



NETWORK NEWS

West Lothian
50+ Network

Spring 2019

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR NETWORK'S SERVICES



West Lothian 50+ Network has received national recognition for its services for older people.

Age Scotland, the leading charity representing older people in Scotland and supporting their rights and interests, has presented the Network with a Highly Commended Award.

Linda Anderson, National Development Manager at Age Scotland came to the Network's April members' meeting, where she presented the award "in recognition of inspiring service to older people in West Lothian" to Network Convener Anne Webster.

Linda spoke briefly about the work of Age Scotland and praised West

Lothian 50+ Network for the work it has done in the 25 years since its inception in 1994, following a visit by a group of West Lothian senior citizens to the European Parliament in the year of the Elderly and of Solidarity between Generations.

Age Scotland runs an annual awards scheme to recognise the hard work of the many dedicated individuals and groups in our communities who are making a positive difference to the lives of older people in Scotland.

The Services for Older People Award is given to an individual or group who have provided an innovative service run by, or on behalf of, older people which has addressed the issue of loneliness and isolation and or improved health and wellbeing in later life.

Although the Network was Highly Commended, we were pipped at the post by the outright 2019 winner, Scotstounhill based *Active Seniors*.

Network Convener Anne Webster said: "We are delighted to receive this recognition from Age Scotland".

"The present committee follows in the footsteps of many volunteers who over the years have shared our vision and worked hard to develop a strong network of over-fifties who can support each other in later life."

"We make things happen for ourselves and help each other to keep active and connected through our special interest groups, social events and outings."

AGE SCOTLAND CONFERENCE REPORT

Committee members Barbara Haddow and Anne Webster represented the West Lothian 50+ Network at the Age Scotland conference held in Glasgow on 20th March.

The conference, held in the Radisson Blue Hotel, incorporated Age Scotland's Annual Awards, and included a full programme of informative speakers and workshops.

Delegates were welcomed by Age Scotland Chair, Lord George Foulkes who was followed by three very interesting speakers who stimulated debate and questions among the audience:

Pennie Taylor's subject was Homes, Health and Happiness.

Professor Rose Gilroy spoke about Going Beyond the Research to Build Better Housing.

And the theme of Dr Melrose Stewart's talk was Intergenerational Bonding.

After lunch - interrupted by the fire alarm - delegates split up for workshops followed by the annual awards ceremony.

Awards were presented in eight different categories. All those nominated represented huge commitment to a wide range of initiatives to improve the lives of older people.

Although our entry was highly commended in the Services for Older People Award category, the outright 2019 winner was Active Seniors in Scotstounhill, Glasgow.



Anita Manning - best known for Flog it and Antiques Road Trip - presented the awards and gave a very entertaining talk of her journey through life and reaching 71.

Thanks to all those involved at Age Scotland for organising such an excellent event.



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EDITORIAL

As we come up to our Annual General Meeting, it's time to take stock and prepare to go forward into another financial year. After losing our core funding in January, your committee have been working flat out to find new ways to keep our finances healthy and ensure our future.

So hearing that the National Lottery – Awards for All – and the Queensberry Trust have shown their belief in what we do by committing substantial awards to the Network is fantastic news. We're also very grateful for the support we have had from a number of local organisations, both financial and in kind.

With the AGM we'll be losing two of our valued committee members as both Vanda Collins and Irene Calder step down this year. We thank them for their service over the years and know they'll both still be around to lend a helping hand where they can. Hopefully we'll soon be welcoming new committee members to take up the baton.

There have been some recent innovations in the Network with the introduction, for example, of card or online payments to make it easier for those who struggle to get into the office. With a full programme of coach trips, social evenings and special events for our silver anniversary, not to mention more people joining the Network than ever before, these easy payment options will help you whilst taking some of the pressure off our very busy office.

We hope you enjoy reading about everything that's planned for the months ahead. It looks like being a lot of fun,

Sue Bedford-Visser,
Editor

NEW MEMBERS' MEETING

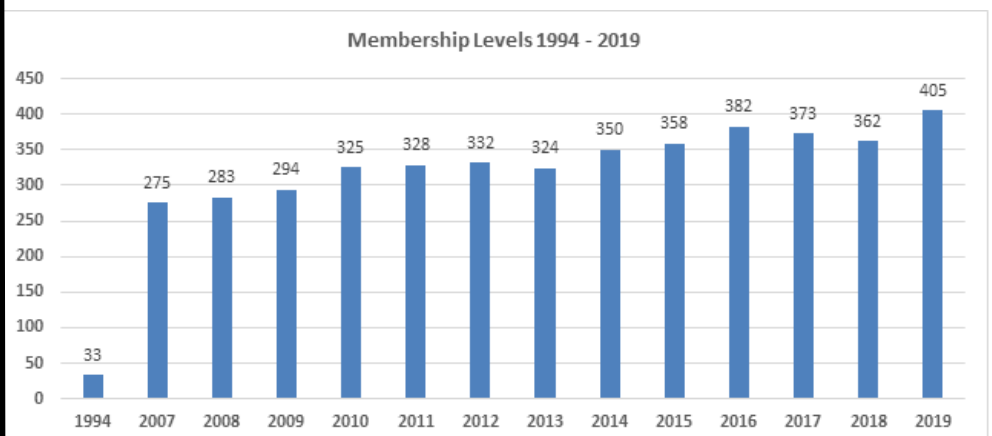


There was an excellent turn out for the 50+ Network's informal meeting to welcome new members.

Some 47 people came along to Rosemount Gardens on 27 March to find out more about what the Network can offer and to meet other new members, committee members and some of the Network's group leaders.

With 53 new members joining during 2018/2019, the Network has seen the largest increase in membership since its inception.

The chart below shows the growth in membership in recent years.



SPECIAL EVENTS TO CELEBRATE SILVER ANNIVERSARY

As part of a year-long celebration of the 25th anniversary of the 50+ Network, we're arranging a number of one-off events.

Our **Cheese and Wine Evening** is on **Friday 17th May** at the Bathgate Partnership Centre.

During the evening there will be musical entertainment from both the Network Singers and our Ukulele group.

Tickets are £5 from the 50+ office.

We're taking an active part in this year's **Bathgate Procession and John Newlands Day on 1st June**, teaming up with West Lothian Bike Library. Up to 25 members will join in, riding some of the wide range of cycles the Bike Library can offer

After the Procession we can be found on the park, enjoying the atmosphere and chatting to people about the Network and how they can join in the fun.

Willie Webster is co-ordinating this activity – please put your name forward to the office if you think you might like to get involved.



On **Sunday 14th July** we're planning a **Car Treasure Hunt**.

It will start and end at Armadale Parish Church Hall on Academy Street.

We're hoping members' families will come along and join in the fun.

Cheese and Wine Evening: Friday 17th May

25 Cycles in the Bathgate Procession:

Saturday 1st June

Car Treasure Hunt: Sunday 14th July

Hat Decorating Workshop (for the Garden Party): Tuesday 13th August

Garden Party: Sunday 18th August

Tree Planting & Sausage Sizzle at Beecraigs: Sunday 22 September

On Sunday **18th August** we are hosting a **Garden Party** in the gardens behind the Bathgate Partnership Centre.

We're hoping for a fine day - and the chance to play some lawn games whilst enjoying refreshments in the garden.

Ladies planning on coming to the Garden Party may also want to attend the **Hat Decorating Workshop** hosted by Kate Blake on the afternoon of **Tuesday 13th August**.

Finally, we've organised a special opportunity to plant some trees - including some silver birch - at Beecraigs Country Park. We think it's a nice way to make our mark and leave something to be enjoyed by future generations for years to come.

The **tree planting** on **Sunday 22 September** will be co-ordinated by West Lothian Council's Forestry Officer, and will be followed by a **sausage sizzle** and outdoor games at the country park's BBQ area by the Balvormie pond and meadow.



Tree Planting

HAPPY WANDERERS' WINTER PROGRAMME

Over the winter, the Happy Wanderers walking group take the opportunity to make cultural and educational excursions to museums and other places of interest where they are not at the mercy of the elements.

Here they share some of the interesting places they have visited this year.

In January eleven members of the group were given a guided tour of the **Central Gurdwara Singh Sabha in Glasgow.**

A gurdwara is a place of worship for Sikhs where people from all faiths, and those who do not profess any faith, are welcomed.

Established in 1981, the Glasgow Central Gurdwara (or "Singh Sabha") was born out of the desire to provide a Gurdwara in Glasgow that operated in strict accordance with Sikh principles and the traditions as laid down by the Sikh Gurus themselves.

Here people can congregate to practice their faith, gain religious and social education, learn music, eat, and socialise.

After the tour members ate at the langar, the common canteen where food



is served to visitors (without distinction of background) at no cost. Only vegetarian food is served to ensure that all people, regardless of dietary restrictions, can eat as equals.

The Happy Wanderers were impressed by the very warm welcome they received, and the openness shown by their hosts.

In early February the group visited **Dunfermline Carnegie Library and Galleries.** The world's first Carnegie Library funded by the Scottish-American businessman and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie opened on 29 August 1883 and, on 18 May 2017 introduced a stunning extension that's home to a museum over two floors, three temporary exhibition galleries, a cafe, a shop, a new children's library and the Reading Room - a local history, study and archives space.

Later in February the group visited



the Circus Exhibition in the Kelvin Hall before moving on to **Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.**

The people of Glasgow own the Art Gallery and Museum and its collections. The building was paid for with the profits from the Glasgow 1888 International Exhibition and by public subscription.

Designed by John Simpson and Milner Allent, it opened as the city's new Art Gallery and Museum in October 1902. Its grand frontage was inspired by Spanish church towers whilst the inside was modelled on an

Italian palace and built so that music echoes through the arches and corridors.

The architects described the building as "a composition on classic lines with free Renaissance detail" – a mixture in other words!

Amongst the highlights were Christ of Saint John of the Cross by Salvador Dali, Leonardo Da Vinci: A Life In Drawing and Dippy On Tour: A Natural History Adventure.



The Happy Wanderers Walking Group is led by Heather Waddell and meets on Mondays, setting out from Bathgate around 9-10 am, with the start time varying depending on public transport timetables and the destination.

Generally, the group walks between 5-6 miles, sometimes a little more and sometimes less.

Walks are flattish but have "undulations" and occasionally a hill or two.

Walkers take a packed lunch and usually manage to enjoy a coffee stop after the walk. It is a friendly, sociable group and there is a great deal of blethering on the outings. The group has 20 members.

MEMBERS' MEETINGS IN 2019

Our monthly members' meetings take place on the 3rd Saturday of every month at the Royal British Legion in Bathgate from 10.30am to 12.30 pm.

Put these dates in your diary.

18 MAY

Our **Annual General Meeting**, followed by guest speaker Ruth McNamara on 'How the West wasn't won'. Ruth was a popular speaker when last she joined us in September 2017 and spoke of a 'Hollywood History of the World'.

15 JUNE

Members' update and update from the Polar Academy.

JULY

No meeting.

17 AUGUST

Members' update and Body Boosting Bingo.

21 SEPTEMBER

With Debbie McConnell, Singer and Entertainer

19 OCTOBER

Coffee Morning and Craft Fair (at St Mary's Church Hall). This busy social event replaces our normal members' meeting.

16 NOVEMBER

With guest speaker Stewart Liddle - Linlithgow Union Canal Society

21 DECEMBER

Our Christmas Party replaces our December members' meeting.

MARCH MEMBERS' MEETING

The snow meant a lower than usual turnout for our March members' meeting. But those that came along were treated to an interesting and humorous talk by guest speaker Adam Fleming who told how he went from starting Wyndford Farm Plants in a field in Ecclesmachan in 2013, to being twice RHS Chelsea medal winner.

Adam propagates and grows from seed all his own stock, bringing the plants on outdoors, which he claims results in them adapting more easily to local conditions than imported plants grown in polytunnels.

Wyndford Farm Plants opened its retail outlet for the new season on 1st April - and there's a 10% discount if you show your 50+ Network membership card.

WHAT'S MY LINE?

50+ Network members enjoyed a fun version of "What's My Line" at the April Members' Meeting on Easter Saturday.

Members Alex Florence and Jim Kilpatrick provided in-depth insights into their life experiences, with Alex having flown a WW2 fighter aircraft and Jim having helped to develop Viagra. Our guest contestant, Ian McLeod, holds the distinction of being the youngest ever boxer to fight in an international for Scotland, a record that can never be beaten.

No-one guessed Alex' flying secret and so he earned a free cup of tea and biscuits as well as admiring questions from sections of the audience.

Jim's blue pill development was guessed and proved an interesting conversation topic with the ladies who swarmed around him afterwards.

Ian, whose age distinction was also guessed, was three times Scottish lightweight boxing champion and held an array of Gold and Silver medals from many competitions, including the Commonwealth Games. Ian showed some of his medals and proved to one lady that, although he had never been knocked out or had his nose broken, he definitely had a boxer's nose.

Host Willie "Eamon" Webster thanks all the panellists for taking part. Thanks also to the audience for their wide-ranging and hilarious questions as they tried to get to the answers.



DEMENTIA AWARENESS WORKSHOP

Are you struggling to care for a family member in the early stages of dementia and find it hard to understand their behaviours and find ways of managing these?

Or perhaps you've noticed changes in friends or in members of groups that you belong to and want to understand more about how to support them?

In partnership with Age Scotland, the West Lothian 50+ Network has organised a free Early Stage Dementia Awareness Workshop to help families and friends increase their understanding and awareness of dementia and provide meaningful support to those affected.

The Early Stage Dementia team from Age Scotland will run a free workshop which will cover:

- What is dementia?
- Signs and symptoms of dementia
- Communication and including someone living with dementia
- Reducing risk of developing dementia

The workshop will be held on Weds 5 June 2019 at a venue in Bathgate from 6 pm – 7.30 pm.

It is open to 50+ members, their friends and families, group leaders, and others in the community who work with older people.

Pre-booking is essential. To book your free place, call 01506 635510 or email

Being
Dementia Aware



DIAL-A-RIDE AND DIAL-A-BUS SERVICES

A representative from a charity that runs vital transportation services for people with mobility challenges in West Lothian will be at the Network's June meeting. Hcl Transport run two services that help the elderly, people of any age with disabilities or Additional Support Needs or affected by geographic remoteness that makes public transport very difficult or impossible to use.

Dial-A-Bus runs a service to The Centre, Asda Livingston and Morrisons Livingston every weekday from different areas across West Lothian; Tuesdays we go to Tesco, Bathgate. On Fridays we go to Tesco, Bathgate; Morrisons, Bathgate and Tesco, Linlithgow. New passengers can have their first Dial-A-Bus ride for free. A return journey is £3.80. So why not give the service a try? **To book just call 01506 633336.**

Dial-A-Ride can take you wherever you need to get to. Journeys are varied and based on where you want to go - medical appointments, meeting friends, visiting family, shops, a concert, cinema or theatre, Waverley or Edinburgh Airport or even for a day trip. **Just phone 01506 633953.** New passengers get £5 off their first booking. The service is not just transportation, it is a door- through-door service which means the driver can help you from inside your home / outside your home to your destination. If you

go shopping the driver will take your shopping onto the bus for you and then into your home (if you wish). All buses are fitted with wheel chair tie downs so can carry 2 wheelchairs on board with passengers not needing to get out of their wheelchair. Or the driver can help you on board, your walking aid and shopping. The service is also available to those who need help short-term, e.g. while waiting for and following surgery such as a knee replacement or hip replacement.

If you cannot drive for a few months and to travel by public transport is too much, then give Hcl a call and they can help you for the months when you need it.



WEEKENDERS GET AROUND

Twelve members of the 50+ Network's Weekenders group visited the Scottish Parliament on 2 February.

They took the free one-hour tour: Democracy by Design, which celebrates the innovative architecture and design of the Scottish Parliament.

The building was designed by Enric Miralles, a Catalan who could empathise with the sense of identity that the new political situation had created in Scotland.

The design is based on boats, a reflection of Scotland's maritime history, and perhaps a poetic way of expressing Miralles' belief of a democratic government as a gathering of diverse ideas.

The Parliament, Miralles' magnum opus and his largest project, was unfinished at the time of his death.



Weekenders had a fun day out on 23rd March at the annual point to point race meeting at Overton Farm in the Clyde Valley.

We all won some and lost some but, with our £2 bets, no-one lost their shirts.



Meet up with the Weekenders on the 2nd Saturday of each month at Rosemount Gardens, Bathgate at 10.30am for coffee, chat, sharing ideas and organising future events.

FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE RACES

Lesley Martin is organising an outing to Musselburgh Racecourse on 2nd August.

This is an evening meeting - doors open at 4pm, with the first race starting at 5.40 p.m. and the last race at 20.50 p.m.

Admission is £17.00 for concessions, payable on the day.



MEN'S GROUP ON THE MOVE

In March, 15 members of the Network's Men's group had an outing to the Beijing Banquet at Sighthill in Edinburgh. All enjoyed a lovely meal and would recommend a visit.

In April, sixteen members also had a very interesting visit to the Tennents Brewery at Wellpark in Glasgow.

From the photos it looks like a couple of ladies were tempted to join the tour!



In addition to the monthly outings, there's a weekly Wednesday morning men's drop in club at Rosemount Gardens in Bathgate, from 10am to 12 noon.

COUNCILLORS' DISBURSEMENTS

We're grateful to a number of local councillors who have demonstrated their support of the Network by giving financial donations via their individual discretionary disbursement funds.

In particular we'd like to thank the following councillors who have helped us in this way:

Harry Cartmill
Dave King
Tom Kerr
Peter Heggie
Andrew McGuire

David Dodds
Charles Kennedy
Pauline Clark
Sarah King

PROMOTING THE NETWORK

Because of the many benefits that membership of the 50+ Network brings, we want to make more people aware of our existence.

We're pleased to say that Tesco has offered us space on their Noticeboards during June - as well as the opportunity to have a presence in their entrance on one day a week in each of the last two weeks in June.

Plans are being drawn up for Tuesday 18th June and Wednesday 26th June, with 3 sessions of 2 hours each day, from 10am -12; 12 -2pm and 2- 4pm.

If you'd like to get involved in this promotional activity, which will largely involve telling people about the Network and how they can join in the fun, please put your name forward, stating which session you are available for.

We'd like to have a small book stall to help attract people to come and chat so if you have any books to donate, this would be a good time to bring them in.

FUNDING NEWS

Once we'd got over the shock of losing financial support from our major funder - West Lothian Council - at the beginning of this year, we rolled up our sleeves and got on with the job of finding new sources of funding to help us maintain "business as usual".

Since early January a great deal of work has been going on behind the scenes - and we're delighted to say that it's starting to bear fruit in a number of different ways.

The second week in May proved to be a very exciting week indeed, with the news that we were to receive not one, but two major awards - one from the National Lottery – Awards for All for £9,460, and one from the Queensberry House Trust for £5,500.

NATIONAL LOTTERY

The National Lottery Awards for All offers funding from £300 to £10,000 to support what matters to people and communities. One of their criteria for funding is for projects that "bring more people together and build strong relationships in and across communities" which is certainly something that the 50+ Network does well.

Competition for these funds is fierce with only a 40% success rate so we are particularly proud to have been selected.

Most of the £9,460 awarded to the Network is a contribution towards our hub coordinator's salary, but there are also contributions towards utilities, rent, venue hire/activity costs, members' travel and a small membership pot to help make the Network accessible to all.

QUEENSBERRY HOUSE TRUST

We were equally delighted to hear that the work of the 50+ Network is to be supported this year by a grant



of £5,500 from the Queensberry House Trust.

The trust funds originate from the winding up of the Queensberry House Hospital in Edinburgh which closed in 1996.

The Trust's objects are widely drawn but the trustees generally give where the need is shown and the donation would make a significant difference to the charity concerned.

The Network has been able to demonstrate its contribution to community development, including the promotion of volunteering, and the need for the grant to improve the effectiveness of our charity.

The grant from the Queensberry House Trust will enable the Network to strengthen the support from our hub office in Bathgate.

Photo: Queensberry House Trustees Su Millar and Roger Smith met with convener Anne Webster and committee member Sue Bedford-Visser at the Bathgate office in May to present the cheque for £5,500.

BATHGATE PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

We very much appreciate the support we have from Bathgate Partnership Centre, a popular venue for a variety of Network groups and activities.

The Partnership Centre was one of the first to come forward and offer support this year, and both their financial support and support in-kind is greatly appreciated.

LINLITHGOW ROUND TABLE

Thanks are also due to Linlithgow Round Table who have made a generous donation of £500.

So all in all there have been some very welcome injections of cash into the Network. This has given us not only a financial lift but it's been a real boost to know that people outside the Network can appreciate the benefits that it brings to the local community.

But we can't rest on our laurels. All of the funds received so far are "one-offs". The work continues to secure longer term funding - and the long-term future of the organisation.

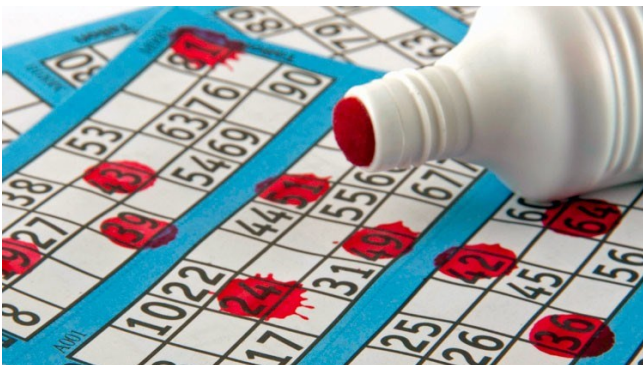
SOCIAL EVENINGS

Bingo at the Legion proved to be a hit for the 50+ Network's first social evening this year when over fifty members joined in our first experience of running a Prize Bingo night.

Six games of bingo were punctuated by a break for pies and beans (or peas) with a lucky dip at the end of the evening.

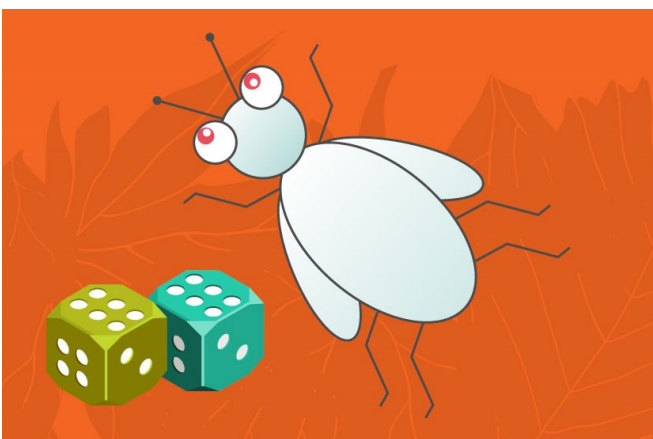
Thanks to Network member Yvonne Buchanan for all her advice on setting up the event, donations for prizes and her help on the night, and to all Network members who donated prizes.

Thanks also to the Legion for the use of their Bingo machine, to their caterers and to Agnes, our Bingo caller.



Our next social evening is on Thursday 30th May when we'll be holding a beetle drive.

Members are welcome to bring friends along too – it's a great way to introduce them to the Network and to new friends.



BODY BOOSTING BINGO

Committee members Anne Webster and Sue Bedford-Visser went along to Age Scotland's recent event in Edinburgh to find out more about their popular Body Boosting Bingo sessions.

Accompanied by live music, two energetic and entertaining facilitators, Jenny and Yolanda, led the activity in St Cecilia's, Scotland's oldest concert hall.

A great time was had by all and we'll be bringing a Body Boosting Bingo session to West Lothian at our August members' meeting.

Roll out the activity in your group by ordering your free download, DVD or pocket game on Age Scotland's website at www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland



SUNDAY COACH TRIPS

Our monthly Sunday coach trips are proving to be immensely popular. We're organising a different coach trip once a month, usually on the last Sunday of the month, to take you to a range of stately homes, gardens and other attractions – all things you've told us you enjoy doing. Here's an update on our last three trips.

CAMBO SNOWDROPS AND ST ANDREWS

24th February

A heavy mist hung over West Lothian on Sunday morning as 48 Network members set out for Kingsbarns for the annual Snowdrop Festival at Cambo.

The mist showed no sign of clearing as we arrived and enjoyed coffee and a scone in the estate's old coach house, then ventured out to explore the walled garden and snowdrop carpeted woodland walk down to the beach.

Some took a brisk walk along the coast, others sought out the Tamworth pigs and their adorable piglets and a fair number of us left with pots of bulbs for the garden.

We arrived in St Andrews shortly before 2pm, where we dispersed in the relentless mist to find lunch and take in the wide range of shops and other attractions.



VISIT TO ABBOTSFORD HOUSE AND MELROSE

24th March

Sunny intervals for our group of 39 on this month's coach trip to Abbotsford House, once home to Sir Walter Scott.

After refreshments in the visitor centre's Ochiltree cafe, the group enjoyed a self guided tour of the house and gardens.

Then on to Melrose for a couple of hours, before a drive home in the late afternoon sun through the rolling Borders hills.



VISIT TO BALLOCH AND HELENSBROUGH

28th April

Our coach trip to Balloch and Helensburgh was enjoyed by 46 of our members and their friends.

There was lots to do at Balloch - cruising on the loch, having tea on board the Maid of the Loch (the last paddle steamer built in Britain and currently undergoing restoration), browsing the shops at Loch Lomond Shores, watching the passing parade of the thousands taking in part in the Glasgow Kilt Walk, walking in the country park, playing crazy golf, or just drinking in the scenery whilst enjoying lunch.

Then home via Helensburgh - fish supper anyone?



UPCOMING DAY TRIPS

We're still working on the details for day trips throughout the year, but the following will give you a taste of what's in store for the rest of 2019:

SUNDAY 26TH MAY - LOCH KATRINE AND CALLANDER

SUNDAY 30TH JUNE - ALNWICK CASTLE & GARDENS

SUNDAY 28TH JULY - BERWICK-ON-TWEED

SUNDAY 25TH AUGUST - FLOORS CASTLE/ KELSO

WEDNESDAY 23RD OCTOBER - PITLOCHRY & THE ENCHANTED FOREST

26TH MAY - LOCH KATRINE AND CALLANDER



Our first stop is at beautiful Loch Katrine where you can enjoy a stroll around the loch, enjoy a meal in the Steamship Cafe, or join a short 45 min cruise on the Lady of the Lake, gliding through the awe-inspiring Trossachs landscape.

We return via the nearby popular town of Callander where you will have free time in the afternoon.

Price £21 including boat cruise (£12 if you do not wish to go on the boat).

WEDNESDAY 23RD OCTOBER - PITLOCHRY & THE ENCHANTED FOREST

We're planning a coach trip to the very popular Enchanted Forest in Pitlochry this October.

This will be on Wednesday 23rd October 2019 and will be in lieu of our usual monthly Sunday trip. (Because of the popularity of the event, we are unable to secure a weekend booking).

We'll travel to Pitlochry in the morning, leaving the old railway station in Bathgate at 10.30 a.m, and arriving around midday. You'll have free time in the town, then join our tour in the early evening.

Our allocated time slot to visit the Enchanted Forest will leave from Fisher's Hotel at 5.45pm.

After a couple of hours in the Enchanted Forest, we'll aim to be back in Bathgate around 10pm.

The cost for coach travel and entry to the Enchanted Forest is £35 per person with an option to add high tea at Fisher's for £15. Numbers have to be confirmed with the Enchanted Forest by the end of May.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Here's how it works if you wondering whether you can bring friends or family along on our trips.

Obviously members get first dibs when the booking opens for a trip.

But we need to fill our buses to ensure that the trip is both viable, and affordable for all.

So once members have been given plenty of time to make a booking, if we still have places to fill we'll open it up to (adult) friends and family.

NUYU DAY OUT

Sunny smiles on a wet day from some of the ladies in the 50+ Network's NuYu group who enjoyed a day out in April to Rosslyn Chapel.

Led by 50+ member Sandra Carr, the NuYu group meets on Tuesdays from 11.00am to 12.30pm in the Partnership Centre in Bathgate.

The aim of this group's members is to keep fit and healthy. They have an hour of line dancing from 11.00am to 12.00, then the fun begins with the weigh-in.

Afterwards weight loss or gain and any other issues will be discussed.



BIRTHDAY WISHES

Members of the Network's two Pilates classes came together to congratulate instructor, Jenni Bruce, who recently celebrated her 70th birthday.

Jenni has been taking our two Pilates classes, intermediate and advanced, for some 12 years now and some members of the advanced class have been with her since the beginning.

We caught up with Jenni between classes in April so that members in both groups could show their appreciation.



Another well-loved Network member is Jimmy Henderson, leader of the Sing and Swing group.

His friends at the Network's Scrabble and Canasta group helped him to celebrate when he turned 80 at the end of March.



**I'VE BEEN TO A LOT OF PLACES
BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN IN CAHOOTS.
APPARENTLY YOU CAN'T GO ALONE,
YOU HAVE TO BE IN CAHOOTS WITH
SOMEONE. I'VE ALSO NEVER BEEN IN
COGNITO, EITHER. I HEAR NOBODY
RECOGNIZES YOU THERE. I HAVE,
HOWEVER, BEEN IN SANE. THEY
DON'T HAVE AN AIRPORT. YOU HAVE
TO BE DRIVEN THERE. I HAVE
MADE SEVERAL TRIPS.**

PLEDGE 25

Five members of the Canasta and Scrabble group have helped to promote a new approach to fund raising.

As the 50+ Network celebrates its silver anniversary, 25 years of organising activities to promote physical and mental well-being in the over fifties, its 420 strong membership have been asked to make a pledge to save 25 pence a week from now until Christmas in a move to raise funds.

And to help boost the amount raised, Network Convener Anne Webster is also appealing for 25 local firms to each pledge £25 to the Network.

Anne explained: "The 50+ Network is having to find new ways of funding their activities since it lost the financial support of West Lothian Council at the beginning of this year."

"The Network is self-sufficient in many ways", she

continued. "All of our activities - some 35 different interest groups and a range of social events and outings - are led by volunteer members."

"But we need to maintain a small office, currently open just 12 hours a week, and employ a part time administrator, to keep things running smoothly."

"We would love to hear from local businesses who could support us in what we do", said Anne. "Either by joining our Pledge 25, or by supporting us in kind by sponsoring one of our many events."

"The Bathgate BID (Business Improvement District) Enterprising Bathgate, has recently committed to support us by funding a short promotional video for the Network which we are delighted about. We hope other local businesses will get in touch to offer support. The Network has an active facebook page, website and quarterly newsletter and every business that comes forward to support us will be acknowledged."



BETTER THAN MEDICINE

Better than medicine, says Generation Arts, a West Lothian charity for people over 50, which believes that regular creative activity helps people mentally and physically, giving people with dementia a better quality of life and having a positive effect on those suffering from depression.

Generation Arts delivers seated dance, music and art sessions in care homes or day centres and runs a growing programme of creative classes in the community for people over 50, their friends and families.

Find out more on their website

at www.generationarts.co.uk



PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

A new video to promote the 50+ Network has been funded by Enterprising Bathgate as a way of showing their support during our silver anniversary year.

The video is short - only 90 seconds long – but captures the essence of what the Network is about.

Network Convener Anne Webster expressed her thanks: “We’re grateful to Enterprising Bathgate for funding this excellent video,” “

It’s short, but very effective and hopefully will encourage many more people to come and join our Network.”

Thanks go to all those members who feature in our video which includes footage from the Bowling group, the Ukulele group, the Network Singers, the Mahjong group and the Two Left Feet walking group. Thanks also to videographer Alan Corrie from Linlithgow based business Images Above which produced the video.

GREETINGS CARDS FOR SALE



Thanks go to our talented crafters who have been producing the beautiful handmade greetings cards that we use in the office for a variety of occasions.

The cards are available for members to purchase at our monthly members meetings, as well as being available to buy at the office.

There’s an excellent selection of cards including sympathy cards, get well cards or cards for birthdays and anniversaries.

They are well priced, uniquely individual – and help contribute to Network funds.

Thanks to Elizabeth Florence, Kath Fraser and Heather Smart for supporting the Network in this way.



THEATRE VISITS

Les Miserables

Having purchased the tickets last June, on 13th February thirteen members of the Network finally attended the matinee performance of the popular musical, Les Miserables, at Edinburgh's Festival Theatre. Although up 'in the gods' we had a great view and enjoyed an excellent performance from a fantastic cast. Before the performance some of the group met for coffee. An excellent day was had by all.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat

After a ropery start to the day with ScotRail cancelling trains, we all made it into Edinburgh by different means and some of us even managed to have time for a shortened visit before the performance to John Lewis cafe for a light lunch as planned. The show was excellent with a very fine cast and also an Elvis lookalike. A great day out.

HOLIDAY IN SEVILLE

Eighteen members so far have booked to go to Seville in the second week of October.

Seville is the capital of southern Spain's Andalusia region.

It's famous for flamenco dancing, particularly in its Triana neighborhood.

Major landmarks include the ornate Alcázar castle complex, built during the Moorish Almohad dynasty, and the 18th-century Plaza de Toros de la Maestranza bullring.

Its historic centre, dominated by the colossal Gothic cathedral, the site of Christopher Columbus's tomb and a minaret turned bell tower, the Giralda is an intoxicating mix of Mudéjar palaces, baroque churches and winding medieval lanes.



If you wish to join the group for what will certainly be a lovely city break, please contact the office where you will be given a contact number and advice on what you have to do.

If you want more details the office can email you an information sheet.

Please also note that you must have current personal insurance and a valid passport.

HOLIDAY IN CHINA

The date for the China trip will be the last two weeks in May 2020.

It is hoped to keep the cost to £1800 plus around £160 for a visa and flight to London.

Jim Dixon has sent a sample itinerary to those members who have expressed an interest. He will call a meeting of those members by the end of May 2019 when a final decision would be made.



GIFT VOUCHERS

Looking for a gift for a friend or family member over the age of fifty?

How about introducing them to the 50+ Network with a gift of a voucher for an annual membership?

One of our £20 vouchers will give them membership of the West Lothian 50+ Network and open up a wealth of opportunities to meet new people, join some 35 different activity groups and take part in a wide range of other social events and activities, giving them a gift for which they may thank you for a long time to come.

Friends who are already members can use the voucher towards one of our monthly coach trips or other ticketed events.

Ask at the office for more information.



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Our facebook page is gaining in popularity, with some 296 people now following the page.

We're aware that some members remain deeply suspicious of this form of communication but it's proving to be a popular way of sharing Network news and attracting new members.

We're also using facebook in conjunction with our website. So, for example, when we publish new items on the website - such as the latest minutes of meetings - we can share a link directly to the relevant page via facebook.



@westlothian50plus network



An early heads up that our Thrift Shop this year will be during the week of 25th September - 2 October.

This is an important fundraiser for the 50+ Network and you've done us proud in the past with your generous donations.

This is your chance to do good, feel good and look good. We're told decluttering is very therapeutic, reduces stress and restores an order of calmness and well-being. So please declutter away to your heart's content and bring us items that you no longer require.

We'll be appealing closer to the time for volunteer helpers in the shop.

NO MORE NETWORK LOTTERY

For some time the Network has run a lottery offering monthly cash prizes as a way of increasing income.

However members will appreciate that, in order to make a profit, a minimum number of members must take part.

Numbers have been falling and have now reached the point we can no longer continue with the Network lottery.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

The West Lothian 50+ Network does not assess its members' fitness for participation in any of its various activities.

The decision about your fitness to undertake any activity lies within yourself, together with any medical advice you may wish to take.

It is your own responsibility to ensure your personal safety and that of your belongings.

PHOTOS HELP

After 25 years, the 50+ Network has accumulated a large number of photos, many of which are in hard copy format.

In order to protect and preserve this archive, we appealed for someone to volunteer to take on the task of scanning and digitally archiving our old photos.

Step forward Graham Hardacre who has begun the task of scanning them all.

Thanks to Graham for the work he has done so far.

We may still need some help in identifying the who, where, when and what the photos depict!



TRACY'S LAST WORD

If you have been into the 50+ office over the last few months, you will have noticed some changes. Not least, Fiona is no longer there, but is happily enjoying her new job in Whitburn Academy. Which means that, if you pop in, most times you will see me. With the change of staff there has also been a slight change in office hours. The office is now open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am– 2pm. It's been a busy time and people call in for lots of reasons and the popularity of our monthly Sunday trips is one of them. However one of our recent innovations is that you now have more ways to book and pay for trips. As always, you can come into the office and pay by cheque or cash or post a cheque to us, but you can also pay by bank transfer or by card, either in the office or over the phone. All making it easy to secure your place on a trip or an event. Even to pay your annual membership fee. Feedback from the coach trips has been really positive, as has the feedback from our recent social event with prize bingo. More social events are planned over the next few weeks - come along to the members' meetings or keep an eye on the minutes or our facebook page to see what's coming up. From a personal point of view, I would like to thank you all for welcoming me and bearing with me while I have learned the ropes. A massive thank you too to all the people who have been helping me out. I am so grateful to Ros Beck, Sheila Linscer and Hazel Matthews who all generously give up their time to assist with office work, to Marion McLaughlin and Helen Knowles who make sure the office is kept clean to the benefit of us all, to Ian Beck and

OFFICE CLEANING



We appealed for help to clean the 50+ Network office following the change to our opening hours, which did not suit our cleaning company.

Thank you to the three ladies who have now come forward to take on this task on a rota basis.

Ideally it would be good to have another couple of volunteers to add to the rota, so if anyone has a short time to give once a fortnight, please speak to a committee member or to Tracy in the office.



Tracy Kerr, our office administrator

John Mumford for their very practical help, and to committee members for being on hand for my questions and to support me in my role. I look forward to meeting even more of our members over the next few months. Hopefully they'll be wearing sunglasses instead of carrying umbrellas as has been the case in my first few months in the job.

West Lothian 50+ Network

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Office Hours

Tuesday to Thursday 10am to 2pm
Friday to Monday: Closed

***Make the rest of your life
the best of your life***

The West Lothian 50+ Network is a group of active over-fifties run by members for members.

We facilitate a wide range of physical, social, educational and cultural activities for our members, with the aim of keeping active in mind and body whilst combating social isolation. We meet monthly with an interesting speaker, offer almost 40 special interest groups and run day trips, holidays, concerts, dinners and other events.

Started in May 1994, the Network is going from strength to strength and currently has over 400 members, some 50% of which live in Bathgate with the rest residing in towns across West Lothian.

Annual membership fee for 2019: £20

We aim to produce **Network News** each quarter to keep our members up to date with what's happening in your Network.

If you would like to contribute an article, or if there's anything you'd like to hear more about, please get in touch.

Editor: Sue Bedford-Visser
suebedford_visser@hotmail.com

DIARY DATES

Cheese and Wine Evening: Fri 17th May

25 Cycles in the Bathgate Procession:
Saturday 1st June

Dementia Awareness Workshop: 5th June

Car Treasure Hunt: Sunday 14th July

Hat Decorating Workshop: 13th August

Garden Party: Sunday 18th August

***Tree Planting & Sausage Sizzle at
Beecraigs:*** Sunday 22nd September

Thrift Shop : 25th Sept - 2nd October

Network Choir Concert: 7th & 8th Oct

Coffee Morning & Craft Fair: 19th Oct

St Andrew's Dinner: 30th November

Kristmas Krackers Concert: 12 December

Christmas Party: Sat 21st December



Scottish Charity No SC024257