

NEWPORT U3a NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2025

September, and suddenly you just know it's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings.
Meister Eckhart

SCOTLAND HOLIDAY

Members of our Holiday Group went on a trip to Pitlochry, Scotland, arranged by Out & About Newport. We visited RRS Discovery in Dundee where we were able to go on board the ship and learn about life and conditions on the heroic voyage to the Antarctic with Captains Scott and Shackleton on the ship's first and highly successful



Discovery Expedition. Later it was used as a WWI merchant ship. From Dundee we travelled to Glamis Castle, a masterpiece of baronial revival. It is the ancestral seat to the Earls of Strathmore and Kinghorne, and famous as the childhood home of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. On the guided tour we managed to climb over 100 steps, including a spiral staircase to the upper floors. We were told about the 3 ghosts and that it was the inspiration for Shakespeare's play, Macbeth. Many of the rooms had photographs of the Queen Mother and childhood photos of the late Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret. The rooms felt informal and we could sit on the chairs and enjoy the ambience of the surroundings. The estate and Italian Gardens were beautiful with an abundance of trees starting to show their autumn colours.

The Cairngorm Funicular is the only mountain railway in Scotland and the highest in the UK. We were lucky to have had a cloudless sky, so we had miles of spectacular views of the Cairngorm National Park, the Grampian mountains and the glistening Loch Morlich. It was only an 8 minute journey but we were able to see how they deal with snow and the winter sports. We ended the day with a cream tea at the Athol Palace Hotel and an exhibition of the history of the building in a small museum in the old servants' wing.

On our final morning we visited the nearby Blair Castle which was instantly welcoming and quite informal, even allowing us to take photos. Our first impression was of the walls covered with antlers, guns and swords (170 antlers in the ballroom alone). However the rooms had some beautiful furniture, paintings and china on display. To complete the morning, at midday a piper paraded outside playing famous Scottish tunes. We had the afternoon free to explore Pitlochry's shops and tourist attractions.

OFF PISTE

Whilst on the holiday in Scotland, some members of our Walking Groups visited the oldest Packhorse Bridge in the Highlands at Carrbridge; also known as the Coffin Bridge, it was built in 1717 to allow funeral processions to reach the Kirk across the River Dulnain. Its parapets were washed away in the famous 'Muckle Spate' and has remained a picturesque ruin and beauty spot for 200 years.



MALVERN VISIT

Many of our members visited the Malvern Autumn Show arranged by our Gardening and Wildlife Group. Bathed in glorious sunshine and framed by the picturesque Malvern Hills, this vibrant celebration of gardening, food, nostalgia and countryside life featured the Giant Vegetable Championship, Cake Off competitions, craft workshops, delicious local food and shopping pavilions galore. In addition, the RHS Floral Marquee



provided an abundant display of autumn colour, whilst over 40 of the UK's leading nurseries displayed top-quality bulbs, perennials and plants. In the Vintage Village we could reminisce about machinery from a by-gone era, and relax whilst listening to live bands performing toe-tapping music. Experts in attendance included Adam Frost, Manoj Malde and Monty Don OBE. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and returned home brimming with ideas for the garden and laden down with so many plants jostling for space on the coach that it resembled a greenhouse!

CRAFT COMPETITION

Members of our Craft Group have been busy knitting and sewing tea cosies which will all be sold at their Christmas Craft Fair on 4th December. Jackie Kerr acted as an independent judge and had difficulty choosing a winner as she was impressed with the craftsmanship but chose Yvonne Moyle's because of the detail applied.



