

CHIT-CHAT



East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF

[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)

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DOES IT BITE?



You wouldn't want to get too close to these flesh-ripping teeth, would you? Find out where not to go to avoid them in *Picture Gallery*.

IS IT ALIVE?



What sort of thing is this? Get the answer to that and find out where it resides in *Picture Gallery*.

CHAT LINE

Chit-Chat needs readers to keep sending in pictures, anecdotes, funny stuff etc. You can send it to me at chit-chat@eru3a.org, or post it on the [ERu3a](#) page in Facebook.

MAKE CONTACT

Use the link incorporated in the *Chit-Chat* heading to access our website, and the various message birds to contact group facilitators. By using the message bird in the [Contacts](#) section of the website you can access any of the post-holders listed there. Safe links to other websites may also appear in *Chit-Chat*.

The interest groups featured in *Groups* are just a few of those now available. They are all listed alphabetically in the [Groups](#) Section of the website. Facilitators can be contacted by clicking on the blue Message Bird incorporated in every group's heading.

If you don't have access to the Internet, phone 0743 712 3921 for information about groups etc.

Jim Hamilton

THE BIZ

NOVEMBER MEETING

Next month's guest speaker is Liz Allan. Her talk this time is entitled *John and Annie Glenn – Stars and Struggles*. In 1962 John Glen became the first American in space and became famous as a courageous space pioneer and campaigning politician. However, Liz will reveal why John regarded his wife as the courageous one.

The doors are open at 1.30pm and the meeting starts at 2.00pm. Refreshments are served after the talk and we ask for a small donation of £1 to cover the costs. If you can – please bring your own mug.



CHRISTMAS FAIR



ERu3a will have a small stall selling beautiful craft items made by our own members.

Why don't you come along for a cuppa at Broom Church, Newton Mearns, on Saturday 9th December 10.30-12.30?

There's also Breakfast with Santa for the grandchildren from 9am-10.30am.

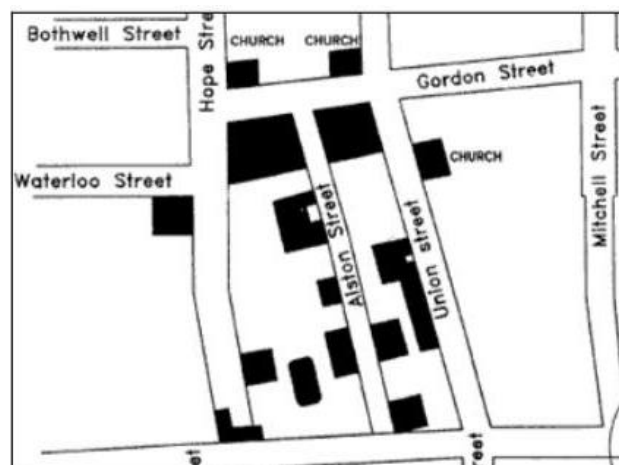
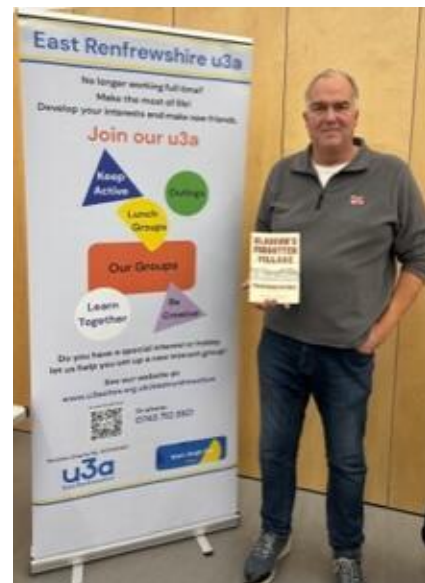
THE BUZZ

MONTHLY MEETING

The hall was packed full this month to hear u3a member Kevin Scott's talk on Grahamston – Glasgow's Forgotten Village. Kevin's interest in Grahamston was sparked when, while researching his family history, he discovered that some of his ancestors had owned a market garden in the village.

Grahamston was first noted on maps of Glasgow around 1680 and grew over the next two centuries from a row of thatched wooden cottages to an important commercial centre in the heart of Glasgow. The opening of the Forth and Clyde canal in 1790 was an important factor in its growth as merchants sought facilities for storage and processing adjacent to the city, with good access to the south and west and to the ocean-going ships at the Broomielaw. Its main street was Alston Street which ran parallel to Hope Street (then named Copenhagen Street after the Duke of Wellington's horse). The village was demolished to make way for the Caledonian Railway's Central Station.

Glasgow's first theatre was built in Grahamston because the city fathers would not allow a 'house of the devil' to be built within the city. Despite being ransacked by a mob on its opening night in 1764, The theatre operated successfully until it was destroyed by fire in 1780 – almost certainly the work of arsonists.



Looking toward Grahamston from Anderston, mid 1700s

Kevin now takes walking tours of the area and when he recently took Glasgow's Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren on his tour she was so impressed that today's 'city fathers' are being encouraged to find out more about Grahamston, so that it will not remain forgotten'.



IGO

From the 2nd – 6th October u3a Interest Groups Online (IGO) held an Online Fair giving 45 minute taster sessions for many of their groups e.g. Early Women Doctors, Armchair



Archaeology, Railways, Science in the News, Quiz, Climate Change, Modern Pop for Third-Agers and many more subjects.

If you would like to join IGO, it costs £6 for 6 months.

A promotional graphic for u3a. On the left, a blue background contains the u3a logo (with the tagline 'learn, laugh, live') and the text 'What is u3a?'. Below this, it says 'u3a is a UK-wide collection of charities that provide the opportunity for those no longer in work to come together and learn for fun.' and 'A typical u3a will be home to many interest groups covering hundreds of different subjects - from art to zoology and everything in between.' On the right, there is a photograph of an older woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark patterned top, standing in a garden and holding a green plant. A large yellow semi-circle is at the bottom left of the blue area.

GROUPS

AROUND THE WORLD DINING

This month our globetrotting diners visited Brel – the popular Belgian restaurant in Hillhead's Ashton Lane. Belgian beer, chocolate and waffles were on offer as well as French Onion Soup, Croque Monsieur and Moules Frites as well as many other dishes. The parmesan macaroni proved popular, as did the chicken schnitzel. Group 1's food was hot and tasty and the service excellent although group 2 didn't fare so well.



CUPPA@11

This month's coffee and chat was at Caulders Garden centre in Newton Mearns.



CYCLING OFFROAD

The newly formed Cycling Offroad Group enjoyed a highly successful first outing on Wednesday 18th October. Five enthusiastic cyclists took in a thoroughly enjoyable tour of Pollok Park, before settling down for delicious coffee and cake in Pollok House cafe. As the name suggests, this new group differs from the long-established u3a Cycling Group in that the members prefer to cycle on paths and tracks, well away from road traffic. The group meets in the mornings of the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. If you too take pleasure in cycling through our delightful countryside away from road traffic and would like to join us, just contact Billy Martin via the message bird on the [Cycling Offroad](#) webpage.



EAST RENFREWSHIRE DINING

Group 1 visited the Orchard Park Hotel, Giffnock at the start of October. The restaurant was very busy but everyone had a superb dinner with great company.



Group 2 enjoyed a meal at Parklands.



FASHION THROUGH THE AGES

For their October meeting some members of the Group travelled to Dundee to see the Tartan Exhibition at the V & A museum. The excellent and informative visit was greatly enjoyed by all. Who knew how tartan has developed and been used in so many different ways over time?



OUT AND ABOUT

At the beginning of October twenty-two of our outandabouters headed off in the rain to the National Mining Museum in Newtongrange. On arrival they were greeted by two guides, who led them through two floors of really interesting exhibitions illustrating the story of Scotland's coal mining industry in and its social history.





PHOTOGRAPHY

When the Group ventured into the city centre to take photos of the historic building and statues in and surrounding George Square, they discovered the square had been fenced off for the World UCI Cycling Championships. Our snappers then decided on a new theme – architecture old and new – for which there was no shortage of photographic opportunities. After taking their photos they went to Tinderbox in Merchant City for coffee and a chat.





QUIZ

Team 'High Living' were the worth winners of the October Quiz with an amazing score of 89. Congratulations to Susan, Allen, Jim, John and Catriona (who wasn't in the room when the photo was taken).

True or False Question – does the last day of October always fall on the same day of the week as the last day of February?



READING

Group 4 had a free choice month and the following members recommended their choices:

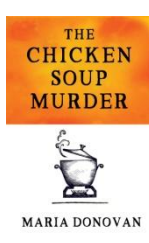
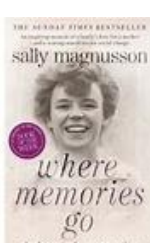
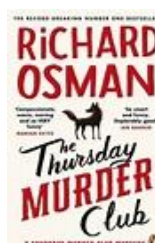
Sharyn – *No one Saw It Coming* by Susan Lewis. An emotional family drama which was suspenseful and had good character depth. A tale of justice and forgiving. Good book.

Alice – *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman. This book about a brutal killing in a peaceful retirement village was a funny, warm, compassionate, enjoyable lighthearted read.

Heather – *Where Memories Go* by Sally Magnusson. This was the very moving story of Sally's mother's journey with dementia. It was told with warts and all but still managed to portray some humorous situations.

Janice – *The Chicken Soup Murder* by Maria Donovan. This debut novel was written from the perspective of an 11-year-old who reckons his neighbour got murdered. It's about grief, love and relationships, with humour thrown in.

Shona – *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan.



Group 5 read and discussed *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee – a family saga spanning nearly 100 years of history. This moving story about four generations of a Korean family living in Japan in the 20th century is full of integrity, empathy and family loyalty. It's a long novel but doesn't feel like it.



SATURDAYS

In September the Group walked from Parklands past the rear of Crookfur Cottages and through Fairweather Park, returning past the waterfall to Parklands for lunch.



In October they met for a crisp autumnal walk in Bellahouston Park, followed by lunch in the lovely private room at The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice.



SPANISH IMPROVERS

Here are the Spanish improvers, with two new members, at the start of the new session.



STROLLERS

The Summer Evening Strollers has been re-branded as The Strollers and now meet in the afternoon so that they can continue walking throughout the autumn and winter months. Their first outing at the new time was a thoroughly enjoyable walk through Linn Park.



WALKIE TALKIES

In October our chatty walkers undertook a pleasant four-mile walk from Erskine to Boden Boo and back again. The morning started out misty and cold but eventually the sun broke through and, by the time they reached the Erskine Garden Centre to enjoy an excellent lunch, the weather was perfect.



WALKING

Despite adverse weather predictions, it stayed mostly dry for the Walking Group's two outings in September to the Lodge Forest by Aberfoyle. This was a 4 mile walk along the Highland Boundary Fault, with the option to add on a further 1½ mile circular trail at the end.

The entire walk follows well made gravel tracks through the forest, passing the Little Fawn Waterfall on the way, which was at its most impressive following recent heavy rainfall. The route climbs gradually through tall pine trees before opening out to give magnificent views over the Carse of Stirling,

After stopping for a short snack break, members returned back down the track, with many continuing for the full 5½ miles through ancient oak woodland before heading up to the flagship Visitor Centre for some welcome refreshment.



The Group made a return visit to Chatelherault Country Park in Hamilton for its two enjoyable outings in October. This has been one of the Group's more popular walks, and members were treated to some lovely autumnal colours along the 5 mile circular route which starts and finishes at the restored 18th century hunting lodge.



It was perfect mild walking weather on both weeks, although quite wet underfoot, but the paths and tracks were all well-defined and maintained in good condition. The walk is mostly through attractive woodland and passes high above the picturesque Avon Gorge, with some steep and muddy parts and several flights of steps to negotiate along the way.



There are some spectacular views down to the Avon Water which flows through the gorge, particularly from the Duke's Bridge where the ruins of Cadzow Castle can also be seen perched high on a cliff above.

Most members stayed for drinks and snacks at the Visitor Centre cafeteria and a look round the gallery and facilities within the building before returning home.

November's walk will be to the Cathkin Braes.





DID YOU KNOW ...?

TRICK OR TREAT

According to the History website Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of [Samhain](#) (pronounced sow-in) to mark the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter – a time often associated with death. Celts believed that On the night of 31st October the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. They also thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

When the Romans ruled the Celtic lands, two of their festivals were combined with the Samhain. They were Feralia – a day in late October when the passing of the dead was commemorated and a day to honour Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of bobbing for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

On 13th May 609, Pope Boniface IV dedicated the [Pantheon](#) in Rome in honour of all Christian martyrs, and established the feast of All Martyrs Day. Pope Gregory III later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs, and moved the observance from May 13 to 1st November. In 1000, the church made 2nd November All Souls' Day, a day to honour the dead, effectively replacing the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, church-sanctioned holiday. The celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English *Alhallowmesse* meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

Borrowing from European traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors.

WHIMSY

Marbe McNeill sent this in.

And Myra Dyer posted this.

NURSERY RHYMES UPDATED FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
The structure of the wall was incorrect
So he won ten grand with Claims Direct.

It's raining, it's pouring
Of course its global warming.

Jack and Jill went into town
To fetch some chips and sweeties
Now he can't keep his heart rate down
And she's got diabetes.

Georgie Porgie pudding and pie
Kissed the girls and made them cry
When the boys came out to play
He kissed them too coz he was gay.

Mary had a little lamb
It ran into a pylon
10,000 volts went up it's arse
And turned it's wool to nylon.



The most common ghosts are the visions dressed in white sheets with flailing arms. These are people who died changing their duvets. They roam bedrooms, forever trying to find the corners

PICTURE GALLERY

LIGHTING UP PAISLEY

Willie Dyer posted these pictures showing how Paisley celebrates Halloween.





GONE WEST

These are just a few of the pictures Carol and Jim Hamilton took recently while travelling in the USA.



Aboard USS Constitution in Boston



Giant Kapok Tree in Palm Beach, Florida



In the White Mountains, New Hampshire

EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	15th November	Monthly Meeting in Newton Mearns Liz Allan - John and Annie Glen - Stars and Struggles
Wednesday	20th December	Christmas Party in Barrhead
Wednesday	17th January	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Tom Marchant - Dear Green Places - The Story of Glasgow's Parks
Wednesday	21st February	Monthly Meeting in Barrhead Brian Young - The Roman Camps in Scotland
Wednesday	20th March	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church - Allan Mauchline - Scottish Emergency Rides Voluntary Service

CONTACTS

Mobile enquires call/text 0743 712 3921 www.u3asites.org.uk/eastrenfrewshire

Chair: Marbe McNeill chair@eru3a.org

Vice Chair: Lillas Dunlop speakers@eru3a.org

Secretary: Mary Fyfe secretary@eru3a.org

Treasurer: Ann Scott treasurer@eru3a.org

Membership Secretary: Roy Bryce membership@eru3a.org

Groups Co-ordinator: Allison Kershaw groups@eru3a.org

Webmaster: Roy Bryce website@eru3a.org

SUPPORTING u3a



The [Riviera Travel Affinity](#) scheme donates 10% of the cost of holidays booked by members.

East Renfrewshire u3a doesn't endorse any commercial organisations.