friends singing one of many popular Christmas songs to get everyone in a festive mood at our Christmas Open Meeting where lots of members went home with one of the many raffle prizes and of course everyone had a go at making an origami Santa Claus and taking part in the Christmas themed quiz.

