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A Happy New Year

We are already into February – not too late we hope to wish all our members a Happy New Year. In January we have had snow, ice, stormy weather and quite a lot of warming sunshine. We hope that the storms have not done any damage to you or your homes and the warming sunshine might tempt you out to one of our many events or activities which are listed at the end of this Newsletter.

Can we remind you that our website can be found at: www.ballymoneyu3a.org.uk and contains lots of useful information including how to contact us, all of our Newsletters for the 2023-2024 year and many more photographs of our events and activities than are shown in our monthly Newsletters.

And, please tell your family, friends and neighbours about us – we are always happy to meet new people.

From all of us Welcome back!

Report of Members Meeting - Tuesday 2 January 2024

We held our first meeting of the New Year on 2nd January in the Connect Centre on Model School Road. The Chairman, John Pinkerton, in welcoming the members, speculated as to whether the record size of the audience (over 50% of the membership) was due to a desire to get out of the house after the Christmas/New Year festivities or to hear the guest speaker, retired Appeal Court Judge, the Right Hon. Sir Paul Girvan. He suggested the later and this proved to be well founded.

Sir Paul gave a fascinating account of his entry into the Law, his life as a junior barrister, then as a QC and his elevation to the Bench as a Judge of the High Court. His final years before retiring were as an Appeal Court judge and a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. To finish his talk he demonstrated the different court robes that he would have worn in the various courts in which he sat.

His talk was extremely well received by the members and after a brief question and answer session the vote of thanks was proposed by Patricia Crossley. The Chairman also thanked Sir Paul for his talk and in closing reminded the members that the next monthly meeting would be on Tuesday 6th February in the Connect Centre.

Our chairman also noted that: The Inner Wheel Club of Ballymoney (to which organisation a number of our own members belong) is holding its annual Quiz Night on Wednesday 7th February in the Royal British Legion hall in Towhead Street. It starts at 7.30 pm and the cost is £5.00 per person. It is always a very enjoyable evening and is well worth supporting as the proceeds will help towards funding a number local charities.

John Pinkerton

Sir Paul Girvan and John Pinkerton



Sir Paul Girvan demonstrating one of the various court robes he wore in the various courts in which he sat



Events

Christmas Lunch – 5th December 2023

Just a few photographs from a very enjoyable Christmas Lunch at the Lodge Hotel. Good food, great company and an opportunity to rekindle acquaintances. Several new members joined in.

Marie Hegarty

Rosie, Helen, Barbara, June



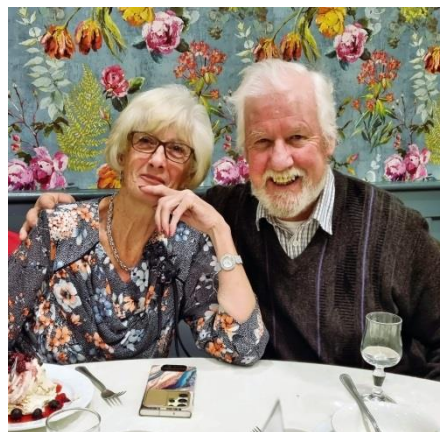
Margaret, Brigid, Olive, Bert



Margaret, Anne, John Elaine



Marie and George and William and Brian



Activity Reports

Coffee Catch-up



Bu3a coffee mornings are proving a popular way of getting to know other members and finding out more about Bu3a. We meet on the last Friday of each month. On 26 January it was encouraging, once again, to receive more new members, and welcome them to Bu3a. Both food and service are good - from a full hearty breakfast, to pastries, or simply a coffee and chat. All members welcome!

Next Catch-Up is Friday 23 February. Drop in between 10.30 am - 12 noon at: NICO'S RESTAURANT, BALLYBRAKES INDUSTRIAL SITE BALLYMONEY. Tables are reserved, in advance. If you wish to join us, simply reply to Julie's email via a text to: 07977297090.

Marie Hegarty

Bu3a Family and Local History Group - 16 January 2024

Fifteen of our members attended our meeting on a snowy Tuesday, 16th January 2024. We were privileged to have an illustrated talk from our BU3A Chairman John Pinkerton entitled "The Pinkertons of Seacon". Being an 8th consecutive John Pinkerton in his family, John traced his family history back to migrants from Scotland in the mid 17th century. He related his family's background as farmers, linen merchants and latterly the last 3 generations as lawyers. His great great grandfather John Pinkerton (1845-1908) had served as an MP at Westminster for Galway 1886-1900, and as a JP and tenant farmer, was a leading speaker and organiser of the Tenant-Right Campaign.

Our John was 3rd generation lawyer in Ballymoney, with all 3 generations serving as Presidents of the Law Society in N Ireland, a unique record for UK lawyers. John's father had served as a "Secret Listener" collecting important radio communications to be passed on to Bletchley Park during World War II. His uncle Tom also had also served in the RAF during WW II and had received many distinguished service medals. John illustrated his talk with several manuscripts, records and photos of historical family heirlooms. Our group thoroughly enjoyed John's presentation and would recommend that John repeats his talk for the full Monthly Members Meeting sometime in the future.

Our next scheduled event will be a visit to PRONI (Public Records of N Ireland) on Tuesday 20th February 2024. We plan to leave Ballymoney by train at 9-30am and return arriving by train to Ballymoney at 5-30pm. Some of our members have registered already for this visit, but any more members interested in joining us should contact myself at gflynn130@btinternet.com or Gladys Mallon at ag4dvc@hotmail.com urgently so that we can have firm numbers and be well prepared for our visit.

John Flynn

John Pinkerton



Despite the weather – a good turn out



Gardening – 25 January 2024



We had a rather small meeting on Thursday; however a very good demonstration dividing plants for planting out. Davy gave us ideas on how to prune blackcurrants, cutting out the old growth hard back as they fruit on new growth. Gooseberries didn't need much pruning as they fruit on older branches. Plum and apple trees need pruning to a light bulb shape. Frances had a selection of perennials, she demonstrating how to separate roots either with two forks or as she uses a saw. Such plants as monkshood, primroses, and a ground cover plant ajuga reptans. We were given cuttings to try our skills at growing them.

A really informative demonstration of separating perennials and pruning fruit trees.

Kathleen Owens

Story Telling

There was no meeting of the storytelling group in January but we will meet again on the second Monday of next month as usual. The date is Monday 12th Feb and is at 11.00 in The Hub Ballymoney.

Mary and I hope that everyone will be able to come along and enjoy the craic and would welcome any new members who wish to listen to the stories or tell some of their own.

George McAuley

General Enquires

Please contact the following for any general enquires.

Role	Name	Phone	E-mail
Membership Secretary:	Elizabeth Stevenson		membershipbu3a@gmail.com
Activities Coordinator:	Kathleen Owens		activitiesbbu3a@gmail.com
Chairperson:	John Pinkerton		jwdp@sky.com

Ballymoney u3a: 2023-2024

Events and Meetings

Date	Event/Meeting	Venue	Information
5 September 2023	Monthly Meeting	Connect Centre	Speaker: Bonnie Cooper, Topic: Hello China
3 October 2023	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Speaker: Adrian Morrow, Topic: Glenarm Castle Estate
7 November 2023	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Information Day. Various Exhibitors
5 December 2023	Monthly Meeting	Lodge Hotel	Christmas Lunch
2 January 2024	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Speaker: Sir Paul Girvan, Retired High Court Judge
6 February 2024	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Speaker: Eddie Lynch, Commissioner For Older People
5 March 2024	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Speaker: Tori Calderwood, Topic: COAST
2 April 2024	Monthly Meeting	Connect	Speaker: David McKeown, Topic: Samaritans
7 May 2024	Monthly Meeting	Connect	AGM, Followed by Scad the Beggars
4 June 2024	Annual Outing	TBC	TBC

Activity	Day/Time	Venue	Leader	Information
ARCHERY	TBC TBC	As advised by Activity Leader	Frances	To be arranged once a month. All equipment provided
BRIDGE	Monday 2.30 pm - 4.30 pm	Castle Community Centre, Castle Street, Ballymoney	Damian	Engaging with others and learning how to play the fascinating game of Bridge
COFFEE CATCHUP	Last Friday each month 10.00 am - 12.00 pm	As advised by Activity Leader	Julie	The group meets new venue at Nico's, at Ballybrakes for socialising over a cup of coffee.
COMPUTERS, IPADS AND MOBILE PHONES	Wednesday 10.30 am - 12:00 pm	As advised by Activity Leader	Michael	Tuition is available for IPAD's, Apple and Android based mobile phones and Microsoft Windows based computers. Subjects covered include: basic how to use; apps such as e-mail; security and for Windows users Microsoft Office products such as Word processing. Each course will run with a minimum of 6 participants. Participants should have their own devices. Courses may be repeated on demand.
CRAFTS	Thursday TBC	As advised by Activity Leader	TBC	Designing and decorating different items using artistic techniques
CREATIVE WRITING	3rd Tuesday each month 12.30 pm - 2.00 pm	Connect Centre, 2-6 Model School Road, Ballymoney BT53 6BH	Sharon	Get together and write stories on given topics.
ENVIRONMENT	Monday weekly TBC	As advised by Activity Leader	Jean	Group getting together to clear rubbish and debris from a local area to make the environment more pleasant. Reflective safety jackets and tools are provided
FAMILY / LOCAL HISTORY	3rd Tuesday each month 10.30 am - 12.00 pm	Connect Centre, 2-6 Model School Road, Ballymoney BT53 6BH	John Flynn	Researching family history for part of the term. Visiting and studying places of historical interest.
GARDENING	3rd Thursday each month 2.00 pm onwards	Ballymoney Community Hub, Robinson Hospital Site	Geoff/Davy	Having some workshops - seed sowing, plant swaps or videos. Mostly going on visits to open gardens.
GOLF	Thursday weekly Starting 10.00 am	As advised by Activity Leader	Donal / Paul	The group meets each week at different golf courses. mainly Benone. They also organise a two day golf holiday twice a year.
NEW ACTIVITY: FOOD FOR THOUGHT	2nd Thursday each month 2.30 pm	As advised by Activity Leader	Irene Barkley	The group will meet once a month to discuss 'Food' and how we use food for energy, nutrition, entertainment and healing.
OUT TO LUNCH	3rd Friday each month 12.30 pm for 1.00 pm.	As advised by Activity Leader	Eileen	Meeting at various restaurants for good food, good company and good chat.
PHOTOGRAPHY	2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of the month 10.30 am - 12.00 pm.	Connect Centre, 2-6 Model School Road, Ballymoney BT53 6BH	Davy	Learning techniques of taking good photos on various locations. The next week studying those photos followed by discussions.
READING GROUP	2nd Tuesday of the month 10.30 am - 12.00 pm	Connect Centre, 2-6 Model School Road, Ballymoney BT53 6BH	Mary	Getting together to read a suggested book and then sharing opinions.
STORY TELLING	2nd Monday of each month 11.00 am - 1.00 pm	Ballymoney Community Hub, Robinson Hospital Site	Mary / George	Some very intriguing stories are told in this group, with each member imparting their knowledge or relating their childhood memories perhaps.
UKELELE	TBC 11.00 am - 12.00 pm	As advised by Activity Leader	Damian / Mary	Providing harmonious melodies using a Ukelele. The Ukelele is provided at first until you become competent.