

Group News

From Jan Bundy, Groups Co-ordinator 01875 341022

September start up

Many groups have a short break for the summer months for holidays, family visits, enjoying travel, the Festival, and the garden. Others continue to meet, and some, such as the Art out of Doors Group, run only during the warmer weather. The pleasure of looking forward to joining our groups again helps us welcome the autumn. Now is the time to get back to pleasurable lifelong learning with our favourite group or groups as we move into the cooler months and, if you are like me, it is difficult to choose between the many interesting groups that we have in East Lothian U3A. So enjoy your U3A activities in the year ahead, and "see you there".

Newly formed groups

This autumn three new groups are starting up and by the time this newsletter goes to press two will have had their first meeting: **Scrabble** and **Spanish Conversation**.

Exploring Philosophy: the first planning meeting for this will be on 12 September. It is not too late to register your interest for this group. Telephone Liz Reid on 01620 893036.

New group proposals

Recorder playing for fun. Could this be you? Some of us may have played a recorder in our earlier years. Why not again and why not now? There are a few interested people so if this is something that could get you back into the pleasure of making music with others, then please let me know - we could make a start before Christmas.

Current affairs. Some members have expressed an interest in forming this group, needing a forum in which to explore intelligently the varied and contentious issues of our times. If you would be interested in joining such a group, please telephone me with your name, address and phone number and we can arrange to have a preliminary meeting about it in the autumn.

Weekends away. An interest in forming a group to occasionally go away for weekends with others has been expressed. If this is something that might interest you, please let me know.

Wine appreciation. Would you like to join a wine appreciation group? An opportunity for convivial gatherings and increased appreciation of regional/international wines. I am pleased to say that one of our members has offered to share his experience in leading such a group, so do let me know if this interests you and we can I hope get a group started before Christmas.

Reminder - from Philip Taylor

Matters Musical is starting up again on 12 October. Downbeat 2.15 pm, The Stables, Whittingehame.

And finally

Liaisons francaises? oui, mais pas dangereuses! French connections are becoming a habit: The **French Conversation Group** has met up twice recently with our Edinburgh U3A counterparts. On the last occasion we met at La Petite Folie, Randolph Place where fluency was enhanced by the delicious food, wine and good company of our friends. I think we have set a precedent and look forward to more get togethers in the coming year.

From Jan Bundy, French Conversation Group Leader.

Welcome to New Members

All those members who joined during the last year are invited to a **coffee morning** to meet each other as well as members of the committee and group leaders. The occasion will help new members find out more about all our activities.

Saturday 7 October 10 – 12 am, in the **Trinity Centre** (near Holy Trinity Church), **Church Street, Haddington**.

St Andrews Day Members' Lunch

Thursday 30 November 2006 is the date set for a **St Andrews Day Lunch** at 12 noon in the Scout Hall, Haddington. Thursday afternoon groups will have ample time to move on to their afternoon meeting / event.

This will be a sit down "Plate Lunch" - each member attending is asked to bring a plate of cold fork and knife eats, either savoury or sweet. e.g., quiche, cold meats, meat loaf, salads, trifles, etc. - plates with a "Scottish Theme" will be particularly welcome.

There will be a charge of £2.00 payable at the door, to cover hire of hall, wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee.

Some members have expressed a wish to have a prepared lunch. At present, we feel that, where accommodation is hired for only a few hours, and without possession of appropriate Health & Hygiene Certificates, we could not meet Health and Safety requirements.

It is essential to know in advance the numbers attending. Please let **Norah Coutts** know *as soon as possible*, but no later than Saturday 4 November 2006, by one of the following methods:

1. The reply slip sent with this Newsletter
2. Telephone: 01875 853653 - leave your name and telephone number on the answering machine
3. By e-mail to: norah.coutts@btinternet.com

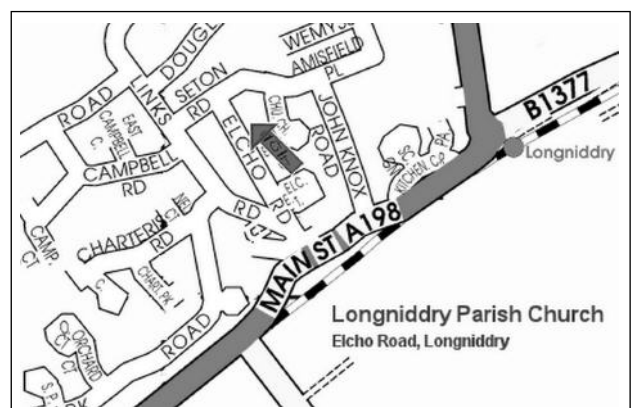
Open Lecture

The next Open Lecture will be on:

Wednesday 27 September 2006 at 2.30pm.

The speaker is U3A member **Professor John Dale** who will be talking about "**Flowers and Fierce Animals in Renaissance Tapestry**".

Venue: **Longniddry Parish Church.**



Joining the online community

It's well known that 'silver surfers' are a growing band of internet users, and information from our membership secretary indicates that as many as 60% of East Lothian U3A members have access to the internet. At the same time it's becoming apparent that those who aren't 'online' are missing out, as more and more organisations offer information and resources via the internet, and as email becomes an increasingly important means of communication.

A recent article in the U3A publication **Sources** listed some of the advantages of being online. These included: simplifying routine tasks such as accessing forms to get a railcard; shopping; buying train tickets; renewing library books; writing articles; staying in touch with friends and family no matter where we are in the world; adding greatly to a hobby such as family history; looking up assorted facts; and studying for a diploma and a higher degree. The author goes on to ask, "How could anyone not take advantage of this?"

The possibility of offering help to members to enable them to get online was discussed at a recent meeting of the East Lothian U3A committee and it was agreed that we would attempt to find out if there are members who do not have computers connected to the internet who would like help in acquiring the equipment and skills necessary to enable them to join the 'online community'.

If you would like to have your name added to a list of members interested in having assistance in this area, please phone Richard Morton on 01620 825979, or write to him at 2 The Sands, Haddington EH41 3EY. Or contact Jan Bundy on 01875341022.

Your new committee

Following the **AGM** on 21 June the East Lothian U3A Committee members are as follows:

- Liz Strachan** – *Chairman*
- Roy Hannah** – *Vice-chairman / Lectures*
- Jim Redmond** – *Treasurer*
- Sally Cummine** – *Secretary*
- Jan Bundy** – *Groups Co-ordinator*
- Glenys McLenaghan** – *Membership Secretary*
- Norah Coutts** – *Hospitality*
- Richard Morton** – *Publicity*
- Robin MacEwan** – *Lectures*

200th Walk



Twenty-eight members of the **Wednesday Walking Group** set off for the Group's 200th walk on the 2nd of August at Holy Island, on one of the wettest days of the summer. After a short walk in the rain they were pleased that lunch had been pre-booked at a hotel on the island. After lunch Ken Stirling thanked all members, and particularly leaders, for their continuing support and he paid tribute to May Dickson and Joyce Glasgow for organising the special day. Although plans to walk back across the causeway had to be abandoned due to deteriorating weather, the enthusiasm of the group remained undampened.

A musical interlude



Four local musicians, and U3A members, **Philip and Bridget Taylor** violins, **Frank Bigwood** viola, and **Raymond Dodd** cello entertained us at our **AGM** in June in Holy Trinity Church, Haddington.

Letter

Dear fellow members

We were asked at the AGM to think about whether members' lunches should continue as there has been some disquiet regarding lack of numbers.

My response is as follows and I hope others will pass on their views too: I would like us to consider that if we were to stop the lunches we would have only five meetings per year when members can mingle with those from groups, other than the ones they belong to. By limiting our general meetings in this way there is a good chance that our U3A groups could become insular.

I, for one, enjoy speaking to members from different groups and hearing about their activities, even though I may not share that particular interest. As we go through life changes in our third age, what may have been a prime interest when we first joined may be replaced by another that is more in keeping with our health and mental faculties. In fact several of our longstanding members have moved from one group to another, often as a result of speaking to others at open meetings and lunches. Talking to members about their groups is by far the best way to find out about them and our very minimal seven get-togethers per year seems to me to be the best way to do it.

Please don't let us lose these shared meetings.

Margaret Gordon