

West Lothian 50+ Network
Minute of Members' Meeting – 16th September 2023
10.30 am at the Legion, Bathgate

Sue Bedford-Visser opened the meeting by welcoming members new and old.

1. Guest Speaker

Our guest speaker was Robert Fraser from Whitburn Brass Band.

Robert has been a tuba player with the Band since 2003. He is also their archivist and librarian, and teaches music as his full-time job.

He outlined the history of the Band which began in 1870. It celebrated its 150th anniversary during the pandemic and is now in its 153rd year. Since 1907 it has led the Whitburn Childrens Gala Day. They have been Scottish Open Champions twenty-two times winning seven years in a row and are the only Band to win the Grand Shield three times, the last time being 2023. They perform regularly at major events such as Scotland's international rugby games, where television audiences numbering in the millions hear them play the national anthem of the Scotland's opponents. They have also played at the Royal Albert Hall.

Sue thanked Robert for a very interesting talk. A donation bucket was passed round and the sum of £75 was raised for Band funds.

2. Tea and Coffee Break

The price of tea/ coffee is £1.80. This is a charge made by the Legion's caterers.

The raffle took place during the break.

3. New Office Bearers

The new Board of Trustees met on 30th August for the first time and agreed office bearers as follows:

Sue Bedford-Visser – Chair.

Frank Ellam - Vice Chair.

Allan Dungavel - Secretary.

Jeannette Scott – Treasurer.

The Board of Trustees also met on 6th September as there is a great deal of work to bring everyone up to speed and begin the process of transitioning to the new SCIO. Future Board meetings will be monthly.

A copy of the Minute of Board meetings will be available to read in the Hub.

4. Holidays and Trips

Heather Waddle updated members.

Trips

- The September outing to Largs is fully booked. This was sold out within 2 days.
- The **October coach trip** on Saturday 28th October will be to Loch Katrine and Callander. We will visit Callander for some free time before progressing to Trossachs pier at Loch Katrine where you have the option of free time or joining us on the Loch for a 45 minute boat trip. Returning via the Dukes Pass and Aberfoyle. Itinerary as follows:
 - 9.30 Depart Bathgate
 - 10:30 Arrive Callander (Callander approx 3 hrs)
 - 13:30 Depart Callander

13:50 Arrive Trossachs Pier
14:15 Boat trip (Trossachs Pier approx 45 min)
15:30 Depart Trossachs Pier
15:45 Arrive Aberfoyle
16:30 Depart Aberfoyle
17.30 Arrive Bathgate (Aberfoyle 45 mins)

Bookable from Wednesday 27 September, £18 or £30.50 (including boat trip). The cost of the boat trip reflects a discount by £1.50 on normal rates.

- **Walking Day in Aberfoyle** – Saturday 14th Oct. £18. A few places are left. Members joining this trip must sign up for one of the led walks.
- **Men's Group Day Trips**
The Men's group are opening up places on their upcoming coach trips to women at a cost of £18 per trip.
Tuesday 19th September – Burns Museum and Ayr. See Jim Dixon **today** if you wish to join this.
Tuesday 3rd October – Burrell Collection, Glasgow.
Tuesday 17th October – V&A, Dundee plus free time in Dundee.
Contact Jim Dixon through the Hub for the October trips.

Holiday

- Tribute Weekend, Friday – Sunday, 26-28th January 2024, 3days/2nights DBB Cost £169
Based at the Cumbria Grand Hotel in Grange-over-Sands with Strathmore Travel.
There are 31 persons booked so far. If you are interested, please pay the deposit of £40 to the Hub by Friday 29th September. Balance due by 1st December.
Our allocation of 9 single rooms has now been taken up. If you don't have someone to share with but are willing to share with another member, leave your name at the Hub.

5. Events

- Our big annual fundraising event, the Thrift Shop, is next week. The shop itself will be open Thursday 21st – Saturday 23rd September from 10am to 4pm.

Donation drop off times:

Sunday 17th September 11am-5pm

Monday 18th September 11am-7pm

Tuesday 19th September 11am-7pm

Wednesday 20th September 10am-1pm

All timings can be found on Facebook and on posters in the Hub.

This is a tremendous effort led by Kate Blake who has a team of 49 members who have volunteered to help sort, price and display donations, as well as help out with sales in the shop.

A reminder that due to the Thrift Shop the Hub will be closed to groups next week.

- The Events group is organizing a Coffee Day to raise funds for Macmillan on Saturday 30th September with tickets costing £5. (Tickets on sale today from Bill McEwan).
Any donation of tea loaves would be appreciated. P
Tickets after today's on sale at the Hub.
- The Events group is also organizing our annual Craft Fair and Coffee morning, Saturday 21st October at 10.30 am at St Mary's Church Hall, Livery St, Bathgate. This is instead of our usual monthly

members meeting. Home baking would be appreciated for this. Tickets £4 on sale Monday 25th September. Information will follow by email.

Please come along and support our fundraisers.

- The Quiz Night which would have been next week has been cancelled due to lack of interest.
- Eleanor Shaw has organized this month's Seniors Session at Bathgate Cinema on Thursday 28th Sept at 10.30am. The film is House of Gucci starring Lady Gaga. Coffee or tea, biscuit and film £6
- There are still a few tickets left for the Reconnect Regal Pantomime Cinderella, Thursday 14th December at 12.30pm cost £10. Fifty seats were reserved for the Network and there are about 14 seats left. Access seats will be available.
- Our allocation of tickets for Silver Sunday has now been taken up.
- Looking ahead to our Members Meeting on Saturday 18th November. We are hoping to have Joseph Witcombe from the Antonine Guard Re-enactment society as our guest speaker, to talk about the Antonine Wall and the lives of those involved with it.

6. Groups

- Notes of interest are sought for a new evening Table Tennis group, Craigswood Sports Centre in Livingston, Tuesdays 7-8pm. The leader is Maggie Wills.
- Another new book group has started, 2nd Edition Book Group, at the Simpson Library, Bathgate Leader Maggie Wills.
- The new Livingston Coffee and Games group have now had 2 meetings in the Chain Runner pub, Livingston and takes place on Wednesdays 10-12noon. There are still places. A leader has been chosen but to be confirmed. Contact the Hub if you are interested.
- A new Yoga taster session was held in the Whitburn Partnership Centre yesterday. This was a free taster. There are still places for yoga, but going forward members will pay a £5 contribution to the cost of the tutor's fee. Fridays, 11am to 12 noon at the Whitburn Partnership Centre.

If you put your name down for groups and you then find you are unable to join or attend, please let the Hub know to help us keep waiting lists to a minimum.

7. Staff

We are currently advertising for a new Volunteers and Groups Co-ordinator, which will bring us up to our full complement of staff. There is an advertisement in INDEED. Please pass this information on to anyone who might be interested.

8. New Members Meetings

We had our first New Members Meeting after the summer break on Wednesday this week. These meetings are an excellent way to meet other new members so please do join us at our next meeting if you have recently joined – or bring a friend along to one of these meetings if you would like to encourage them to join the Network.

The next New Members Meeting will be in October, date and time to be confirmed.

9. Increase in membership fees:

Sue had some unwelcome news to deliver, and this is that membership subscriptions will be increasing to £24 per year.

Existing members will not pay the increase until 1 April 2024, but it will apply to new members joining from 1 October. From next month we will charge new members on a pro-rata basis of £2/month for the months from the date of joining until the following March. So, a member joining in, say January,

will pay 3 months at £2 = £6 instead of a full year's fee and will pay the full £24 when renewing on the following April.

We have held off the increase as long as possible, however membership fees have been held at £20 for 5 years during which time just about every single cost that the Network has to pay, has increased.

This is the position over the last few years:

2018/2019 £17

2019/2020 £20

2020/2021 £10 (because of reduced activity due to the pandemic)

2021/2022 £20

2022/2023 £20

2023/2024 £20

2024/2025 £24 agreed increase

We have faced widespread increases the cost of running the Network - in postal costs, electricity – to name just two - and we must demonstrate to our funders that we are capable of raising funds ourselves. This membership fee increase will bring in approximately an additional £2,500 in a full year. We hope that you will still consider that the Network provides good value for money.

10. AOB

There was no further business.

11. Date of Next Members Meeting

Saturday 18th November, 10.30 am at the British Legion, Bathgate.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S L Bedford-Visser". The initials "S L" are written on the left, followed by the full name "Bedford-Visser" in a cursive script.

Susan Bedford-Visser

Chair, West Lothian 50+ Network

16th September 2023