

Massereene u3a

Report for year September 2022-September 2023

Massereene u3a continues to move forward, albeit slowly. The number of subscribed members is not always reflected in those attending the monthly meeting or interest groups. This year there were 87 members on register but the average attendance at meetings was 44. The purpose of u3a is to learn from others so the greater the interaction, the better the outcome.

A wide variety of topics were covered at Friday meetings.

Joanne McConville began the season by recounting the day when her parachute failed to open. Her book, "My Piece of Sky" is a testament to her strength of mind and determination which inspired her recovery.

The planned Speaker for October was unable to attend, so at very short notice, a team from Lough Neagh Search and Rescue stepped into the breach and described their function in the Lough and beyond.

Similarly, in November, it was necessary to find a replacement Speaker. This time, a local historian, Ron Bishop, was able to present an interesting and informative story based on the diary of a lady who once lived in Carrickfergus.

A well attended Christmas Lunch was held in Dunsilly hotel where games and fun added to the delicious food. Thank you to all who were involved in the organisation of the day.

In January, Mary Watson related many facts and features of the village of Carnlough. She drew attention to the industrial and maritime importance of the village in the past, in contrast with the modern seaside place.

A representative from PSNI visited in February with harrowing tales of Human Trafficking which is taking place closer than many realise.

Claire Ablett, curator of History at the Ulster Transport Museum took members on a virtual tour of the facility in March. The journey moved from horse and carts to the modern DeLorean car.

The Belfast Hills Partnership was explored with Jim Bradley at the April meeting.

In June, Adrian Steel from AJS Sketch Art presented his artwork. Adrian's art focused on the architecture of local buildings and their connections with social history.

The final event of the year was an Outing to Ballyscullion House and Garden. After a talk on the history of the house and a walk in the garden, afternoon tea was served.

Thanks to Alan and Tomina Ashenhurst for organising this.

Interest groups continue their activities and are always pleased to receive new members. If anyone has an interest which they feel others may share, please approach a Committee member who will be able to help with the setting up of a new interest group.

Bridge, Book club, Rang Gaeilge, Dine Out and Let's Go remain the core interest groups.

Establishments visited by Dine Out:

Cloth Ear

Fusion

Archana

Academy

Home

Scalini's

Cyprus Avenue

Let's Go activities were:

Back stage at the Grand Opera House

Viaduct Garden, Randalstown

Bird box building at Men's Shed, Randalstown

Mindfulness and Wellbeing with Nuala McKeever

Christmas Wreath making with Gillian Mairs

Enchanted Winter Garden, Antrim

Photography explained

Afternoon tea

Guided tour of PRONI

Visit to Transport Museum

Massereene u3a is fortunate to have a willing and able Committee .This is vital to the running of the Organisation. My thanks to everyone who has been on hand to help.

Membership subscriptions are due in September, so £18 will be payable at the opening meeting. If possible, our treasurer would appreciate the correct amount. For insurance purposes, it is important that subscriptions are kept up to date. If you receive communications from Massereene U3A by email you will be aware that we have policies in place on Privacy and Data Protection in compliance with EU legislation. The policies can be viewed or downloaded from our website, <http://massereene-u3a.org/>. Communicating by email is quick, convenient and saves costs but if some members do not use computers or have email accounts, they will continue to receive essential communications by post. Look forward to seeing you during the incoming season.

Hilary