



Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter



May 2025

Editor – John Giovanacci – publicity@falkirku3a.uk

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

If like me you support Falkirk Football Club then Friday, 2nd May 2025 was a very special day for you. For on that day the Bairns (one of Falkirk FC's nicknames) won promotion to the Scottish Premiership by beating Hamilton Accies 3-1 at the Falkirk Stadium. As every Falkirk supporter knows the Bairns never do anything easily. They had lost their previous two games allowing Livingston to catch them up in terms of points (they were both on 70 points). Even in the game with Hamilton they started by going a goal down, but then fortunately fought back to win not only the game but the Championship title as well. At the end of the game thousands of fans invaded the pitch. After 15 years away from the big times they were finally returning to the top league. This is great news not only for the club and all its supporter, but also for Falkirk and District especially following the bad news coming out of Grangemouth.

I would like to thank Eric Melvin for his fascinating talk on the Herbalist, Duncan Napier. An interesting exploration of Victorian genealogy. I would also like to thank Jack Egdell and the Photography Group for their montage of photographs to music. I particularly liked the photos of the Japanese Gardens: a great place to practise Mindfulness.

It has been a year since the Third Age Trust relaunched their quarterly magazine with a new title (*u3a matters*), new content and a fresh design. The Trust are keen to see if the changes have helped in making the magazine more relevant and appealing to its readers. They are, therefore, inviting members to complete a simple survey form with a view to gathering members' opinions on various aspects of the magazine. I have completed the survey form and found it straightforward to do. It took me about ten minutes to fill in. The link to the survey form is as follows: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XR6TZBQ>
Members who take part in the survey have a chance of winning an M&S voucher.

Just another reminder that the Falkirk and District u3a AGM will take place 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 can be found in the Documents section of the website <https://falkirku3a.uk/index.php/about/documents>

I do hope you enjoy reading the May edition of the Falkirk and District u3a Newsletter. I wish you a happy, relaxing and safe May.

Peter Kahan

A mindfulness thought

The moment. Stop regretting the past and fearing the future. Today is all you have. Make the most of it. Make it worth remembering.

Garcia & Miralles, 2017

Interest Group News

Local History Group

Members of the Local History Group, plus one guest from the u3a membership, enjoyed a sun-soaked visit to Kinneil House last Thursday. The group was taking advantage of Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) initiative to offer Free Learning Visits to u3a members.

Walking through the parkland approach to the house decked in all its leafy spring glory made a great start to our visit. We were met at the house by our very knowledgeable HES guide who began with an overview of the history of the site and the people associated with that history.

After that we were able to just peek through the main door into the 5-storey shell that once was the main house but now stands as four walls with nothing inside but rubble, victim of the demolition squad. This much was saved by the finding on the walls of a smaller wing of the main house murals of great historical and cultural significance. These were discovered by chance. Thus, the demolition of the whole building was halted and today we can enjoy visits to the site and try to imagine what it might have looked like 300 or so years ago.

The murals were the main focus of our visit, and we were all fascinated by the quality and expressiveness of the drawing. Although they have suffered from the passage of time they are quite stunning and well worth the visit.

We had an excellent visit to Kinneil House and are most appreciative of HES's offer of Free Learning Visits to a wide range of educational organisations. We hope to organise further visits next session which, like this one, will be open to all u3a members on a first come first served basis according to availability. Look out for updates in future editions of this newsletter.

The Local History Group with lots of sunshine!



Jennifer Kightley (Local History Group Organiser) - localhistory@falkirku3a.uk

Coffee Morning

Now the summer break approaches we are aware that most groups stop, and it can be a lonely time after the busy-ness of the rest of the year. We are pleased to say that we will continue to meet every two weeks throughout the summer; our current venue is The Nutmeg Café within the grounds of Galaxy Sports Little Kerse, Polmont.

The group is open to all; come and enjoy some cheery conversation ☺



For more information contact Susan Crisp - email: coffeemorning@falkirk3a.uk

Film Group

The film I had intended showing in January but had to be cancelled due to Storm Eowyn will be this month's feature. It's a very tense thriller called **The Guilty**, a Danish film with English subtitles which is set in one location.

I am always keen to know which films are celebrating notable anniversaries and here are 4 such films. Can you guess the film from the clues for each one?

50th anniversary – 'you're gonna need a bigger boat'

60th anniversary – directed by David Lean, starring Omar Sharif and Julie Christie.

70th anniversary – Hitchcock film set in the French Riviera.

75th anniversary – Gloria Swanson plays a faded film star determined to make a triumphant return.

Answers in June newsletter.

John Giovanacci

Scrabble Club

Last month's Scrabble challenge was slightly different. You had to find **five** words which contain all five vowels a, e, i, o and u. How did you get on? Well, I hope. Here are some examples of such words: *Authorize, Automobile, Education, Evacuation, Facetious, Multimillionaire, Regulation and Simultaneous*. Well done if you got some of these words or other words not shown here.

Here is another slightly different challenge for you to try. Which of the following are **not** words?

Accismus, Alot, Definately, Limerence, Riposte, Sherbert, Verisimilitude

All the best.

Maths Teasers

How did you find the maths teasers in the April 2025 Newsletter? Hard or straightforward? Don't worry if you could not solve one or both as you will find the two questions restated plus the solutions to the questions.

Question 1

Determine the value of the following expression:

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

Solution

This problem is another example of the application of BODMAS which stands for Brackets, Order, Division and Multiplication (from left to right), and Addition and Subtraction (from left to right). Let's use BODMAS to solve the question.

Brackets first

$$6^2 \div 3 + 4$$

Order

$$36 \div 3 + 4$$

Division

$$12 + 4$$

Addition

$$= 16$$

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.

Solution

This question involves inverse proportions (i.e. as one variable gets larger the other gets smaller).

Thus,

$$4 \times 12 = 5 \times t$$

Where t = the time to complete the job with 5 workers

Or

$$48 = 5t$$

Or

$$t = \frac{48}{5} = 9.6 \text{ hours}$$

0.6 hour is equal to $60 \times 0.6 = 36$ minutes. Thus, the job takes 9 hours and 36 minutes. Let us add on the 30-minute lunch break to the 9 hours and 36 minutes which gives 10 hours and 6 minutes.

To find the finish time let's add on 10 hours and 6 minutes to 8.00 am which will give us a finish time of **18:06 or 6.06 pm**.

May Maths Teasers

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

Question 1

$$A + B = 9$$

$$A - B = 5$$

What does the following equation equal? $A^2 + B^2 = ?$

Question 2

Solve the following equation

$$\sqrt{x} + \sqrt{3} = \sqrt{27}$$

Gardening Guru

As I write this, we have had some hot weather for May. Just like ourselves, all plants, particularly young plants need plenty of water to keep them hydrated and looking their best. Now is the time to sow biennials. These are plants like wallflowers and foxgloves that grow in the first year and bloom in the second year. Sow seeds in a tray on a windowsill or greenhouse and when they are big enough, grow on in a sheltered spot outside. Transfer to their final position in the autumn.

If you have planted potatoes, they will probably need earthing up now. Draw soil up to form a ridge along the row when the plants are around 8" (20cm) tall.

Cover strawberries with netting to prevent birds and squirrels causing damage to your fruit. Remove some of the immature runners but retain a few runners to give you plantlets to replace older plants.

Why don't you relax and watch the RHS Chelsea Flower Show on tv or better still, go on a visit to it?

