



St Marnock News and Views

News and views from your local friendship group

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Welcome to the latest edition of St Marnock News and Views

It's a pleasure to bring you this Spring edition of our Newsletter, and we extend a warm welcome to all new members who will be receiving this publication for the first time.

We have had a busy six months filled with interesting events and friendly social meetings. As always, we look forward to welcoming new people to join us at any of our events and hope everyone enjoys being part of our Friendly Society.

We are always looking for new ideas for events so, if you have any suggestions or feedback, please do get in touch. We'd love to hear from you!

Amanda and Christine

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The Oddfellows is the trading name of The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Manchester Unity Friendly Society Limited, incorporated and registered in England and Wales No. 223F.
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In remembrance, John Carswell

John Carswell, our committee member, died in January this year. John was from Motherwell and was formerly a much respected Senior Partner in a major Architectural Practice in Glasgow, and was involved in many successful commercial and residential developments in Scotland and London.



John went to a Retirement Fair in Glasgow and met David McKenzie our late Social Organiser. John and his wife Sheila then joined our Oddfellows branch in 2007. John quickly joined the committee and contributed greatly over the years to our branch management, becoming a Trustee in 2013.

John and Sheila were stalwarts of the overseas trips and John took it upon himself to organise St Andrew's evening events and many other activities for us all. He was eternally gregarious, generous and cheerful and became a much loved and loyal friend to many of our members.

John was also an elder of his local church and together with Sheila was very actively involved, particularly with their youth section.

Sadly Sheila passed away last year and since then John bravely faced his cancer with stoicism and a ready smile with the loving support of his daughters Pauline and Anne. We will all miss his smiling face, enthusiastic involvement and his wise counsel.

Ken Hastings

A bit about us...

The Oddfellows is a not-for-profit friendly society that's been around for over 200 years. Our aim is to bring people together through social events, as well as support our members through a range of benefits and services. For more information visit www.oddfellows.co.uk or call **0800 028 1810** to speak to one of our team.

What's been happening in the East of Scotland

I'm delighted to report that the events programme is now up and running in the same format as it was before Covid had such a catastrophic impact on our events' output. Although earlier parts of the programme were marred by Covid-related cancellations, I'm happy to say that things are once more on an even keel.

The return of our 'Coffee with Friends' events to the Hotel Indigo has signalled a massive increase in attendance as we returned to our original venue. Everyone seems really delighted to be back at the hotel as it provides the perfect environment for these highly enjoyable free monthly get-togethers.

The past six months have offered a wide range of events starting in July with a bright sunny day at Lauriston Castle where we enjoyed a trial croquet lesson and learnt more about the mechanics of the game.



Croquet on the Lawn

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the session which was followed by a lovely picnic lunch at Mimi's Bakehouse.

Our first event in August was a guided tour of Saughton Park. The Friends of Saughton Park is a very busy community enterprise providing vital ongoing support to, and working alongside, the Council team. Our guide led us round every corner of this wonderful park and explained each element of the beautiful space.



Saughton Park

Later in August it was on to Musselburgh and a guided tour of Newhailes House. The property had been shut for almost five years, so it was a real treat to enjoy access to such a fascinating building. The stables were recently converted into a welcome centre and café where we ate a delicious lunch on the sunny patio.



Newhailes House

In September we enjoyed a simply wonderful meal at the Murrayfield branch of Dine restaurant. This was a very special event with outstanding food, exceptionally friendly service and great company. The fact that most of the group were still chatting away at 4pm was a sure sign that we'd had a good time!



September Dine

A visit to Edinburgh's Art & Craft Collective in November was a real treat. We received a warm welcome in this busy wee gallery which showcases the work of over 60 artists and makers. With lunch at Sardinian restaurant Isola, our day was highly enjoyable.



Art & Craft Collective

November also saw a group visit the beautiful Custom House in Leith. The oldest customs house in Scotland, the building is now a creative hub and event space. This highly distinctive - and architecturally significant - Georgian building is slowly being restored as funds allow.



Custom House



Christmas Lunch

Christmas Lunch at Dine proved to be a real hit with great food and the usual excellent service. Later in December our group enjoyed an amazing production of the much-loved musical, *My Fair Lady*. This gorgeous production was excellent in every way and included one of the most ingenious sets we'd ever seen!

Amanda Fraser



© Marc Brenner

My Fair Lady

Secret Strollers

Our friendly wee group, Secret Edinburgh with Friends (aka The Secret Strollers!), was out and about in Newhaven discovering hidden stories from this fascinating wee community. All members are welcome to join friendly tour guides - Robert and Susan - as you discover smaller and more unusual venues and locations in the company of friends.

These wee hidden gems are too small to be included in our main events programme, but are equally deserving of a visit. So, join this group to find out more about Edinburgh's hidden

treasures. All events are free of charge unless an entry fee is required. These trips will include the option to meet up for tea, coffee or lunch.

If you'd like to find out more, please contact Amanda Fraser - details on page two.



Oddfellows Travel - Look whats coming up in 2023



29 April – 3 May **Discovering beautiful Bournemouth**

With Daish's Holidays. £269 per person based on 2 people sharing. Half board. Includes coach pick-up from certain locations.

Single rooms £10 supplement for the whole stay. Self-drive option available.

11 – 15 July **Summertime in Lapland and Scandinavia**

With Fred Olsen Cruise Lines. From £2,099 per person based on 2 people sharing. Full board. Departing from Newcastle.

3 – 7 July **Oddfellows Summer Holiday** **Thoresby Hall**

From £351 for a Standard room or £381 for a Signature room, based on 2 people sharing. Half board.



7 – 13 August **Isles of Scotland and the Faroes**

With Fred Olsen Cruise Lines. From £999 per person based on 2 people sharing. Full board. Departing from Dover.

4 – 8 September **HF Discovery Tour to the South Downs** **Abingworth**

Classic single room £659. Premium single room £739. Classic twin room £659 based on 2 people sharing. Full board.

For further information and to book contact Mike Hall **0161 832 9361**
(Ext 2224) travel@oddfellows.co.uk www.oddfellows.co.uk/travel

What's been happening in the West of Scotland



Johnnie Walker

Johnnie Walker Experience

The state of the art Johnnie Walker interactive tour took us back to Johnnie Walker's childhood from the age of 14 and depicted his entrepreneurial vision for providing excellence. The tour included three whisky drinks tailored to individual preferences.

Following the tour, we visited the Rooftop Bar where we had lunch and enjoyed the spectacular views across the city.

The Burrell Collection with Lunch in the Burrell Café

Members enjoyed a tour of the recently refurbished Burrell Collection where we learned the fascinating story of Sir William Burrell's love of art and his exquisite collection, renowned worldwide.



Burrell Collection



Burrell Café

Our Tour Guide was extremely knowledgeable and gave us an insight into Sir William's life.

This was followed by an excellent lunch in the Burrell Café. Members were then free to re-visit the exhibition and enjoy some retail therapy in the shop.

Christmas Lunch – The Pipers' Tryst, Glasgow

Twenty members enjoyed a traditional festive lunch in The Pipers' Tryst in Glasgow.



Pipers' Tryst

The lunch was held on Monday 19 December and was a great way to put everyone into the Christmas spirit.

A welcome drink on arrival was followed by a delicious lunch, great service and lots of friendly chat.

REFER A FRIEND

Share the love and make someone smile

To refer someone you know and make their day, either fill in the **Refer a Friend form** available from your Branch Secretary, or call Membership on 0800 028 1810, or visit our Members' Area at www.oddfellows.co.uk



*Terms and conditions apply to the Refer a Friend offer. It cannot be used in conjunction with any other member offer. For full terms and conditions and for details of the rewards visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/offers.

Ref 1644

Thank you for keeping each other's spirits lifted

When you're going through a tough time, joy can frequently feel in short supply.

Despite the challenges and upsets we've faced as a nation this past year, it has been reassuring to see so many instances of our members coming together to enjoy each other's company. When I look at our Facebook pages and see the comfort you give each other, and the happiness being cultivated, it never fails to make me smile.



I've been an Oddfellow for 27 years, which compared to many members is no time at all. However, over time you notice what brings us together as members and makes us such a powerful, collective force. We've a desire to make the most of our situation, and to improve the lives of those around us. And that is so special. There's a lot happening at the moment and so much of it is out of our control. But there is one thing we can influence – our wellbeing – by adding more mini-moments of peace or happiness into our days.



Please stick on some music that makes your heart sing. Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while. Bake something to share. Try something new. And, of course, make sure you pop one of our socials in your diary. Joy is infectious. You only need to share a smile to witness this. Even if you don't know them, they're likely to smile back and feel happier for it.

We've been sowing the seeds of friendship and support for over two centuries now, and I know I can count on you to continue to do this.

I know a little extra dose of happiness won't solve all our problems, but it will help us to cope with them better, and hopefully create a positive 'Oddies' chain reaction with those around us. We've been told to brace ourselves for difficult economic times, so I also want to remind you that we are always here and ready to help where we can. Thank you again for all that you do and for being such wonderful examples of Oddfellowship.

I wish you, your family and all those you care for good health, happiness and fortune for 2023.

**Yours always in friendship,
Jane Nelson, CEO, the Oddfellows.**

Help with the cost of living

It's a worrying time for everyone with rising household bills, food price inflation and dramatic increases in fuel costs. However, now is always the best time to seek guidance with maximising income, coping with bills and debts, and seeking help with mental and physical health issues.

Our colleagues from the Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line have shared information on help available, and ways in which we can alter our behaviour to save money.

Speak to your local council

Some people can access support from the “Household Support Fund” (also known as “welfare assistance”). Check your local council website to find out if you're eligible.

Budget your outgoings

Having a very clear picture of where your money is spent can help you identify any unnecessary spends, or highlight an opportunity to cancel or find a better deal on subscriptions.

Create a meal plan

Make a list of everything in your cupboards before writing a shopping list to avoid purchasing items you may already have tucked away.

Check your benefits

Some people may be entitled to unclaimed benefits or more than they currently receive. Check <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> or contact the Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line.

Sell your spares

It's never been easier to get rid of unwanted clothes, toys or unused items. Use websites such as eBay or Vinted to make a little money from items which would otherwise be sat around your home.

Be scam aware

There has been a huge increase in the number of scams happening, so be vigilant and if you're ever unsure, speak to a friend, family member, or the Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line for their input.

Other help available (qualifying criteria applies)

Such as the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme, £150 Council Tax rebates, £650 Cost of Living Payment, £150 disability Cost of Living Payment and up to a £300 pensioner cost of living payment. Plus more help to be announced for 2023.

If you are worried about the cost of living, and would like more information, please call the Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line. The number can be found on the back of your membership card or call Membership on 0800 028 1810.

HA Andrews Memorial Fund



Representatives from the Oddfellows visited the Centre for Cancer Immunology to present the first installment of funding from the Society's HA Andrews Memorial Fund and discover how it will support developments in cancer research.

Immunology is a ground-breaking development in the fight against cancer. It offers less invasive treatment for patients, and the results so far are extraordinary.

The Centre, which opened at Southampton General Hospital in 2018, and is funded entirely by donations, is the most recent beneficiary of a gift from the HA Andrews Memorial Fund. The Fund will provide three years of support for a talented PhD student, Nur Zainal, whose research will focus on a specific gene which can potentially be manipulated to target cancer cells in a new vaccine.

Guernsey Oddfellows member, Eric Ferbrache, nominated the project for funding after learning about the Centre's work when it initially opened.

He said: "I personally think it is such a worthwhile project, and the research they are doing around how we can use our body's immune system to better treat different types of cancers is a great advancement. I'm so pleased that it was chosen for the most recent round of funding."

Dr Tim Fenton, Associate Professor in Cancer Biology at the University of Southampton, said: "Our proposal to study the role of RNA editing in cancer cells was selected from amongst a list of 27 submitted from different universities across the UK. We'd like to extend our gratitude to the Guernsey Oddfellows, who supported our application to the HA Andrews Memorial Fund."

Jane Nelson, CEO at the Oddfellows, said: "Sadly, many of our members and their families have been affected by cancer, which is why we are proud to support this incredible research with the HA Andrews Fund. Anything we can do to help the efforts to find a cure is hugely important to us."

We recently received a kind thank you note with a beautiful picture from His Majesty King Charles III, and wanted to share it with you.

When we heard about the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Society sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the Oddfellows and its members.



Unity Mutual – here for you

At Unity Mutual, we believe looking after your finances shouldn't feel scary. It should feel achievable to anyone in any circumstance. Whether you're interested in a deposit on your dream home, saving to give your grandchildren a great start in life, or wanting to leave a little something to loved ones should the worst happen, we're here to help you achieve it.

We have a range of savings and insurance products that could work for you, such as a Junior ISA or Child Tax Exempt Savings Plan, which can offer your child, grandchild, niece or nephew a great head start into adulthood that will mean the world.

Or our new Over 50s Life Insurance Plan, so that when the time comes (hopefully a long time from now), the people you love

are taken care of. Visit our website: www.unitymutual.co.uk/oddfellows or call our friendly team on **0161 214 4628** for more information and the terms and conditions that apply to each product.

Keep a look out for the next Society News, where we will feature our individual products in more detail as part of our 'Introducing Series'.



 **Unity Mutual**
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*To view Unity Mutual's Guaranteed Investment Bond terms and conditions, go to www.unitymutual.co.uk/oddfellows/gib. If you're in any doubt about whether any Unity Mutual product is right for you, it's a good idea to talk to an Independent Financial Advisor (IFA). You can find a local financial advisor by visiting www.unbiased.co.uk. You may need to pay for a financial advisor's help, so make sure you ask them about their fees first.

Oddfellows Members: Do you need help?



None of us know what is around the corner...

Local Care and Welfare Support

To request contact from a Welfare Visitor and for local help and information about Branch benefits and benevolence contact Yvonne Rice on **01563 572727** or email yvonne.rice@oddfellows.co.uk.

Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line

Call 0800 0149 821*

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm

Email: oddfellows@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk



Run by Citizens Advice for Oddfellows members, you can access free, confidential, independent advice on welfare benefits, money and debt issues, consumer problems, housing, fuel bills, employment issues and many other issues.

*The Oddfellows cannot provide legal advice and accepts no liability whatsoever for advice provided by Citizens Advice, which is an independent advice agency. If you have any queries about the advice you have received or wish to make a complaint then you should contact Citizens Advice directly. Citizens Advice operate a formal complaints process.

Care and Welfare Helpline

Call 0800 0149 822

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday to Thursday, 9.30am - 4.30pm, Friday, 9.30am - 4pm

Email: care@oddfellows.co.uk

Run by the Oddfellows Care and Welfare Department, you can access information and guidance on issues such as accessing health and care services, supported housing, support for carers, and planning for later life. The helpline will try and identify any Oddfellows benefits or services in the community which may be of help to you.

**Visit our website page at www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care
for care and welfare information**

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East of Scotland - Events Diary 2023

March

Friday 10 - Edinburgh Hindu Mandir & Cultural Centre

The Temple of Edinburgh Hindu Mandir is based in a former church. Large enough to accommodate 500 people, the congregation meets once a fortnight. The Temple is keen to involve other communities by encouraging them to participate in festivals and also cultural and arts activities.



We'll enjoy a tour of the Centre and the opportunity to find out more about the Hindu faith and the programme of activities at the Temple. Bijou Bistro is our lunch venue - it's one of Edinburgh's best-loved local restaurants. Starts at Hindu Mandir, St Andrew Place, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 7EG at 11.30am. Cost: Tour - Free. Lunch from £13. Please book as soon as possible.

Thursday 23 - Tall Tales!

Join us as we enjoy a 90 minute walking tour in the company of Blue Badge guide - and gifted storyteller - Sarah. It's so easy to walk past the many statues which form part of the City landscape and not really pay any attention to them. This engaging tour - covering around one mile - will provide lots of fascinating facts about Scottish history and the people who made it.



Lunch is at Dusit - one of the City's best Thai restaurants - serving contemporary Thai food using quality local produce and with herbs, spices and vegetables imported from Thailand. We'll enjoy a banquet lunch offering an array of delicious food to share. Starts at St Giles' Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1RE at 11am. Cost: Tour - £10. Two course lunch £16.95. Please note reduced price for lunch. Please book as soon as possible.

West of Scotland - Events Diary 2023

Wednesday 22 March - Kelvingrove – Welcome Tour and Lunch

We will enjoy a personalised welcome in the magnificent setting of Kelvingrove Centre Hall. A museum guide will give a synopsis of the 'must see' world class objects within Kelvingrove and give an insight into some fun and interesting behind the scene facts. We will then have lunch in KG Café, situated within the Gallery.



Costs: Tour: £7 – 11.30am. Lunch approximately £15 – 1pm

St Marnock District of Oddfellows Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will take place on Monday 27 March and you are welcome to attend. The meeting starts at 2.30pm and the venue is the Park Hotel, 2 Dundonald Place, Kilmarnock KA1 1UR

Tea, coffee and sandwiches will be served. Places must be booked – please confirm your attendance by contacting **Yvonne Rice** on **01563 572727** or **yvonne.rice@oddfellows.co.uk**.

Learn, have fun, and stay in touch from home

We've online events for all to enjoy. Give one a try.

To see what's coming up visit **oddfellows.co.uk/events** and enter 'Kelso' in the place name search box

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