

Email: info@lisburnu3a.org
 Website: <https://www.lisburnu3a.org/>



Charitable Status No NI103276



Lisburn U3A Committee

HELP AND SUPPORT

If you or any LU3A member you know is in difficulty during this time of social distancing, please contact any of the Committee. We will do our best to provide support and helpful information. Email the Chair or Secretary.

COVID-19

MEETINGS ARE ON BUT...

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, the **Lisburn u3A MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE TAKING PLACE USING ZOOM**. Links are sent out a day before the meetings.

NEXT MEETING:

25 FEBRUARY 2pm

Communications

ITEMS FOR MEETINGS

Anyone with news for the full LU3A membership should phone or email the Chair, Secretary or Editor with your items so they may be distributed to all.

See email addresses on the line below:



EMAILS: chairlu3a@hotmail.com

editorlu3a@gmail.com

info@lisburnu3a.org

MEMBERSHIP

Sandra Stokes

MEMBERSHIP HELD STEADY AT 328 MEMBERS.

EMAILS: chairlu3a@hotmail.com

editorlu3a@gmail.com

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Hello Everyone!

- Coffee & Chat was held Thurs. 11th Feb, hosted by Margaret Hanna and Elodie Ellingsen. There was lots of laughter and enjoyment.
- The next **Coffee & Chat** is set for **Thursday 11 March, at 11.00am via Zoom**, hosted by Pearl and Trevor. Come along, it's bound to be fun!
- The next **Committee meeting** will be held on **18 March at 6.00pm** via Zoom.
- The next **Monthly Meeting** will take place on **Thursday 25 February at 2.00pm** via Zoom. This month we're going to see some film footage from **Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive (DFA)** relating to Lisburn and its environs, travel and tourism in Northern Ireland, LU3A activities and more. It's an **interactive presentation** so we hope you'll join the conversation and share your memories.
- The **March Monthly Meeting** will take place on **Thursday 25th March at 2:00pm** via Zoom.

MISCELLANEOUS

From: LIZ WEIR, MBE

Storyteller in Residence , Libraries NI

If anyone wants to join my Saturday night event please email me liz@lizweir.net

For library storytelling sessions see events on www.armstory.org.uk.

Happy birthday!
Liz

Liz Weir MBE
Storyteller in Residence , Libraries NI
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LESLEY KIRK

I've just come across this website. If you scroll down there is a comprehensive list of websites offering virtual tours and talks.

I'll post the link on the face book page but as many of you aren't on Facebook, I'm also submitting to the newsletter.

<https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home>

Last Month Recycle Your Waste | Kicks Count

Apologies to **Lesley Kirk** – I left her name off of this submission.

TAM – THIRD AGE MATTERS MAGAZINE

It has come to our attention that those who have previously opted out of receiving the magazine have started receiving it again. This may be due to the rebranding that has taken place.

IF YOU WISH TO OPT OUT OF THE MAGAZINE, PLEASE INFORM JOAN AT info@lisburnu3a.org AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. This information needs to be sent in soon!

LISBURN U3A IS 10 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR!

READ OTHER MEMBER’S STORIES ABOUT

LISBURN U3A BEGINNINGS

and

WHY I JOINED LISBURN U3A

SALLY CUNNINGHAM

I suppose I must be a joiner of groups, throughout my life I have been involved with Peace Groups, Women’s Groups and protest groups, and in my working days I ran several supporting women. So, when talking to an acquaintance she started to tell me about a group called U3A and how they did all sorts of activities including walking. This happened approximately fifteen years ago just as I retired from work. I got the information from her and rang the person who organised the walking and it went from there. I had officially joined Belfast U3A, and the first ‘scramble’ was Long Seefin in the Mourne. Going along the first time to anything new is never easy but as I arrived, I was quickly put at ease by the group. I couldn’t wait until the next month to go into the mountains again. I then started to walk on other days with the ramblers a different group of people but just as friendly. So, it went on I made many friend in Belfast U3A and took part in lots of ‘the groups’. I joined Lisburn after it had been going for about two years and the same experience applies. I learned to play bridge, I visited the theatre, and had many outings. Walking holidays with both U3As have been wonderful and we have had many visiting Spain, Portugal, Mallorca to name a few. In Lisburn I was secretary for several years and being on the Committee is a great way of getting to know people and a peep behind the scenes as to how it all works. I organise the Fringe Group which is for more local theatre shows, mostly in the Island Centre. Last year I started a Genealogy Group, we have had a visit and a tour of PRONI in Belfast and a couple of meetings in the Lisburn Library The regional U3A have organisers who look after various groups and they were able to send me information on research which was sent out to the group. This is a group where members have to be motivated to do the research themselves and the past year has not been easy. I started to attend the Irish class in Belfast and it was going well with good attendance every week. I’m not too fond of on-line learning so hope fully we will get back to the classroom soon. Friends made in Belfast, many are now in Lisburn and we all still enjoy walking maybe not to the top of mountains anymore but getting out there and enjoying the outdoors and the company. Just a few thoughts about my experience of U3A and the many friends I have made through it.

DES DONNELLY**Editor's Note:**

In August 2020 I received a poem from Des Donnelly about the Pandemic, called **Samedays**. Since that time Des has become our Resident Bard, and my go-to man for editing emergencies like having extra space to fill. Des has written a piece especially for the 10th Anniversary which I was chosen to read at the monthly meeting. I hope the French group forgave my unusual French pronunciation!

**An Ode to U3A**

It's the year 2012 and I want to break free,
from the things that devour your time and energy,
like markets and contracts, procurement and V.A.T.
And little did I realise or indeed foresee,
that there's a life beyond the retirement party.

It was a time to make time to smell the roses,
to listen to music and poetry to compose,
to feel the wind in your face when riding your bike,
to escape to the mountains on a good hike,
to lie on in morning and get up when you like.

But I have so many interests like the arts and sport,
going places, meeting folks and winding them up.
Talking the talk, telling stories and sharing a joke,
often shooting the bull and chewing the fat.
So, tell me, where do I go to get all of that?

So, I'm thinking about it for days and days,
when my good friend Gerry, he called to say,
'Des, it's a no brainer, go and join U3A '
And that's what I did and later on that night,
had a good look at Lisburn U3A website.

I found Scrabble and Scrambling, Snooker and Singing,
there was Badminton and Bridge, Book Clubs and Bowling,
Sewing and Painting, Photography and Karate.
Yogalates, Theatre, Hiking and Crochet.
Et si tu veux une autre linge, ils t'apprendront Le Francais.

But the lure of the mountains was too much to resist,
so as a Scrambler and Hillbilly, I did enlist,
to spend days in the Mourne with Judith and Stanley,
glorious climbs on Binnian, Bernagh and Rocky,
days of fresh air, fun, and camaraderie.

So, I've got to know people and made lots of new friends,
a list of their names, would be a list without end.
Maybe, one day, I'll write a poem about them.
For everyone has a story that we should embrace,
a friend may be waiting behind a stranger's face.

So, thanks to the committee and the leaders too,
may your feet be swift and your step always true,
we really appreciate all that you do.
And so, that's it, what is there more left to say,
but good luck and may God bless Lisburn U3A

Des Donnelly
January 2021

GEORGE CHAMBERS

I was at the first meeting of LU3A in the Island Centre all those years ago, when we were younger and all excited at a new project starting. A lot has changed since then, we are older, and maybe not wiser, but LU3A still goes on. I am not sure about speaking at the meeting but will give a little insight about the Golf.

We have had some enjoyable outings, and it should be known we introduced Social Distancing before it really became necessary. It should also be noted we had mixed groups, but unfortunately one Lady player who shall be nameless, could not stick the pace and had a lovely rest in the club house! There are some good players in our group, some with bad maths and memories, and some who just lost count of how many shots they had taken....

We saw some lovely courses and saw places on them that the clubs did not know existed. My other exploits with the LU3A include ballroom dancing and the singing group. Sadly to spoil everyones Christmas, I have been selected to tell a joke!


Editor's Note: Don't disparage yourself, George, your joke made my day!

JACQUI'S TEASERS

Jacqui Townsley

This month's teasers: - What is it?
Clue: Some of you may remember these!

(A) (B) (C)




Answers next month!


Jacqui Townsley

Answers to last month's secret messages:


ADORE: Amethyst Diamond
Opal Ruby Emerald



REGARD: Ruby Emerald
Garnet Amethyst Ruby
Diamond



DEAREST: Diamond Emerald
Amethyst Ruby Emerald
Sapphire Turquoise



FILM GROUP

Judith Prentice

If you've got a spare 20 mins during your very busy lockdown, would recommend spending it over a cup of coffee with a lovely little film called "Ruby". This was filmed in NI and stars Dan Gordon and Kate O'Toole. You can find it on BBC iPlayer. Also, if you have access to Netflix, you may be interested in "The News of the World" starring Tom Hanks in his first western. (This one's for you, Bill Ingleston ! 🤔)

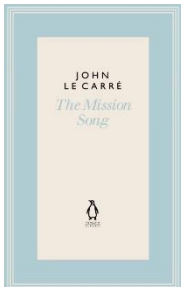
If anyone has recommendations on other good films on Apps or iPlayers, please let me know and I will pass them on to everyone via the Newsletter.

BOOK GROUP 2

Joan Bryson

Our March meeting will be on Tues. 30th at 10.30 am. At present we **preZOOM** that will be online.

We will celebrate the great writer John le Carre who died in late 2020 by reading 'The Mission Song'. Salvo is a London based interpreter from a Congolese background who's employers include the secret services His latest assignment sucks him into a shady world of financiers and warlords where nothing or nobody may be what they appear.



TEN PIN BOWL

New Leader?

Help Wanted

As you know, Jean Needham has moved to England, and will be sorely missed!

While she is continuing as Group Leader for the French Group, which is meeting via Zoom, that isn't possible for Ten Pin Bowling! Contact Keith Ineson if you would like to volunteer to take leadership of this group, so we can be ready to recommence at lockdown end.

CONCERT & THEATRE GROUP

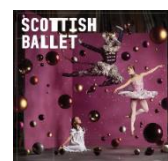
Jacqui Townsley Reah Browne

Restoration at the Grand Opera House progresses, but over the past few months the disruption caused by Covid-19 has had a significant impact both on the restoration work that started in January and on show tours that were due to visit theatres across the UK and Ireland.

As a result, they have had to postpone four productions that were due to take place late 2021 & 2022 - Goldilocks and the Three Bears, MAMMA MIA!, The Nutcracker, and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time. However, the good news is that they hope to have these rescheduled shows back on general sale in September.



When GOH opens again we will see lots of changes – AND I CAN'T WAIT!!!



IRISH GROUP

KEITH INESON

The Irish group came into being just over a year ago. We had our first set of lessons locally and then started going to Turas in Belfast for our second set of lessons. And then Lockdown came and made everything stall. Turas started classes on line and some of us were able to access these.

We are surviving though like so many of the groups under very difficult circumstances. However, members are still enjoying learning.

Here are some of the comments I have received. One person wrote: -

I love languages and never had a chance to learn Irish until U3A introduced this class. I am of an advanced age but still love languages. I have coped well with lockdown as I have a dog and need to walk him every day in the park and have discovered a lady who speaks Irish so I try to greet her in Irish and she has given me some tips which is very helpful. Also I keep in touch with my friends although I miss actual contact with them. I am glad Turas has put classes on Zoom as I still would like to learn some more Irish. I hope to learn a bit more in the next term which I have signed up for.

Another wrote: -

For ages I have wanted to learn how to pronounce Irish, understand the structure of sentences & develop vocabulary - for use on frequent visits down south. I found Irish Zoom classes suited me well. I enjoy the leader's anecdotes & stories. She introduced rules & grammar right from the beginning which I found helpful. I hope zoom classes continue alongside conversation opportunities. Lockdown has provided time to explore a lot of online material relating to Irish & together with other things has kept me reasonably sane! I'm very enthusiastic about learning Irish & am especially grateful to you for setting up the Group.

And yet another: -

Of the many things that made me interested in Irish, one was the origin of place names. For example, "Lis" and "dun" are common versions of the Irish and Scottish Gaelic for a fort or stronghold and help explain Lisburn, Dunmurry and many other Lis... and Dun... places around us. Mór meaning big gives us Knockmore (big hill), Dromore (big ridge) etc.

When I heard that the phrase "that is good" is "is maith sin" in Irish and pronounced "smoy shin" and so explains the origin of the English word "smashin'" or "smashing" I thought this is a language worth learning!

Turas in East Belfast have been welcoming and patient with us slow learners so it has been positive and very enjoyable learning some Irish there.

And finally from me: -

All told it is a very enjoyable and social group and long may we continue – even with thickos like me trailing behind.

-  LU3A Jan 2012 NLpdf.pdf
-  LU3A Nov 2011 NLpdf.pdf
-  LU3A Oct 2011 NLpdf.pdf
-  LU3A Aug 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  LU3A Dec 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  LU3A July 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  LU3A June 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  LU3A May 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  LU3A Sep 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf
-  Nov 2012 Photo Supplement.pdf

David Todd supplied these archival copies of newsletters and photo supplements, which will be going up on the website for everyone to access and enjoy.



Thursday Evening Bridge at the Racquet Club – 2012.

BOWLS

CATHERINE MURDOCK

Editor's Note: Catherine and I had a lovely conversation, which I will try to repeat for you as accurately as I can. I'll use the first person, so remember it's **Catherine speaking**, not me!

In the beginning, I was so enthusiastic about bowling.

At a very early meeting, when I had just joined, someone got up and suggested that we start a Golf Group, and I stood up and said "What about Bowling?" Because my Bowling group had stopped you see, and I was not longer able to bowl in matches and that. And I was bereft, in a way. So that's why it started in the U3A, and I couldn't believe how enthusiastic everybody was! And we started with 7, and it just built up every week from there. And now we've had nearly 50 at times.

It was mentioned in the meeting, and in the newsletter, and people just kept showing up! It was difficult at first but worth the effort as we have seen.

We Started with Thursday morning, then Andrew started on the Tuesday afternoon and then we added Mondays. In the winter it's indoor, then in summer it's outdoor, and we go straight from one to the other, hardly missing a week in the year, unless holidays came. It is basically continuous. Many activities stop in the summer, but we went on.

Always the bowling has been more into the social side, and for enjoyment. There are a few more competitive players, and we do have wee competitions at times, but we have laughter and conversation, which you wouldn't find at a true bowling club. We usually have 1 meal out a year, and the Monday group had something booked but pandemic meant we cancelled. They have little lunches, Christmas gathering, and dinners when prizes would be given out.

The problem now is that you need a new group leader, and assistant. Someone to be there every bowling day to see that everything is running smoothly. Kilmackee is very good and all the setup is done for us, and the kitchen is available to us.

Indoor Bowling is Monday, Tuesday afternoon, at Kilmackee, and Outdoor Bowling is Tuesday afternoon, Thursday mornings, and not this last time, but we have had Saturdays, and these are at Lisnagavy and Lagan Valley.



The opening day of the Outdoor Bowling Group

YOU JUST CAN'T HOLD A TRUE THESPIAN BACK!



David Todd and Stanley Prentice at the dress rehearsal for a sketch the committee performed at the **first annual dinner** at Lisburn Golf Club



David and Stanley performing on the day!

KAY MERCER (Read out at the meeting)

Kay and husband John first heard about Lisburn U3A from Donna & George Irwin, going to monthly meetings and joined in mid-2011. They enjoyed making many new friends through joining the different activities offered. Bowls, Golf, Walking Groups "Lets go days out" and crochet.

Through attending a meeting when Neil Powell asked for volunteers to foster and train a puppy suitable to be trained as an assistance dog, Honey came into their lives and brought new friends associated with Guide Dogs. It was a wonderful experience with such a happy outcome when Honey was matched up with Rebecca, a 6 year old who was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome and autism. They followed the news of all the dogs in the group and how they were transforming lives.

Kay said the support she has had from U3A members this past sad difficult year has been vital to her well-being. U3A brings opportunities to meet new friends and try different activities and hobbies.

BRENDA PALMER (Read out at the meeting)

I joined the U3A shortly after it's opening of the Lisburn branch. Lesley Kirk told me about it. I didn't know what to expect as I attended the first meeting on my own. I could not begin to tell you how friendly everyone was and the lovely sense of belonging it created.

I joined the book group as I have always been an avid reader. This has pushed me to read books I wouldn't normally choose and I enjoy the discussions immensely along with coffee and a chat.

Having knitted all my life I wanted to learn how to crochet so of course I joined the crochet group. All these years later my knitting needles are gathering dust! We have all become close friends and have shared our joys and our sorrows and of course our crochet skills have improved amazingly all in the lovely atmosphere of Maureen's front room.

I initially joined the Pilates group but when Lesley Kirk was no longer able to continue as Group Leader, Freda Bell and I took over the job. We lost our Pilates instructor but We were able to find Ros our present instructor who teaches a combination of Yoga and Pilates so titled Yogalates. I cannot praise Ros highly enough. She is an excellent teacher keeping us all fit and supple. She caters to our individual needs and restrictions beautifully. She really goes the extra mile and has become a good friend to us all. During this time of Covid she is working hard running classes on Zoom and it's great to feel we are still part of the community and keeping stretched.

I'm sure we will all be glad when we get through this time of Covid restrictions which hopefully will be soon now with the vaccine. Won't it just be lovely to meet up again as normal?

I'd just like to thank Margaret and everyone on the U3A committee who have worked tirelessly to keep us together throughout this time of Covid. Your hard work is greatly appreciated.

JOAN HAMILTON (Spoken at the Meeting)

When I retired, I joined Belfast U3A, the nearest one at the time, so I knew what a good organisation it was. When Lisburn U3A started I joined and was on the first committee holding the position of treasurer. This was easier in the early years than it is now, with a smaller membership and no worries about producing accounts for the Charity Commission.

I suggested at one of the early meetings that we should have a gardening group – a suggestion which was well received. I said that I'd organise the first outing but that I wasn't going to be the group convenor so I needed someone to take this on. No one did, but Jacqui kindly offered to help, so we ran the group until 2018. Although we were called the gardening group, we didn't do any actual gardening, but we did visit lots of lovely gardens in both the north and south of Ireland.

Also with Cynthia I started a beginner's golf group. When the beginners passed our ability to teach them any more – and to be honest that didn't take too long! – we then widened the group for players and so the golf group began. We visited lots of lovely golf courses and actually, did play golf! The group is now in the capable hands of Madge, who was one of our beginners!

I'd recommend U3A to anyone who is no longer working. It's a great way to get to know people, make friends, take on new activities, and learn new things. The monthly meetings allow us to hear interesting speakers and meet those folk that we don't come across in the groups we attend.

Hopefully later this year we can resume normal activities and how great will that be!!

DAVID TODD**Lisburn U3A – the beginning**

After a tentative, initial meeting, a small number of individuals, *who probably should have known better*, agreed to explore the potential for setting up a U3A branch in Lisburn.

In the olden days there were originally only six hard-working souls on the steering group running the entire operation!

We owe a lot of thanks to the original chairman, Stuart Hudson, the extremely hard working and efficient secretary, Elizabeth Fleming, the treasurer Joan Hamilton, the speaker organiser, Gil Colvin, the interest group convener, Monica Rafferty and the venue and media organiser, Stanley Prentice.

But for the hard work and dedication of these six, the flickering flame that was the fragile beginnings of Lisburn U3A could just as easily been snuffed out. Their enthusiasm kept the flame of hope alive. Very quickly the flame spread and Lisburn folk began joining in ever increasing numbers.

As membership rose and the number of activities (and responsibilities) increased, there was a need to bring in more support for the original six. Irenë Orr, Jean Needham, Judy Prentice and myself, David Todd – all shy and retiring individuals, agreed to throw ourselves into the swirl of activity at the burgeoning centre of Lisburn U3A.

We were pushing an open door – There proved to be a need for organised activities for Lisburn folk who had retired on the outside, but who were still in their twenties on the inside! Even though we were not yet an official U3A group, and were still run by a non-elected steering group, membership quickly soared to over 100.

We came of age on 29th September 2011 when we were officially accepted into the U3A fold. Steering group members became the first LU3A committee and had the dubious pleasure of serving for another two years!

The rest is history!

Why did I join?

I had previously moved from South Belfast to Lisburn and wanted to make new friends.

I had recently retired and wanted to explore new activities and try out new skills.

I wanted to add to the community and not just rely on what was there.

I was innocent enough not to realise how efficiently the U3A movement sucks you into organising things and making you do things that you would never have thought possible!

What do I get from it?

Far more than I could ever repay! Friendship, enjoyment, entertainment, banter, togetherness, new-found skills, contentment, pride

What activities am I involved in?

A wide range over the years - Archery, Ballroom Dancing, Bowling, Let's Go, Rambling, Wine Tasting,

What is my best memory?

Trying to hoist Margaret Walker over a five-bar gate!

We have a photograph to prove it!

Walking in Majorca or France or Spain or Mourne country or Rathlin or the Tow Path or

Winning at bowls, losing at bowls, teaching others how to play bowls – I just don't like cleaning bowls.

What does LU3A mean to me?

LU3A is a constant reminder to me that those who reach retirement age are not at the tail end of something, they are only at the beginning of a brand-new world. Retired people's enthusiasm, energy, imagination and ingenuity just knows no bounds. I am honoured to be one of the gang!



David's note: Margaret is feeling perfectly well – We are just trying to get her over the fence!