

Inverness and Black Isle u3a Newsletter

May 2026

Welcome



**To the May
Newsletter**



Can you sing, play an instrument, read some poetry? Any or all of the above? Well the birthday team would like to hear from you. At the u3a 25th birthday party celebrations on 25th October, we hope to be able to showcase all the wonderful talent that our members have so step forward, don't hide your light under a bushel, this could be your time to shine in the sun. Your u3a needs you to make the day a roaring success. Contact the team with all your ideas - Lorna, Avril, Fiona, Daphne, Mary, Sally, Lesley

**Calling
all
talent**



If you know of anyone else with these talents who might like to come and entertain us, let us know about them too.



A word from our Convener

Our AGM will take place on 18th May at 2pm in Culloden Baptist Church.

Most of the committee and office holders are willing to continue for next year. Nominations are sought for the following:-

Vice-Convener the post is currently vacant, it would be hoped that the person elected would take over as Convener in May 2027

A committee member to replace Lesley Williams who is stepping down because of ill health

Nominations should have a proposer and seconder and the agreement of the nominee.

Further information about the AGM will be circulated as a separate email nearer the time.

We also have a number of other areas outside of the committee where we need help

Publicity

Mainly to try to raise our profile especially as we approach our 25th Birthday.

Outing

To help, probably together with the travel group, to organise day trips open to all of our members, particularly to link in with our general meetings. Such as The Flow Country and The Arctic Convoy Museum.

Technical Team

To help with our general meetings setting up the equipment and also preparing recordings. In addition it would be good to have teams of people looking after many of our areas rather than just one person e.g finance, newsletter and membership

Some other points

Please check the venue for our meetings. Recently we have had members miss meetings because of this. In particular we use 2 different buildings in North Kessock, the village hall and also the Community Hub. The latter is opposite the North Kessock Hotel and is the old ticket office

The Summer

Unlike many u3as we normally close for August although some of our members head off to u3a summer schools. Recently a number of us attended a day workshop in Pitlochry with 4 varied talks and a lunch. The committee wonder if there would be support for something similar here. If you would possibly be interested in such a day do please let me know. lbconvener@gmail.com

Longer Walks Group



18 members of the above group enjoyed a superb 7 mile walk, in warm spring sunshine on the Tomatin to Slochd circular route. This is part of the old General Wades road network and takes walkers through an interesting variety of environments – fields of grazing sheep, ancient woodlands and finally out onto the moor, where the group admired some of the many “way marker” stones, used to ensure travellers in the past didn’t lose their way.



Shorter Walks group



The short walks group continues to flourish with new members joining and good attendances on walks. Since January, we have had a mixture of new walks and some “old faithfuls” like in the Slochd area and the circuits of Loch Kinellan and Loch Moy. Also, we have had three new walk leaders, namely Margaret Lewis, Carol Grant and Sally Moore. Our largest attendance was in February when Margaret Lewis led twenty four of us on a walk towards Culloden from UHI ending with a lunch at the Sheiling Restaurant at UHI. Many thanks to all participants for their chat and especially to all the walk leaders who keep the group functioning.



Mackintosh Memorial, Loch Moy

Travel Group

The Travel Group took to the sky for the first time in March when 7 members travelled to Belfast for a 3-night city break. The main event was a group visit to the spectacular Titanic Experience, but members also took in visits to City Hall, the Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens and some took a day tour around the Antrim Coast with the Giants Causeway, the top feature of the day. Sharing good food, good stories and good humour made the trip a pleasure from start to finish.

Group discussions are also well in motion to continue with a busy trip programme through 2026 and beyond with plans in development for European city break destinations and river cruising in 2027.

Next up for spring is a Portree visit in April, followed by a busy May with a 'Waverley' cruise and an overnight visit to take in Cowden Japanese Gardens (Fife) and Branklyn gardens (Perth). A special U3A travel group experience at RAF Lossiemouth now looks likely in May for a restricted team of members (12) due to obvious RAF security requirements. Clearly this one will be dependent on the situation with global issues at the time.



Belfast Town Hall

This is what happens when the travel group visit a distillery!



Beyond, into summer and autumn, members are working on overnight and day visit plans to visit the Falkirk Wheel, Kyle of Lochalsh by train, Morayvia Aviation/Elgin Motor Museums, Thurso and York and other member suggestions arise regularly.

It is thought prudent to book the accommodation in Thurso (Premeir Inn) by next month. The current suggestion is that we go Friday 11th September through to 13th or 14th September. It has been noted that the Premier Inn is cheaper on Saturday and Sunday nights. A decision on this WILL be made at the next meeting on Tuesday May 5th Some folk may choose to go for 3 nights some for 4. If you can't make this meeting and want to go to Thurso, get in touch to let us know.

Since forming last year, the travel group has continued to grow steadily in popularity and each member, in proposing a trip that appeals to others, has successfully taken on the responsibility to follow it through and make the arrangements required.

Next Travel Group meeting - Tuesday 5th May at 10.30 in North Kessock Community Hub.

Writing Group



The Inverness and Black Isle writing group had a very constructive meeting in March which outlined the purpose of the group. It is to be for all types of creative writing, stories, plays, poems etc and will include exercises to help members develop their skills. Members will also be able to bring examples of their own writing for discussion with the group. The purpose is to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere for discussion and learning. Clive Soley is group leader together with Agnes Sangster.

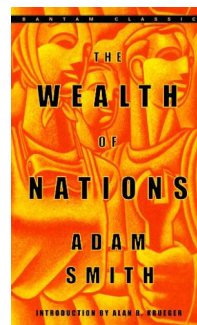
The Group will meet on the last Monday of every month from 1pm to 3pm and it is hoped this will always be at the community Hub in North Kessock. Any enquiries, please contact Clive Soley (clivesoley@btinternet.com)

The April meeting looked at an unpublished story written by one of our members who said " After 27 years I lost my best friends. 27 YEARS!!! How could I have been so careless? And after such a long time. We had not quarrelled or had a major disagreement over anything. So what actually happened? "

This was quite a powerful statement from a life experience that provides a lot of thought for story lines.

Our next meeting is at the North Kessock Community hub (<https://www.northkessockcommunityhub.org/>). 1pm to 3pm on Monday 25th May. We will be looking at some historic photographs from Egypt and discussing how photographs can stimulate writing, and how "a single image can suggest multiple stories, inviting us to imagine the people, emotions and events that exist beyond the frame". We will all have a go at interpreting the same scene and discuss the very different and creative things we come up with.

Political Economy Group



The new PolEcon group held its first meeting in late March. Appropriately we looked at the work of 'the father of modern economics', Adam Smith, and how his ideas have been distorted to justify current thinking.

It was clear that there is a yearning for better economic knowledge so that the current system operating in the UK, to the harm of most of us, can be challenged and to show that alternatives exist.

The group agreed to meet monthly, in late April and then on the 28th of May. New members welcome. If interested, contact Andrew Fraser at amfraser1297@yahoo.co.uk

.....and finally

Thank you for getting everything to me early this month. Back to normal in May, please let me have your contributions for June's newsletter by 24th May. Do keep sending photos as long as the members are in agreement. Please send everything to ibiu3newsletter@gmail.com