

CHIT-CHAT



East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF

[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)

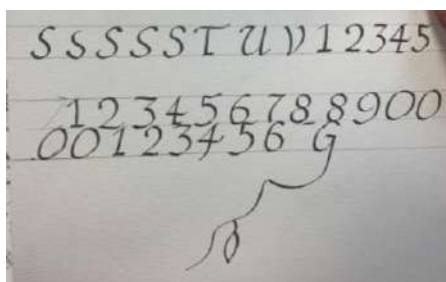
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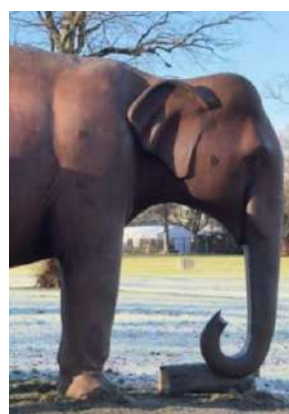
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IN THE SCRIPT



There is a purpose to this curious jumble of letters and numbers. Find out about it in *Groups*.

OUT OF INDIA



This exotic creature seems far from its ancestral home. Find out who visited it at its current abode in *Groups*.

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

HATWALK AFTERNOON TEA UPDATE

Thanks to all those who have made a booking, the next Hatwalk on 14th February is now a sell-out. The event at Clarkston Halls starts at 2.00pm sharp and doors open 1.25pm. Following suggestions from members, there is now the opportunity to sponsor a table in memory of a loved one for £50. If you would like to sponsor a table please contact Lili Dunlop at liliardunlop@gmail.com or on 0141 639 3940. All proceeds from bookings will go to the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice.

As car parking spaces at the Clarkston Halls are limited, those attending by car are strongly advised to plan their journey in advance to enable them to be seated by 2.00pm. Car sharing may be an option for those attending as part of a group. If appropriate, it may be easier to use public transport as venue has bus stops and a train station within very easy reach.

Local businesses have provided sterling support by donating a range of very generous services and products to enable a Raffle to take place. Their support is very much appreciated and will assist fundraising efforts.

To those of you attending we look forward to seeing you and remember, if you want to, wear a hat !

COFFEE HOUSE DISCUSSIONS

[Online Across Scotland u3a](#) is presenting an online equivalent of the 18th century coffee house gatherings at which new ideas and matters of the day were discussed. Interactive discussions will take place on the first Thursday of each month at 4.00pm. Click on the [Zoom Link](#) to access the talks.

Meeting ID 993 1667 2323

Passcode: 154212

On Thursday 1st February William Martin will be giving a talk about the use of plants and plant-derived molecules in medicine from antiquity to the present day. Some of these plants are commonly found in our gardens and local parks, while others are from more exotic locations.

Billy Martin is Emeritus Professor of Cardiovascular Pharmacology at the University of Glasgow. On retiring he joined Bearsden and Milngavie u3a and he is now also a member of East Renfrewshire u3a.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Our next monthly meeting will be in St Andrew's Community Church Hall in Barrhead. Our guest speaker will be Brian Young, a historian who has studied

Roman history for many years. He is the author of *The Eagle Has Fallen* and is now writing a new book due out this year about Hadrian's wall.

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.



THE BUZZ

CHARITY COLLECTION

The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice was delighted to receive a donation of £252.10, collected at our Christmas party.

MONTHLY MEETING

This month's guest speaker Tom Marchant entertained us with part of a film produced by [East Renfrewshire Camcorder Club](#) which tells the story of Glasgow's parks and green spaces.

The oldest park is Glasgow Green, dating from 1450, when James II granted 56 acres of parkland to Bishop William Turnbull and the people of Glasgow. Buildings and monuments within Glasgow Green that featured in the film included Nelson's Column, erected in 1806 about 30 years before the more famous one in London.



Among the other famous Glasgow Green landmarks shown were the Doulton Fountain – the largest remaining fountain built of terracotta in the world, commissioned by ceramic manufacturer Sir Henry Doulton in 1887 for Queen



Victoria's Golden Jubilee – and the former Templeton's Carpet factory, the design of which was inspired by the Doge's Palace in Venice.

Other parks covered included Bellahouston Park, site of the 1938 Empire exhibition, from which the Palace of Art is the only remaining building and the Botanic Gardens, originally set out at Sandyford near Sauchiehall Street in 1817 and moved to its current location in



1842. The most notable structure in the park is the Kibble Palace, a wrought iron framed glasshouse designed for John Kibble in the 1860s and moved from his home in Coulport to its current location in 1873.



Kibble Palace

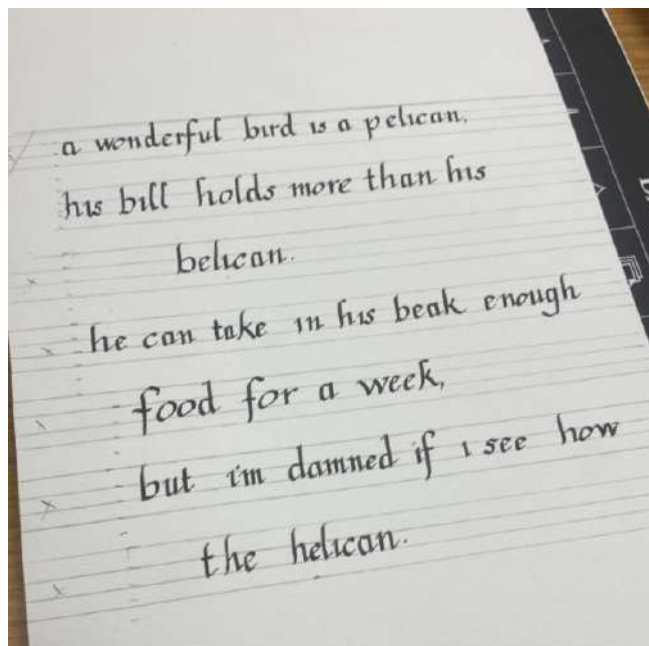
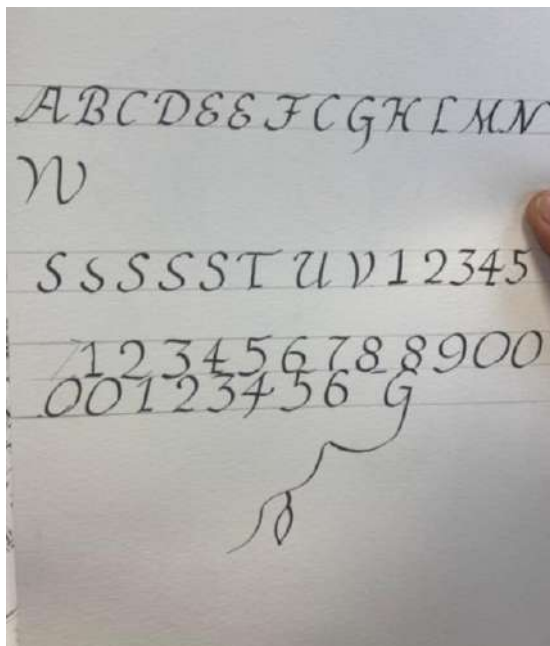
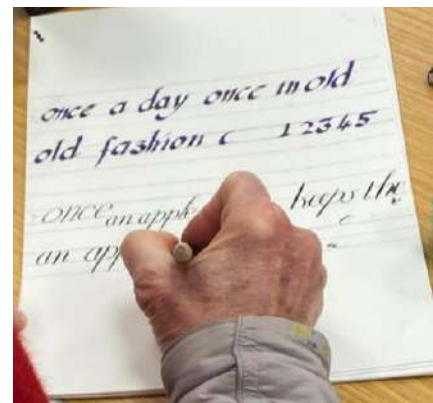
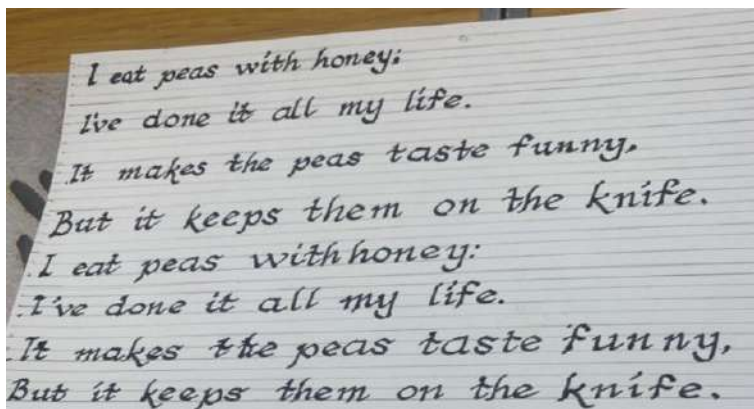


GROUPS

CALLIGRAPHY

The pop-up Calligraphy class, hosted during January was a great success, with everyone taking away new skills or rediscovering long forgotten talents. Facilitator Avril McAllister, a very talented calligrapher, was very patient with the group whilst they tried to learn this new skill.

The key now is to practice practice practice. Included here are examples of what was attained after just four classes, and the high standard is solely due to the diligence and work of everyone who attended. In the majority of cases this was an entirely new skill, and the results have been fabulous.





The challenge for next week is to write a poem in beautiful calligraphic script.

FASHION THROUGH THE AGES

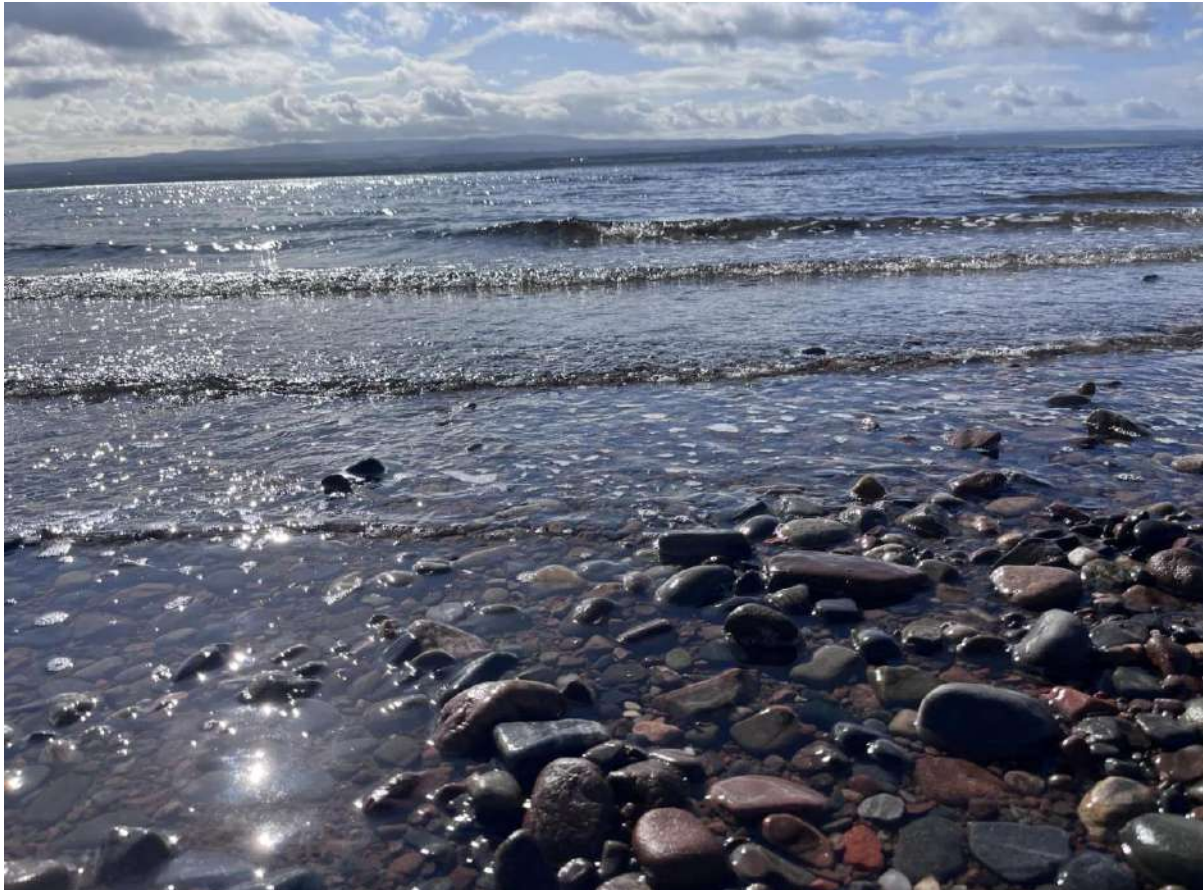
This month 19 members of the Fashion Through the Ages Group enjoyed an educational, interesting and entertaining talk entitled *The Town that Thread Made* by Clarke Wallace, a volunteer at the Paisley Thread Mill Museum. The talk included a bit of Burns, mention of parts of Paisley a fair number of them didn't know about, historical facts and of course the development of the thread industry involving the competition between the Clark and Coats family businesses.

Clarke passed round a lot of interesting brochures and showed a picture of a replica of HMS Victory made from small spools, which he hopes will be on display when the Group visits the museum in April.

At the next meeting in February one of the Group's members, Mary Fyfe, will give a presentation entitled *The Sewing Machine – the final side of the triangle*.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Our photographers were presented with an end of year challenge to submit their 'best' photograph of 2023. This was no easy task but members rose to the challenge. It became clear that photographic skill wasn't the only consideration. Some photos evoked a memory or a feeling or were a favourite photo.





QUIZ

For the first time the Quiz group had two teams tying for first place. John from the Quizicals was the first person to correctly answer the tie-break question.

Commiserations to team Five Go Quizzing (William, Myra, Margaret, John and Rosalind) but many congratulations to the winning team, The Quizicals (Annie, John, Susan Corinne, Allen and Catriona).



STROLLERS

Some of the group previously known as the Summer Evening Strollers have opted to keep walking during the afternoons in winter, so are now simply The Strollers. The first January walk to Bellahouston on a cold but bright day was followed by a much-needed hot drink in the café at The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice.





On possibly the wettest day of the month the Strollers enjoyed a walk at Rouken Glen, despite the challenges of flooded walkways, closed paths etc.



WALKIE TALKIES

For their January outing 17 members of the Walkie Talkies group enjoyed an informative and interesting walk in Glasgow City centre led by Kevin Scott. The theme of the walk was Grahamston – Glasgow's Forgotten Village and it took in Central Station as well as part of Argyle Street and the Highlandman's Umbrella. Although the weather was cold, the rain and snow held off for the duration and most of the participants went on to have lunch in the Sir John Moore Wetherspoons in Argyle Street before heading home.



WALKING

For their first outings of the year, the Walking Group went on an enjoyable 5 mile linear walk from Kelvingrove Museum to Pollok Park. This followed part of the 20 mile Commonwealth Walkway created in commemoration of the 2014 Commonwealth Games which were held in Glasgow.

After meeting at the Museum car park, the walkers headed down towards the



River Clyde, then followed along the riverside for a short distance before crossing the Millennium Bridge and past the BBC Studios and Glasgow Science Centre. Continuing along to Ibrox Football Stadium, where a short stop was made, the route followed well-made paths through Bellahouston and Pollok Parks before reaching the destination at the Burrell Collection where a number of members stopped to enjoy welcome refreshments before heading home.



Weather conditions could not have been more different on the two walks. Despite sub-zero temperatures and widespread ground frost on the first week, it was glorious sunshine and bright blue sky all the way. The second week was dull and drizzly, but far from the dire conditions forecast, and this proved no deterrent to the well-wrapped members who came along.



February's walks will be to Midge Glen and around the Neilston Pad.

WINE BUDDIES

The Wine Buddies Group usually meet on Zoom, but in January they met in the real world for a wine tasting lunch at the Swan Inn in Eaglesham. They started with some 'nibbles' to accompany the three wines they were tasting – a Gavi from Italy, a rosé from the Languedoc and a Rioja from Spain. This was followed by a superb lunch with excellent service and of course some more wine. The members really enjoyed their wine tasting lunch and are looking forward to another year of learning more about and tasting wines from around the world.





THEATRE & STAGE CRAFT

Our Theatre Group enjoyed a live screening of David Hare's acclaimed play, *Skylight*, at Eastwood Park Theatre starring Bill Nighy and Carey Mulligan.

They are looking forward to Giffnock Theatre Players next production- John Byrne's *Cuttin' A Rug* which is the sequel to *The Slab Boys* which the company performed last January. They have a particular interest this time as our new Stage Craft Group have been assisting gtp members in creating and dressing the set.



DID YOU KNOW ...?

OUT OF THE CORE

The 6th January issue of *New Scientist* carried a piece by features writer Graham Lawton about plans by HjalTI Pall Ingolfsson at the Geothermal Research Cluster (GEORG) in Reykjavik to drill into a magma chamber. In 2008 Iceland's main power company Landsvirjun started drilling into the Krafla volcano to explore the possibility of tapping extremely hot pressurised water for geothermal power. In 2009 the drill began to struggle before suddenly plunging down then abruptly stopping. After the engineers partially withdrew it then tried to lower it again it refused to budge. The drill had penetrated a magma chamber and, when it was

withdrawn, molten rock flooded in and it was left stuck in obsidian, a type of ultra hard volcanic glass.

In 2014 the Landsvirjun project manager Bjarni Palsson and his team set up the Krafla Magma Testbed (KFT). Starting in 2026, KFT will drill into the magma close to the original borehole. 'Being able to go into the crust and sample magma would give us huge knowledge,' says Ingolfsson. The borehole will stay open for many years to enable monitoring and experiments to take place.

The final goal is to advance geothermal energy production, which could supply the world with vast amounts of clean electricity at next to no cost. Many places on Earth have the potential to exploit this near-magma geothermal method, not least the mid-Atlantic Ridge. Ingolfsson foresees great platforms all around the Atlantic harvesting energy from magma holes to produce low-carbon synthetic fuels.

WHIMSY

Annie Wills posted this



And thione is from Libby McCree

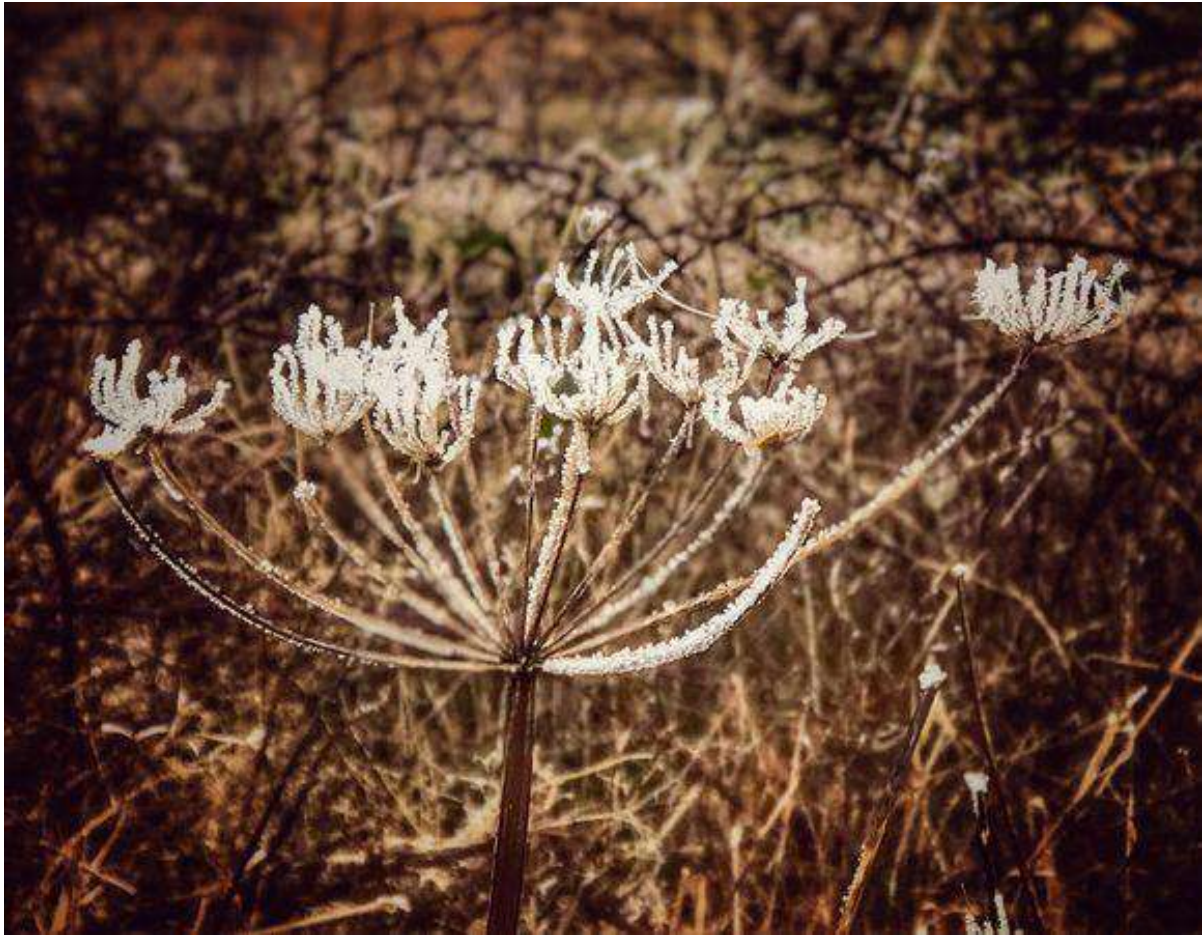


We hope you all caught your haggis in time for Burns Night!

PICTURE GALLERY

Willie Dyer took these shots during a walk at Balgray to see what happening in preparation for remodelling of the Barrhead to Newton Mearns road.





EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	21st February	Monthly Meeting in St Andrew's Church, Barrhead Brian Young - The Roman Camps in Scotland
Wednesday	20th March	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Allan Mauchline - Scottish Emergency Rides Voluntary Service
Wednesday	17th April	Monthly Meeting in St Andrew's Church, Barrhead David McDonald - Scotland's Sweet Spot
Wednesday	15th May	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Peter Macfarlane - Incredible India

CONTACTS

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

Chair: Marbe McNeill chair@eru3a.org

Vice Chair: Liliias 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.