

## **Retired Members Section. Report to Branch AGM Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017**

The Retired Members Section has in excess of 250 members. Between 20 and 30 of these members attend our monthly meetings.

Our section has been in existence for nearly 30 years. It began during the old Tayside Region and when this converted to district councils the retired members from Dundee City, Angus and Perth remained as one section. Perth eventually broke away, leaving Dundee City and Angus Retired Members Section. This has been the set up for the last twenty years. We recently had a problem with both attendance at our monthly meetings and lack of volunteers to serve on our committee. Our committee mounted a recruitment campaign and I'm pleased to report that attendance has improved and that the section is in good shape. The situation was also improved by members from Angus and NHS Tayside Unison, who do not have active RM Sections, starting to attend our meetings.

We produce eight editions annually of a newsletter which is collated/ partly written by our editor and is then printed and mailed out to 250 plus Dundee City members with the help of the Branch Office. Angus branch receives an e-copy which they distribute to their 72 retired members. Dundee City Archivist and Unison Scotland Website are also copied into this publication.

Another service the section provides is to visit Dundee members who are ill in hospital and/or at home. We also organised a successful trip to Pitlochry in June 2017 and a Xmas Party in December in the Queens Hotel (thanks to the Branch for supporting the latter). Member feedback indicates that they greatly value what our section provides. Our committee see this work as complementing the community support the Branch gives to, for example, to the food bank, women's organisations, anti racism campaigns and Dundee Together.

Our monthly meetings consists of a guest speaker followed by information sharing on issues affecting retired people, ending with tea and biscuits and good conversation. We try to get a variety of speakers to suit all tastes. I hope we achieved this with our speakers in 2016. These included Colonel Jake Hensman on his 30 year career in the Marines, Mike Arnott on Dundee and the Spanish Civil War, Chaplain Andrew Bennet from Ninewells and Sam Walters from the CAB on switching energy suppliers. Our old favourite Daphne Barbieri with her new film on Cuba and Iain Flett with a guided tour of the Howff also made return visits.

New speakers for 2017 include David Elder on the Dance Halls of Dundee, Moira Foster on Dundee Womens' Trail, Lorcan Mullen on issues facing our employed colleagues in Unison and Dr Sarah Browne on her research into the History of Womens' Liberation in Dundee

A retired member sits on the Branch Executive Committee. The Branch also helps us to send delegates to both the Scottish and UK Unison Retired Members Conferences.

We hope that any Unison member nearing retirement will consider joining us. It's only £15 for life membership and this entitles you to continued access to the Unison Plus benefits you currently enjoy and the national Unison newsletter. In addition, the local section gives you a chance to meet like minded people for a chat and cup of tea as well as access to the activities and benefits outlined above.

If you are retiring, membership application forms are available from the Branch Office or stewards. Dundee City Retired Members Section hopes to welcome you to one of our future meetings.

***Ron Kerr, Dundee City Unison Retired Members Section.***