



# Outlook Christmas 2022

**Wishing you all  
A Very Happy  
Christmas  
and Best Wishes  
for the New Year.**



**Welcome to our Christmas Edition of Outlook.**

Inside this edition - news from groups, members pages, a quiz, and some pictures to brighten a grey wintry day.

Before printing please consider the environment. If you are reading a printed copy please re-cycle.

**Published by Opportunities in Retirement, Ayr. An organisation for the over 50's**



Welcome to "Outlook" our OiR Newsletter for Christmas 2022

Thank you to all our Group Leaders and Members who have contributed articles and pictures for this festive edition.

Remember if you don't have access to a computer we can arrange to have your handwritten article (s) typed and your photographs scanned. Pictures which are copyright protected cannot be reproduced. Please contact the office for help. Some articles may be amended slightly to fit the space available but editing of text will be kept to a minimum. When submitting articles and pictures for publication please use a Word document and ensure that 'read only' is not applied to any of the text/pages.

**Final submission date for Summer 2023 edition of "Outlook" will be the end of June 2023.**

Groups and Town Hall meetings will resume in January and members will be able to enjoy the company of others again after the Christmas Break. Information was correct when our pages were created but readers should check the OiR Ayr website, or contact the office, for current information about group meetings or dates for Speakers Group meetings in the Town Hall.

If you have access to a computer but the office is not aware of your current email address please send a message to:- [office@oirayr.org.uk](mailto:office@oirayr.org.uk) so you can access Outlook online and reduce our postage costs.

Stephen Dodd— Layout & content

Isabell Rogers— Typing & proof reading

Margaret Fagan—Circulation & printing.

### **Our mission statement**

To make OiR the organisation of first choice to enable our 50's and over community to participate in co-ordinated and supported opportunities which enhance their lifestyle and personal well being

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## From the Chair

Hello, and welcome to the Winter 2022 edition of Outlook. The Committee have decided that there will be a small increase in the yearly subscription in 2023 from £18 to £20. I hope you will agree that this still represents excellent value for money.

To have a successful organisation, such as OiR, efficient administration is necessary. For that I have to thank Margaret, our Office Manager, and the many willing volunteers, without whom OiR could not continue to provide the many physical and mental benefits which members continue to enjoy.

The Publicity Group continues to meet to discuss ideas for increasing our membership. I hope you approve of the poster in the office window. An additional one will be installed early next year.

The Baking Group seems to be a flourishing group, albeit small in number. I look forward to being able to taste a little something from their productions one of these days! It is also encouraging to see the Bird Watching Group doing well.

In order to save on increasing printing costs, only a few copies of this newsletter will be printed. These will be available from the OiR Office, or at the fortnightly Town Hall meetings. Outlook will be posted on our web page during early December 2022.

After a very challenging three years, we can look forward to better times ahead.

Best Wishes from the Committee for Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kind Regards

**Barrie Southwood (Chair)**

### Office closure for the Festive Season

The office will be closed from 2.00 pm on Thursday 8th December.

We will re-open on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 10.00 am.

We would remind you all to please call or email to make appointments to come into the office. This is to prevent our very small office from being too crowded during the winter months. We will do our very best to accommodate you with your preferred date and time.

Wishing you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.



### Meeting times and venues

If you intend to visit/join a group please check the meeting place and time before you travel as they may have changed.

Visit the OiR website for current information or call the office.

## GROUP UPDATES FOR 2023

### Mah Jong

This group meets in Prestwick Community Centre on Fridays from 1.45-3.45. There are some spaces available, if you are interested, please come along any Thursday morning and you will be made very welcome.

### Craft Group

Meeting on Thursday afternoons from 1.30 till 3.30 pm in Castlehill Church Hall. We are always ready to welcome new members so if you have an interest in any handcrafts how about giving us a try. We work at all sorts, crochet, knitting, all types of sewing, card making, paper crafts and lots more. For more information please contact the group leader, Morag Lewis, on 01292 570806

### Café Strollers

Café Strollers is a new group within OiR and aims at short walks, finishing off with a coffee and chat. If you are interested in joining please contact the office for more details.

### Spanish

We hope to start the Spanish Class during February 2023, on Mondays in Newton Wallacetown Church Hall from 1.30 till 3.30 pm every week. If you are interested in joining and have not yet expressed your interest, please contact the office. Alternatively you can go along on the day and the tutor, Mary Turbett, will make you very welcome. Please keep an eye on the monthly email for more news and start date!

### Quilt and Stitch Group

We are still trying to create interest in this group to allow us to start up. If you are interested in joining please contact the office on [office@oirayr.org.uk](mailto:office@oirayr.org.uk) Please give us your contact number and note any days which would not suit you for a group meeting. Thank you.

### Activities for the over 50's

*From Art to Mah Jong, Walking to Wine tasting. Poetry to Photography and Bowling to Books you are sure to find something which interests you.*

*For more information visit [www.oirayr.org.uk](http://www.oirayr.org.uk) or our Facebook page.*



### FRIENDS REMEMBERED

Since the last edition of Outlook, we have sadly lost the following members:-

Jean Storer

Carol Hayes

David Lindley

Judith Ballard

Our sincere condolences go to their family and friends.





# A CHRISTMAS QUIZ

How many Christmas Carols and songs can you find?

Each clue represents the first line of a well known song – the first letter of each word is given.

For example SNHN is 'Silent Night, Holy Night'

1. AIAMNCFAB.....
2. DTHWBOH.....
3. ISMKSC.....
4. ISTSCSI.....
5. IDOAWH.....
6. JBJBJATW.....
7. JBJBJBR.....
8. JTTWTLIC.....
9. LDLD.....
10. LTAIB(MBC).....
11. OCAYF.....
12. OCOCE.....
13. OIRDC.....
14. RTRNR.....
15. SBPAPUTTFM.....
16. SNHN.....
17. TFNTADS.....
18. THATI.....
19. WTKOOA.....
20. WSWTFBN.....



Answers on page 7 (no cheating)

## Help us to fill the pages of the next edition of "Outlook"

We need your articles, poems, short stories, recipes and pictures to fill the pages of the next edition of "Outlook".

Please deliver your contribution to the OiR office by email or handwritten via the letterbox. We will do the rest.

Please note contributions must be original and not copied from any publication which is copyright protected.

# OUR WALKING GROUPS

## FRIDAY WALKING GROUP

### A Walk by a River



Barrie's Friday Walking Group are a small, friendly group and I have enjoyed walking with them if they are in my home area. On the morning of Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September, I joined the group on the 10.20 bus in Ochiltree and accompanied them on the short distance to Auchinleck. From there, we walked down the North Drive to Dumfries House.

There are a variety of walks in Dumfries Estate but we took the path which runs parallel to the Water of Lugar, through woodland and Broomfield Playing Fields, to Cumnock. There we enjoyed lunch and a good blether before Barrie and those who had travelled with him in the minibus headed back to Ayr.

In 2007 Prince Charles stepped in to head a consortium to save Dumfries House and its contents for the nation. Many visitors since then have enjoyed walking in the walled garden or having a guided tour of the house.

That Friday was the day following the death of Queen Elizabeth II and, as we walked past Dumfries House, we noticed that the flag was flying at half-mast. King Charles III spent his last night as Prince Charles at Dumfries House and, after being told of the deterioration in the Queen's health, was taken by helicopter to Balmoral to be with his mother.

No doubt His Majesty's visits to Dumfries House will be much less often in the future and we wish him well as he takes on the duties and responsibilities of the monarchy.



**Dumfries House and the Chinese Bridge**



## SATURDAY WALKING GROUP

Throughout 2022, the group's destinations encompassed a large area of the south and west of Scotland.

In February, we had a very pleasant walk through the woodland on the banks of the River Ayr from Mossblown to Auchincruive, where we had lunch at The Bothy. March took us to Helensburgh where we walked along the promenade and visited the Hill House. June, July and August meant interesting and scenic walks in Biggar, Thornhill and Moffat. September brought a real sunshiny cliff walk in Portpatrick returning to the village through Dunskey estate. The October walk will take place on 5<sup>th</sup> November – a short walk in the Maidens/Culzean area followed by lunch in Wildings. The last walk of the year will be on November 26<sup>th</sup> although the destination has not yet been decided.

The members of this friendly group wish to thank Barrie for his leadership and organization of all the walks we have enjoyed this year and we are all looking forward to seeing where next year's walks take us.

**Amy Kinnaird**



## IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A SHEEP? IS IT A STOAT?

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October four of us (Jim, Margery, Alice and myself) braved the changeable weather and travelled to Lochwinnoch while questioning whether to continue with the planned walk to Glengarnock or into the more sheltered parkland. We decided to stick to the original plan with the hope that it stayed dry and cloudy.

It's an interesting walk along the old railway line as some of the bricks from the station platforms can still be seen peeping through the plant life.

After a while, we came across two sheep at the side of the path. Looking around we tried to see where they had come through the fence when we heard a man calling to us from a gate. We helped the farmer (who told us he was over 90!) to get his scattered sheep back through the gate – dogs had worried his flock the night before. After our good deed for the day, we carried on towards our goal.

Shortly afterwards we spotted a small animal ahead of us. Alice had her binoculars with her so we learned it was a weasel.

We saw several bird species too and were also rewarded with a bull frog booming in a large puddle.

Our lunch in the "Auld Clock" was nice and the coffee excellent!

All in, a very successful walk and it only started to rain on the last half-mile!

**Dorothy McCracken**



### **Just a wonder**

**A row of bottles on my shelf  
Caused me to analyse myself.  
One yellow pill I have to pop  
Goes to my heart so it wont stop.  
A little white one that I take  
Goes to my hands so they wont shake.  
The blue ones that I use a lot  
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.  
The purple pill goes to my brain  
And tells me that I have no pain.  
The capsules tell me not to wheeze  
Or cough or choke or even sneeze.  
The red ones, smallest of them all  
Go to my blood so I wont fall.  
The orange ones, very big and bright  
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.  
Such an array of brilliant pills  
Helping to cure all kinds of ills.  
But what I'd really like to know....  
Is what tells each one where to go!**

Source dennydavis.net

### **CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS**

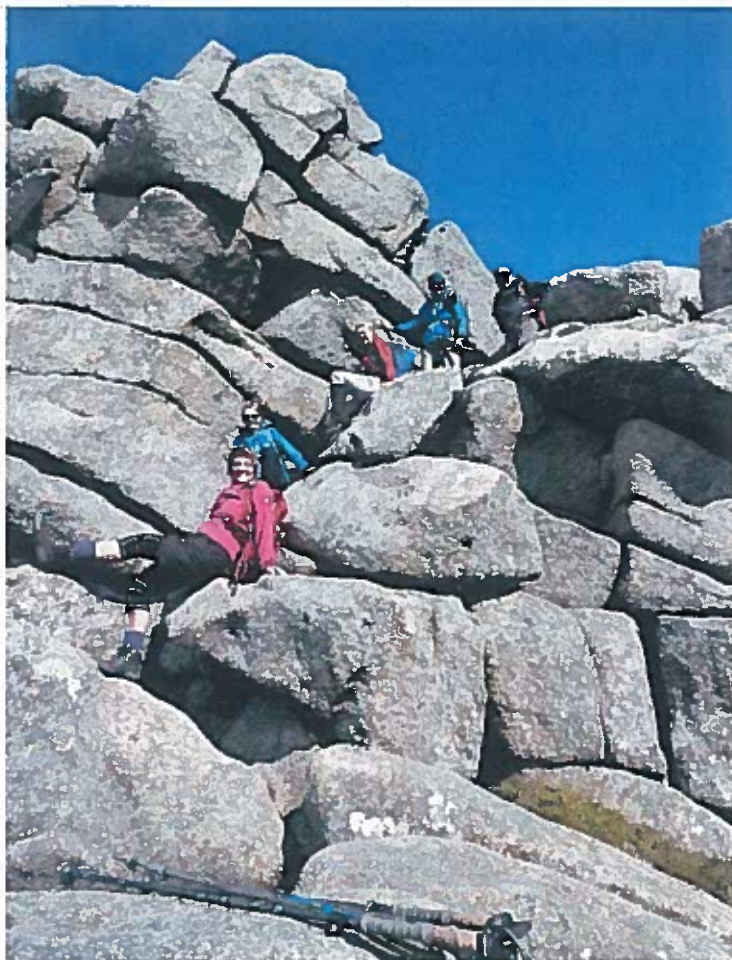
1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed
2. Deck the halls with boughs of holly
3. I saw mummy kissing Santa Claus
4. I saw three ships come sailing in
5. I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
6. Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way
7. Jingle bell, jingle bell, jingle bell rock
8. Joy to the world, the Lord is come
9. Little donkey, little donkey
10. Long time ago in Bethlehem (Mary's Boy Child)
11. O come all ye faithful
12. O come, o come Emmanuel
13. Once in royal David's city
14. Rudolph the red nosed reindeer
15. Santa baby, put a present under the tree for me
16. Silent night, holy night
17. The first Nowell the angels did say
18. The holly and the ivy
19. We three kings of orient are
20. While shepherds watched their flocks by night

Quiz devised by Isabell Rogers.

## 'Jellyfish age backwards!'

They don't of course – just an illusion, but it's the title of a recent book on ageing and longevity by Niklas Brendborg, a Danish scientist. He considers the changes which occur during ageing, and also discusses critically the various factors which may increase longevity. He points out that it is often difficult to be sure of factors as folk who do one thing which might be beneficial, also tend to do other things which could have positive effects. Whatever, as suggested by others, some things such as no smoking, a good, balanced diet, moderate drinking, avoiding disease, especially some viral diseases, and on the positive side, being sociable, seem to be good bets.

What is novel is his idea of 'hormesis' (scientists love to come up with fancy names, usually derived from Latin or Greek for their concepts). In essence he suggests that things which cause physical stress make us stronger and increase longevity (providing they don't kill us in the first place!). Pain, then gain! He gives examples of low doses of toxins and radioactivity having long term beneficial effects – but I am inclined to pass on these options. More interestingly, he emphasizes the value of physical exercise, the more strenuous the better.



Exercise is something many of us enjoy with the OIR. Walking of course ticks two boxes – physical exercise and socializing. The OIR provides walks from the gentle, low level, to the strenuous antics of the Hill and Mountain Walking Group (of which I am fortunate to be leader). Plenty of socializing goes on during outings of the group – indeed I am always amazed at the way some of the lady members can keep chatting even when going steeply up hill; I tend to plod along silently at the back. While not a meaningful experiment, we do have four of us in the group who are 79 or 80 and still getting up the hills, so maybe Dr Brendborg has a point. Whatever, we have many a great day out together as illustrated by a couple of photos of recent ventures (we do have plenty of men in the group, but the ladies are just more photogenic – and bloody good walkers!).

So, maybe this piece should have been entitled 'Walking, talking, living longer'. More importantly, the OIR may be doing even more good by keeping some of us going than it realizes!

**Dick Vernon**



**Pictures—** TOP On an ascent of An Caisteal.

ABOVE On a traverse of Goatfell ( not the tourist route! )





## OUTDOOR BOWLING CLUB

The Outdoor Bowling season 2022 finished on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> September. We have had a very enjoyable season with no games missed because of bad weather, a lot of fun and laughter and some very good bowling. The average attendance was ten players. Our Bill Booty knockout competition finished with a very close final game score of 21-20 and our congratulations go to the winner, Mabel Shankland.

We are very grateful to Alloway Bowling Club for letting us play on their lovely green on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> July when we could not bowl at Northfield because of the International Competitions being played there. We very much enjoyed the hospitality at the Alloway club.

The indoor bowling season has now started and we welcome any members who would like to give bowling a try to come along on a Monday or Wednesday afternoon at 2.00 for a 2.30 start.

Thanks to all our bowlers for their support this season.

**Robert Kerr**

## BAKING GROUP

The Baking Group, under the leadership of Hazel Sommerville, first accessed their wooden spoons and baking bowls at the beginning of 2021. There were about a dozen members initially, stalwarts keen to occupy themselves during those dreich moments of isolation. Members receive a recipe from Hazel fortnightly which we then bake, photograph and comment on. These photographs are posted on the website by Arnie Green.

From these beginnings, the Group has successfully continued. There are currently 14 members with room for plenty more! The Group has produced fruit loaves, egg sponges, cheesecakes, lemon meringue pies, chocolate cakes etc.

Hazel invited us at the end of August to afternoon tea in her garden. There, members were able to meet face to face in pleasant surroundings. OIR is, and always has been, a fine example of older men and women who, during their working lives, have acquired skills and knowledge which they happily pass on to each other in a wide variety of activity groups.

Thank you, Hazel.

**Amy Kinnaird**

**Chocolate Muffins**



**Ginger Biscuits**



**Fruit Scones**





## A VIVID MEMORY

I have always enjoyed writing. I think that it goes back to my primary school days when we were taught to write a 'composition'.

At the beginning of this year, to celebrate the centenary of the BBC, Radio Scotland began to broadcast a series of programmes entitled "100 Years of Scottish Stories". The idea was to ask listeners to write a short article of no more than 500 words on a personal memory of living in this centenary.

I decided to write about an interesting experience which, for me, happened in 1956.

I was a young Civil Servant and, in March of that year, I was invited by the Scottish Headquarters of the Ministry of Labour to represent Scotland at an International Youth Conference which was to take place in St. Andreasberg, which is in Lower Saxony, Germany. An exciting invitation for a young girl from a small Ayrshire village!

I travelled by train to London, accompanied by another representative – a young man from Fife – also a Civil Servant. In the London H.Q. we met 16 young English men and women, and a couple from Wales. We travelled from London by train to Harwich then overnight by boat to the Hook of Holland where we were joined by the Dutch contingent and continued across Europe by train to Hannover.



Skiing in St.Andreasberg—Google images

From there, by coach, we were driven to a new, purpose-built, building in the Hartz Mountains to join 60 other young people from many different European countries. The conference was being held by the West German Government to encourage peaceful relations between European countries in the future.

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We had lectures on democracy, freedom and fellowship. Headsets with English translations were available if required as the lectures were all in German. We had several interesting visits – to Goslar, Göttingen and Hannover. Snow lay thick on the ground and we were given skiing instruction.

Those two weeks were my first experience of 'going abroad' and the memories of that European 'holiday' remain very clear in my mind to this day.

Amy Kinnaid

## More group updates

### Scrabble

An interest has been expressed for the Scrabble Group to start again. If you are considering becoming a member of this group please contact the office to register your interest. This is a small friendly group and you will be made most welcome.

### Table Tennis : Thursday mornings.

Our Thursday morning Table Tennis group has spaces available. Should you wish to join this group please contact the office for more information. Meetings are held weekly in Newton Wallacetown Church Hall.

Visit the OIR website or our Facebook page for more information about groups, meetings and venues.



## Merry Christmas

~ Anon

Merry Christmas to friends!

Merry Christmas to foes!

The world's bright with joy, so

Forget all your woes.

The earth's full of beauty, of

Love and good cheer.

Merry Christmas to all and a

Happy New Year!



# Our "Welcome Day"

Pictures taken on Tuesday 29th November in  
Newton Wallacetown Church Hall

An opportunity to introduce a friend, or two, to the  
benefits of belonging to OiR Ayr.



Group Leaders and members offered visitors  
information about the activities organised by  
and for our over 50's community.



Colourful displays of photographs, crafts and  
literature prompted plenty of conversation.





## More from our Welcome Day



Information on community safety was provided by the Police and South Ayrshire Council



Visitors, OiR members and friends enjoyed afternoon teas supplied by the Sugar Cube.