

CHIT-CHAT

u3a
East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF
[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)
SCOTTISH CHARITY No. SC044004

No. 130

April 2024

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WHERE'S BIG FOOT?



Find out where these colossal toes were spotted, and who spotted them, in *Groups*.

THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH?



Find out where to avoid a confrontation with this scary chap 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

Our next monthly meeting will be at Broom Church in Newton Mearns.

The guest speaker will be Professor Peter W Macfarlane, Emeritus Professor and Hon Senior Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow. He was Professor in Medical Cardiology from 1991 to 1995 and Professor of Electrophysiology from 1995 to 2010. He was educated at Hyndland School, Glasgow, and the University of Glasgow, where he graduated with a BSc (Hons) in 1964, PhD in 1970 and DSc in 2000. He has worked in Glasgow Royal Infirmary for almost 60 years.



His major interest is the application of computer techniques to the interpretation of electrocardiograms. The work of his team has been adopted commercially and is currently used worldwide. He has published over 400 scientific papers and 14 books.

Professor Macfarlane is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. In January 2014 he was awarded a CBE for Services to Healthcare.

His major weakness is being a supporter of Ayr United.....

The doors are open at 1.30pm and the meeting starts at 2.00pm. Heather and Bruce Cutler are inviting everyone attending the meeting to join them for tea/coffee and cake to celebrate their departure to a new life Down Under. If you can- please bring your own mug.

THE BUZZ

APRIL MEETING

Marbe McNeill opened the meeting by announcing that we now have 608 members, exceeding 600 for the first time. She also confirmed that subscriptions are to be held at the current level and donations for tea/coffee will no longer be required.

David McDonald, the guest speaker reported in the March issue of *Chit-Chat*, was unavailable and the talk entitled *Scotland's Sweet Spot- Confectionery Manufacturing in*



Lanarkshire was delivered instead by Gillian Brogan, a fellow Learning and Access Officer at North Lanarkshire Council. Gillian reviewed the history of some well-known Scottish confectionery brands.

Tunnocks of Uddingston was established by Thomas Tunnock in 1890 and is currently run by his grandson Boyd. The company's famous caramel wafers, caramel logs and teacakes first appeared in the 1950s when shortages of flour, sugar and cocoa produced a need for products with a long shelf life. Tunnocks' products are now sold in 40 countries throughout the world. Teacakes have however been banned by the RAF since 1965 because of their tendency to explode inside non-pressurised aircraft.



Caramel being poured out of a cauldron



Lees of Coatbridge, famous for their macaroon bars began trading as grocers in the 1930s and now have two large factories. In 1991 the company made a record loss and was acquired by Fine Foods.



DID YOU SPOT IT?

Marbe would like to draw attention to Page 16 of the current issue of *u3a Matters*, which includes a report on our St Valentine's Day *Hatwalk* event that raised £4,547.48 for the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice.

INTEREST GROUPS ONLINE

[u3a - Interest Groups Online](#) (abbreviated as IGO) is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home. As with a u3a, the activities are run by members and are a great way to meet people from all across the u3a movement.

It costs £12 to join for the year, equating to £1 per month. Membership runs from 1 April to 31 March of the next year. After 1 October, it costs £6 to join until 31 March next year. Membership and your groups are managed via the u3a Beacon Members Portal.

GROUPS

AROUND EAST RENFREWSHIRE DINING

Just after Easter, Group 1 visited the recently refurbished Malletsheugh for the first time. Everyone enjoyed the excellent food served up in a lovely private area away from the main restaurant. They intend to be back before too long.



AROUND THE WORLD DINING

This month our globetrotting diners made a return visit to Revolucion de Cuba in Renfield Street. The cuisine has a strong Spanish influence and many chose from the Tapas menu. This restaurant is a popular night spot, but is quiet at lunch time. The food is tasty and the staff are friendly.



BOULES

Our Boules group had a lovely sunny day for their first meeting of the summer.



FASHION THROUGH THE AGES

For their April meeting our fashionistas paid a visit to the Thread Mill Museum in Paisley. Volunteers Frances and Clarke were on hand to show them around and give an insight into the history of the weaving and thread-making industries in Paisley. Fascinating artefacts relating to the industry that were on display included a spectacular model of Nelson's ship Victory made mainly of miniature reels of thread.



GARDEN VISITS/GEOLOGY

On a gorgeous warm sunny April morning the Garden Visits and Geology groups went on a joint visit to Victoria Park, where Roy had arranged access to the Fossil Grove building. The group were very honoured to have their own private visit. As there were thirty people two



tours had to be organised. Roy took the first group and Colin took the second. Both guides were excellent, well prepared, knowledgeable and very informative. The visitors went on to the Quarry Knowe Rock Garden before exploring the rest of the park. The cherry blossom was at its best, a froth of beautiful pink or white flowers, and the magnolias and rhododendrons were spectacular.



The group stopped at the Park Cafe for a welcome coffee or ice cream before heading home.

OUT AND ABOUT

This month our outandabouters visited Glasgow City Chambers. The building, designed by William Young, was officially opened by Queen Victoria in 1889. Mosaic tiles decorate the floor and ceiling in the entrance hall. On the floor they depict the city's coat of arms – The bird that never flew, The tree that never grew, The bell that never rang, The fish that never swam. There are over one and a half million Venetian glazed tiles on the ceiling and ornate Venetian stained glass windows in various parts of the building. To the left of the entrance is a book detailing those who served in the Merchant Navy during the World Wars and to the right there is a bust of Nelson Mandela who was created a Freeman of the City of Glasgow while still a prisoner on Robben Island.

Each of the drop-down writing boards in the council chamber has a small hole for a flower to be inserted. Councillors usually choose flowers in party colours - blue for Conservative, red for Labour and yellow for Scottish Nationalist.



There are magnificent examples of marble in the grand staircase and pillars throughout the building and of satinwood (now considered extinct) and Spanish mahogany panelling. The largest room is the Banqueting Hall which is used for various purposes including formal dinners and concerts. The day following the visit over 300 people were due to attend proceedings during which they would be granted British citizenship.



After the visit the most of the group went for lunch across George Square in the popular Greek restaurant Elia.

QUIZ

Congratulations to the winners of the April Quiz, Team Six-Pack (Rosalind, Peter, Ruth, Catriona Neil & Colin) who scored a superb 100 out of 110 points.



Frances dressed for the occasion in her Easter Bonnet and brought along a bunny team mascot.

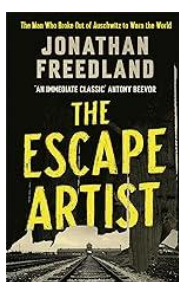


SOCIAL SATURDAYS

The group had a light lunch at the Malletsheugh, Newton Mearns.

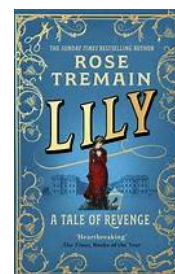


READING



Group 4 read *The Escape Artist* by Jonathan Freedland. This extremely harrowing read was appreciated but, because of the subject matter, not enjoyed by all the group. It is the traumatic true story of two men's escape from Auschwitz and their subsequent struggle to inform the world of what was truly happening there, and to try to prevent further deaths. The main protagonist Rudi is very intelligent man, with an incredible ability to retain information from inside the camps – the numbers of people who arrived and were sent to the gas chambers and where they were from, even the numbers tattooed on the arms. To inform the world about all this was his reason to survive and escape. He later became a scientist, married and had a family, although his hellish experiences made him an untrusting person.

Group 5's book for April was *Lily* by Rose Tremain. The novel promoted a very interesting discussion about abandoned babies and Victorian institutions for orphans, primarily the Foundling Hospital started by Thomas Coram in 1735. He was a philanthropist who was appalled to see children and babies dying on London streets. It was estimated that around a thousand babies were abandoned in London alone. This led to discussions on abuse of children in institutions, short term fostering and children put out to work from a very early age – all issues covered in the book. This is a bleak novel, a dark Victorian tale, but a moving one.



STROLLERS

The Strollers current afternoon walks which will be returning to early evening walks in May. This month they enjoyed a slightly muddy walk around Busby and through Busby Glen. The White Cart in the photo was ferocious and coffee in the Busby Hotel following our walk was very enjoyable.



Ten members had a walk around beautiful Bellahouston Park in lovely spring weather. Along the way the Bargacree cafe in the Hospice provided a welcome break for refreshments.



TASTE THE WORLD

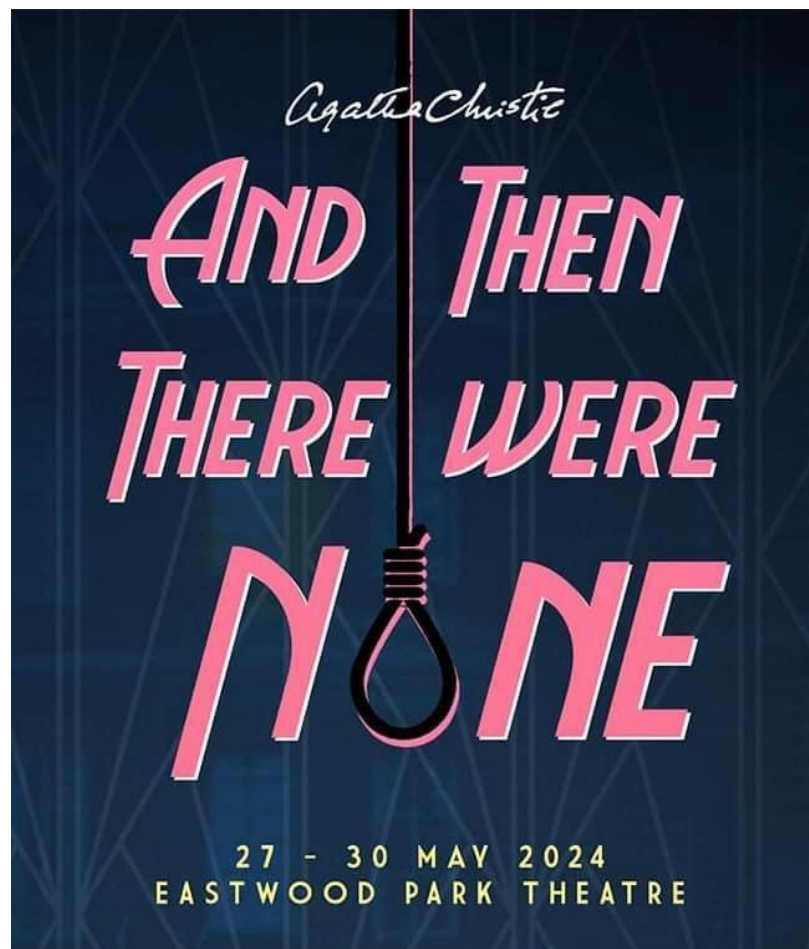
Eleven of our tasters enjoyed a German style lunch, with appropriate beer, at Bavaria Brauhaus in Bothwell Street.



THEATRE

28 members of our Theatre group are looking forward to Giffnock Theatre's production of the Agatha Christie's classic *And Then There Were None* at the end of May. Some of the group will meet together for a pre-theatre meal at Banco before going to the show.

Meanwhile our Stage Craft group have already started painting the set, reupholstering the sofa and looking out for the required props. This group work alongside members of gtp assisting in all the aspects of putting on a production.



WALKIE TALKIES

For their April outing 18 members of the Walkie Talkies Group headed to Kilmarnock on a beautiful warm sunny day to enjoy a 4 mile walk through Caprington Woods. Along the way they passed the remains of Blackskye Tower. This rare example of an engine house, built during the times of the Caprington coal mine, is a building of national significance.

The group then passed through the small and charming hamlet of Earlston where Todrigs Farm was the birthplace of Johnnie Walker of whisky fame. The imposing castellated mansion of Caprington Castle, a very impressive private residence, was a beautiful sight against the blue sky.



Lots of woodland flowers including celandine, wood anemones, bluebells, primroses and, of course, daffodils were to be seen along the way, as were many new lambs in the fields with their proud mums. Two large deer were also spotted running along the path at one point.



At the end of the walk, most of the group then visited the nearby Dewaldens Garden Centre to enjoy lunch in the pleasant cafe before returning home.

WALKING

This month's walkers enjoyed an excellent circular walk of 6.5 miles along canal towpaths, the Antonine Wall and Croy Hill. Starting and finishing at Auchinstarry Marina, just south of Kilsyth, the walk started along the towpath of the Forth and Clyde Canal as far as Twechar then crossed the canal, before continuing on grassy paths on the hill. Soon the exposed remains of a fort were reached just south of the Antonine Wall, which was built around 142AD. The fort was once home to a garrison of 480 men from all parts of the Roman Empire. Many parts of the walk follow the John Muir Way and there were plenty of information boards explaining the many ancient features and history. On returning to Auchinstarry, the first week walkers enjoyed soup and coffee at the Boathouse Restaurant, while week two walkers had a picnic in the cold sunshine.







DID YOU KNOW ...?

WARMING UP THE VALVES

In his 2022 book *What If? 2* Randall Munroe posed the question – 'what if my phone was based on vacuum tubes (American for valves)? How big would it be?'

On receipt of an electrical signal valves and the smaller more reliable transistors which replaced them in the 1960s are both able to flip a switch controlling another electrical signal that can be used to tell other switches what to do to create a digital circuit. UNIVAC, an early commercial computer, packed around 5,000 valves inside a case as big as a room but an iPhone 12 carries 11.8 billion transistors, producing about a trillion times more computing power per litre. An iPhone using valves packed together in the same density as they were in UNIVAC instead of transistors would be about the size of five city blocks. Conversely, if UNIVAC had been built using iPhone-size components it would be small enough to fit inside a grain of salt.

WHIMSY

NOTES FOR THE MILKMAN

Libby McCree posted these humorous notes left for milkmen in days gone by.

I've just had a baby, please leave another one..

Please leave an extra pint of paralysed milk.

Cancel one pint after the day after today.

Please don't leave any more milk. All they do is drink it.

Milkman, please close the gate behind you because the birds keep pecking the tops off the milk.

Milkman, please could I have a loaf but not bread today.

Please cancel milk. I have nothing coming into the house but two sons on the dole.

Sorry not to have paid your bill before, but my wife had a baby and I've been carrying it around in my pocket for weeks.

Sorry about yesterday's note.. I didn't mean one egg and a dozen pints, but the other way round.

When you leave my milk please knock on my bedroom window and wake me because I want you to give me a hand to turn the mattress.

Please knock. My TV's broken down and I missed last night's Coronation Street. If you saw it, will you tell me what happened over a cup of tea?

My daughter says she wants a milkshake. Do you do it before you deliver or do I have to shake the bottle?

Please send me a form for cheap milk, for I have a baby two months old and did not know about it until a neighbour told me.
Please send me details about cheap milk as I am stagnant.
Milk is needed for the baby. Father is unable to supply it.
From now on please leave two pints every other day and one pint on the days in between, except Wednesdays and Saturdays when I don't want any milk.
My back door is open. Please put milk in 'fridge, get money out of cup in drawer and leave change on kitchen table in pence, because we want to play bingo tonight.
Please leave no milk today. When I say today, I mean tomorrow, for I wrote this note yesterday.
milkman please put the coal on the boiler, let dog out and put newspaper inside the screen door. P.S. Don't leave any milk.
No milk. Please do not leave milk at No. 14 either as he is dead until further notice.

PICTURE GALLERY

COLOURS OF SPRING

Willie Dyer posted these striking pictures taken at Threave Gardens.







EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Thursday	2nd May	U3A Scotland Awake, Sleep and Dreaming Talk on Zoom at 4.00pm. Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/99316672323?pwd=ajBWZnBzQkpRb1dmSjkzRlgvNEp2UT09 Meeting ID: 993 1667 2323 Passcode: 154212
Wednesday	15th May	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Peter Macfarlane - Incredible India
Wednesday	19th June	Monthly Meeting in St Andrew's Church, Barrhead Margaret Anderson
Wednesday	17th July	Monthly Meeting in St Andrew's Church, Barrhead Barbara Craigie - Andrew Carnegie
Wednesday	21st August	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Mary McDougall - Playlist for Life

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.