

The Bray Heads U3A
AGM Thursday, 3rd November 2022.

Secretary's Report

The Bray Heads U3A Group continued to face the challenge of Covid which necessitated that we continue our meetings on Zoom, as we were unable to return to Bray Golf Club in January. Following our Christmas Festivities on December 17th we took our Christmas break and recommenced our Zoom Meetings on January 6th 2022.

Our Co-ordinating team going forward into 2022 are as follows:

- Jane Grimson (Chair)
- Isolde Moylan
- Nikki Gordon
- Leonie O'Toole Bates
- Aoife Nic Réamoinn
- Mary Kelly
- Ian Ring (Treasurer)
- Mary Ashall
- Mary Mullen (Secretary)
- Harry McAlinden (co-opted)

Our Co-ordinating team has held a total of 8 team meetings to date. The members of our team outside of these meetings also spend time working on our future programme, searching for topics and speakers of interest for the year ahead, making contact with potential speakers, updating the programme of talks, and organizing trips/activities.

Our Programme began in January 2022 with our Thursday meetings on Zoom and continued exclusively on Zoom until 6th April, 2022.

We had a total of 9 Zoom meetings in this period. With a diversity of topics which included talks on:

- The Phoenix Park
- From Sorcery, Alchemy, Science, Prayer, Art and Evolution to Mystery
- Russia and Ukraine: the return to war in Europe
- Fake news: those yelling it loudest are usually the fakers
- An introduction to the Camino de Santiago
- President John F Kennedy and the summer of 1963: civil rights, cold war politics and an Irish homecoming
- Cop 26 – The UN Climate Change Conference, Glasgow, October- November 2021: the issues, the hopes and the outcomes
- Daniel O'Connell
- Age Proof.

From 14th April we initially tried a hybrid form of meetings with both attendance in-person at Bray Golf Club together with virtual attendance via Zoom. This proved to be a considerable technical challenge and therefore had to be abandoned after a couple of meetings. We give a special thanks to our IT team of Ian, Harry and Jane for their technical support.

During this period, we held a total of 6 meetings.

Topics in this period covered :

- An abridged history of The Incas of Peru
- Jazz – The Story and Recordings of the Music
- Nature in crisis – what can we do about it?
- Time, place and action in three plays by Brian Friel: Philadelphia, Here I Come!, Aristocrats, and Faith Healer
- James Joyce's 'After the Race' story in 'Dubliners': A Reading and an Exploration'
- Creating evidence-based policy to address the climate and biodiversity crisis

There were two outings during this period, namely in May to Charleville House and Gardens, and in June to Marsh's Library, both of which proved very popular and was much appreciated by those who participated.

Following our meeting on 23rd June, 2022 we took our summer break and on September 8th we returned to Bray Golf Club, no longer continuing our meetings on Zoom.

We have had a total of 4 in person talks since 8th September 2022:

- My Ocean Racing Adventures: LegenDerry Crew on the Clipper Round the World Yacht Races of 2013-14 and 2015-16
- Revolution or Rebellion? The American Declaration of Independence, 1776
- In the wake of the Vikings
- Wexford Opera – one of the Great Miracles

We also included two outings:

September: a walk from Shankill to Rathmichael Church led by Margaret Merne

October: a tour of the Museum of Literature Ireland.

Summary: We have had 19 meetings with a variety of speakers covering a wide variety of topics.

Our Co-Ordinating Team would like to welcome all our new members who have joined from the Waiting List. We have decided not to re-open the Waiting List. Since our return in September to in-person meetings at Bray Golf Club, we know some people are finding it difficult to come to gatherings with the threat of Covid still very much around. Although the wearing of masks is not mandatory at the moment in indoor places, we support and encourage any of our members who would feel safer if they were wearing a mask to do so. We look forward to welcoming old friends back to our Thursday meetings.

Mary Mullen
Secretary, The Bray Heads U3A Group