U3A FILM GROUP – PROGRAMME: January – June 2026 Venue: Stewart Bowling Club; Time: 2pm

Friday 16 January 2026 – 84 Charing Cross Road (1986)

Starring: Anne Bancroft, Anthony Hopkins

Director: David Jones Running time: 95 minutes

A true story about love and the love of books. Helene Hanff, a feisty New York writer, mails a letter to a small London bookshop requesting some rare English classics. Frank Doel, the reserved English bookseller, answers her request, beginning a touching and humorous correspondence that spans two continents and two decades. Their intimate, richly detailed letters draw us into their lives as they share their dreams, hopes, sorrows, and so develop a lasting and extraordinary friendship.

Friday 6 February 2026 – Thelma and Louise (1991)

Starring: Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis, Brad Pitt, Harvey Keitel

Director: Ridley Scott Running time: 124 minutes

Meek housewife Thelma (Geena Davis) joins her friend Louise (Susan Sarandon), an independent waitress, on a short fishing trip. However, their trip becomes a flight from the law when Louise shoots and kills a man who tries to rape Thelma at a bar. Louise decides to flee to Mexico and Thelma joins her. On the way, Thelma falls for sexy young thief J.D. (Brad Pitt). The sympathetic Detective Slocumb (Harvey Keitel) tries to convince the two women to surrender before their fates are sealed.

Friday 20 February 2026 – (500) Days of Summer (2009)

Starring: Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Zooey Deschanel

Director: Marc Webb Running time: 95 minutes

A romantic comedy-drama that flips the typical love story on its head. The film explores the highs and lows of a relationship through a nonlinear narrative that jumps between different days of their 500-day connection. Tom, a greeting card writer and hopeless romantic, falls for Summer, who doesn't believe in true love. Their relationship unfolds in fragments – joyful moments, heartbreaks, and everything in between. The story isn't about a perfect romance, but about personal growth, expectations vs. reality, and learning to move on. The film is known for its quirky tone, stylish visuals, and a killer indie soundtrack featuring artists like Regina Spektor and The Smiths. It's often praised for being emotionally honest and relatable, especially for anyone who's experienced unrequited love or a breakup that didn't make sense at the time. It's now considered a cult classic for its fresh take on romantic storytelling.

Friday 6 March 2026 – Gorillas in the Mist (1988)

Starring: Sigourney Weaver, Bryan Brown, Julie Harris

Director: Michael Apted Running time: 129 minutes

Sigourney Weaver stars as Dian Fossey, in this true story about Fossey's study of gorillas, and her efforts to stop the decimation of the endangered apes. A Kentucky woman, Dian Fossey is inspired by anthropologist Louis Leakey to devote her life to the study of primates. Travelling into deepest Africa, Fossey becomes fascinated with the lives and habits of the rare mountain gorillas of the Rwandan jungle. Studying them at close quarters, Fossey develops a means of communicating with the gorillas, and in doing so becomes obsessed with the apes' well-being. She becomes so preoccupied with her vocation that she loses the opportunity of a romance with the National Geographic photographer Bob Campbell.

Friday 20 March 2026 - The Caine Mutiny (1954)

Starring: Humphrey Bogart, Jose Ferrer, Van Johnson, Fred MacMurray

Director: Edward Dmytryk Running time: 124 minutes

Aboard the USS Caine, the crew notices that their captain Lt Commander Queeg (Humphrey Bogart) is showing signs of mental instability. In order to protect everyone on board they urge the First Officer to take over command of the vessel. When involuntarily relieved of his command during a violent typhoon, Captain Queeg brings his officers up on charges of mutiny. The film's climax is the Court Martial hearing.

Friday 3 April 2026 - GOOD FRIDAY - no film

Friday 17 April 2026 – Magic in the Moonlight (2014)

Starring: Eileen Atkins, Colin Firth, Emma Stone

Director: Woody Allen Running time: 93 minutes

Acclaimed magician Stanley Crawford (Colin Firth) dazzles his audiences with feats of supernatural amazement. But when it becomes inexplicable, Stanley is a dedicated sceptic. Enter Sophie Baker (Emma Stone), psychic, soothsayer and stunning seductress. As they embark on misadventures up and down the French Riviera, will they discover proof of a world beyond the laws of physics, or have they fallen under the sway of a more earthly chemistry?

Friday 1 May 2026 - Red Eye (2005)

Starring: Rachel McAdams, Cillian Murphy, Brian Cox

Director: Wes Craven Running time: 85 minutes

A psychological thriller which is a taut, high-stakes story that unfolds almost entirely during a red-eye flight from Dallas to Miami. Lisa Reisert (McAdams), a hotel manager, meets the charming Jackson Rippner (Murphy) at the airport. Once airborne, his charm turns chilling – he's part of a terrorist plot and needs Lisa to help orchestrate an assassination. If she refuses, her father will be killed. The film starts with a rom-com vibe but quickly shifts into a suspenseful thriller. It's claustrophobic, fast-paced, and surprisingly grounded for a movie with missiles and political intrigue. Critics praised its tight direction and strong performances. It holds an 80% rating on Rotten Tomatoes and was a box office success, grossing over \$95 million worldwide on a \$26 million budget. If you're into thrillers with a confined setting and psychological tension, this one's a solid pick.

Friday 15 May 2026 - The Father (2021)

Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Olivia Colman

Director: Florian Zeller Running time: 94 minutes

In an Oscar and Best Actor winning performance, Anthony Hopkins plays the eponymous role of a mischievous and highly independent man, who as he ages, refuses all assistance from his daughter (Olivia Colman). Yet, such help has become essential following Anne's decision to move to Paris with her partner. As Anne's father tries to make sense of his changing circumstances, he begins to doubt his loved ones, his own mind, and even the fabric of his reality.

Friday 5 June 2026 – Angel Has Fallen (2019)

Starring: Gerard Butler, Morgan Freeman

Director: Ric Roman Waugh Running time: 116 minutes

When there's an assassination attempt on President Allan Turnbull (Morgan Freeman), his trusted confidant, Secret Service Agent Mike Banning (Gerard Butler), is wrongfully accused and taken into custody. After escaping, he becomes a man on the run, and must evade his own agency and outsmart the FBI in order to find the real threat to the President.

Friday 19 June 2026 – Paddington (2014)

Starring: Hugh Bonneville, Sally Hawkins, Julie Walters

Director: Paul King

Running time: 91 minutes

A young Peruvian bear with a passion for all things British travels to London in search of a home. Finding himself lost and alone at Paddington Station, he begins to realize that city life is not all he had imagined – until he meets the kind Brown family, who read the label around his neck ('Please look after this bear. Thank you.') and offer him a temporary haven. It looks as though his luck has changed until this rarest of bears catches the eye of a museum taxidermist.