

Inverness and Black Isle u3a Newsletter

October 2026

Welcome



**To the October
newsletter**

Membership cards

Have you got your membership card yet? If not they will be available at all our general meetings, or from your special interest group leader – make sure you pick yours up so you know what's going on in our u3a

***Are you ready
to party on
Thursday 15th
October? 1 to
4 pm
Townhouse,
Inverness***

With two weeks to go there is still time to get your tickets for our 25th birthday party.

We have got a great afternoon lined up with entertainment and refreshments. But don't leave it too long, with only two weeks to go it will be an afternoon not to be missed

Group Leaders Presentation Day



The Inverness and Black isle u3a had their first general meeting of 2026/27 on Thursday 7th September at the North Kessock Village Hall. We had a magnificent turnout of over 55 members, who were treated to a grand display of all (25) special interest groups posters, plus presentations from 8 special interest group leaders. Tea, coffee and biscuits was provided for by our very able “catering gang”

New members were signed up to the u3a, and several special interest group leaders reported receiving enquiries about joining their groups. Members had plenty of time to chat informally with special interest group leaders, both before and after the presentations, as well as catching up with friends over refreshments.



This year our u3a has produced membership cards (many thanks to Doug for this), these cards are a one stop shop containing all the information about our u3a – committee member’s names and roles in the committee; special interest groups and their leaders; and dates, venues and topics of the general meetings to be held throughout the year. If you haven’t got yours yet, pick them up at the next general meeting, or let the leaders of the special interest group to which you belong know, and they can let the membership secretary know.

**Next General meeting of
the Inverness and Black
isle u3a - Friday 9th October
at 11.00 in the Culloden-
Balloch Baptist Church,
Wellside Road, Balloch**

At the above general meeting, Dr John Barrett will present a most interesting, illustrated account of the areas surrounding Forres and Elgin during medieval times. Dr Barrett is a professional archivist, occasional archaeologist, historian, walker and cyclist who has published a number of books on the topic and I am sure it will prove to be a most interesting talk.

Coffee and Craic

Political Economy Group

The Political Economy Group will hold its next meeting on Tuesday in afternoon 20th October. Its main purpose is to help us better understand the economic choices which are made which have such a big impact on our lives.

The week after the meeting the new Chancellor will deliver his Budget. Will he continue with the same choices which have failed most of us since the 1980s? Will he move to the real alternatives which exist and have worked in the past and which could lead to a better world to leave to our children and grandchildren?

If you have thoughts about this or would just like to know more about these issues the group would welcome you to join us. Please contact Andrew Fraser at
07846 606 740 or
amfraser1297@yahoo.co.uk



At our September meeting at the Palace Hotel the Coffee and Craic Group celebrated the forthcoming World Coffee Day on 1st October. For the coffee aficionados amongst us, it was a way of honouring coffee growers across the world who make it possible for us to enjoy our morning coffee.

As well as our usual lively conversation, we had a quiz related to different kinds of coffee and all things coffee-related. The quiz was designed to test attendees knowledge about coffee in general. Many of the questions were fairly easy to answer, with a few more challenging ones thrown in for good measure. The final question - 'What's the main difference between espresso-based coffee drinks and brewed coffee?' was probably the one that stumped most people.

The winner of the quiz, who scored 8 points out of a possible 10, was Sue Tompkins. Sue's prize was the Marks and Spencer Coffee Collection, with its 5 coffee-filled chocolates, comprising Mocha, Caramel Latte, Oat Flat White, Cappuccino and Espresso.

After so many rainy days, we were fortunate to have been blessed with brilliant sunshine, which I think left most of us feeling quite uplifted.

Travel group

Any interest in a Poetry Reading Group?

This is an idea that worked very well in the previous U3A branch I was in. We sat round a table and took it in turns to read a poem aloud. Sometimes there was discussion about the poem. Depending on how many people were there on the day, we each read two or three poems. One of the pleasures of this was hearing works by a wide variety of poets, many more than any one person knows. In the previous branch, a few people also wrote poetry and sometimes read one of their own poems.

Very provisionally, I propose meeting monthly on the third Monday morning of the month. But if some other time would be better, please say. Venue will depend on how many people are interested, but do say if you have a strong preference.

If this sounds interesting, please contact me by email at iibiu3awebsite@gmail.com.

Six Members travelled by train and bus to Thurso on Friday 11th September, which is an exceptional journey. Some hiking was done for those arriving earlier on the Friday. We stayed at the Premier Inn, which is a very short distance from Thurso Train Station, for 3 nights and participated in various activities. On Saturday, two members sailed from Scrabster by ferry and did a whistle-stop tour of Orkney, and took in all the major sites that the beautiful island had to offer. Two members travelled to Wick for some exploration and two visited the North Coast Visitor Centre in the centre of town. We all had a very enjoyable day. On Sunday we all visited Stannergill Whisky Distillery in Castletown, with some whisky sampling, followed by lunch in their restaurant, and then took a short scenic walk to the very interesting Heritage Museum in Castlehill.

The Museum gave us an insight into the quarrying of stone slabs used on important buildings all over the World, fossils and RAF memorabilia. Each night we got back together for an evening meal and a catch up on the day's events. Particularly good was the meal at the Tapas Restaurant (Capilla) in Scrabster on Saturday evening. We were lucky with the weather and relaxed on our train trip back to Inverness.



New Group “STROLLS”

The group aims for short easy walks, mainly on the flat, though could include forest walks and uneven ground and some elevation. Aimed at those who can no longer walk our beautiful hills but still need to get out into our lovely environment.

Short Walks group



We are a friendly sociable group, we stop for breaks and coffee where possible, with walks tailored to those in the group and their abilities.

Group leaders Eileen Bramley and Patricia Burton.

Future walk dates:-

Wednesdays 7th October and 4th November. Venues to be arranged.

Fortnightly Short Walks have continued over the summer with a good turnout on each. Many thanks to the members who have prewalked and lead walks in such a variety of places. Without your input the group would not function.

The following walks are proposed for the Autumn.

October 7th — Strathpeffer

October 21st—Craig Phadrig

November 4th—TBA by Audrey

November 18th—Dingwall Heritage Trail plus

December 2nd—Abriachan

December 16th—King’s Steps Nairn

(joint Christmas walk with other walking groups)

.....and finally

Thank you all for your interesting items this month. Please let me have your items for next month’s newsletter by 25th October to ibiu3anewsletter@gmail.com

I’m looking forward to seeing you all at the 25th birthday party. 🎈