



**Clarion** is the magazine of Edinburgh u3a and is published bi-annually with contributions from and about individual members and groups. The **Bulletin** is published monthly on-line and contains brief updates on forthcoming events and group news.



**DEEP WATER** by Barbara Clarke – wool, cotton, tencel 2023

Exhibition by Tapestry Group (see page 13)

## In this Issue:

### Letter from your Chair

### An Appeal from your Membership Secretary

### Monthly Meetings

### Spread your wings!

Off the Wall

Festival 24 York

Motoring along

u3a Climate Summer School, CAT

### Groups.

Anyone for bridge?

The French Network (*Le réseau français*)

Geology Group's trip to Anglesey

Pickleball -P -I -N -G Your Serve!

Table Tennis Group

Edinburgh u3a Singers

Coffee and a stroll

Tapestry Weaving Group

### Summer visits

Thirlestane Castle

### Miscellaneous

Morningside Justice and Peace Group

Members Abroad

Zone 2: Training for body and soul

Workshop 7th November

U3a in Scotland Summer School 2024

### Current Committee

### Editor's Note

## Letter from your Chair

I'm pleased to report that we have seen a modest increase in Group numbers over the past six months. This will help us manage our growth in



membership which is currently running at around 30 new members a month. By the end of the year we expect our membership to be back to pre-Covid levels. However, we still need to engage more members in setting up and running Groups. This need not be daunting – Group Coordinators (GCs) can provide advice and we have many resources in place to help. The Third Age Trust run an excellent course on setting up and running groups. They also have advisors in over 70 subject areas. These are experts in their subjects and can provide complementary support to our own GCs.

On that note, I'll mention of the appointment of two new Group coordinators. **Mary Cranston** joins the Committee as GC for Groups D-I and **Dave Duncan** for J-P. This brings us back full strength with 5 GCs, who are the backbone in keeping our core activity of Interest Groups running healthily.

Introducing  
Mary Cranston



Stepping down, after many years, are two "behind the scenes" committee members: **Lachlan Paterson** and **Andrew Roberston**. Lachlan has managed key group information underpinning information in the Bulletin, the Website and our Groups register.

Cont'd

## Letter from your Chair, Cont'd

Andrew has handled audio-visuals and IT at our Monthly Meetings, as well as supporting many of our Interest Groups. Thank you both, for these unseen, but vital services in keeping Eu3a running smoothly. Thank you both, for this unseen, but vital services in keeping Eu3a running smoothly.

We held our first Monthly Meeting on 20th. Sept at our new venue, the Greyfriars Charteris Centre, part of Greyfriars's Kirk. By the time you read this we will have run our second. I trust this will go as well as our first by Mark McKerrow (See page 5) While we had a few minor teething problems, the in-person meeting went well. Thanks to the organisers of the talks and the facilitators, both in Eu3a and the staff at the Centre.

In our last *Clarion*, I presented the problem of preserving our history. Since then, I've talked to a couple of long-standing members who are interested in helping, initially to discover and preserve what we can, both in documentary form and in discussion. We've also uncovered (literally) in our move away from the Methodist Church, a folder which contains minutes and other documents dating back to 1993, close to our formation date. We'll be starting to progress this social archaeology work later this year. Anyone involved in our earlier days is invited come forward either to participate or just to recall your memories of that time.

Finally, here's a plug for something outside Eu3a. The 2024 Scottish u3a Summer School will be run in Stirling on 20th-22nd August next year. The three days will have a variety of threads including: technology in the home, drawing, drugs from bugs and plants; needlecraft; and playwriting. There will also be a taster session on Qi Gong from yours truly! I have never attended one, but I understand that they are as much a social event as a learning one. The summer schools are popular, so keep your eye on the u3a Scotland website for the full announcement, and we'll alert you in the Bulletin when the school is announced.

**George Cleland** [chair@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@edinburghu3a.org.uk)

## An appeal from our Membership Secretary

### Have you sorted your membership payment?

Membership fees and the membership year for Edinburgh u3a changed in 2021. The membership year now starts 1st April (no longer 1st August) to coincide with our financial year, and the amount to be paid is £10 per year for a single membership and £20 per year for a joint membership.

A significant number of our members have not yet adjusted their payment date and/or payment amounts. Could you please check that your payment is set for 1st April each year and that your payment amount is either £10 single or £20 joint membership.

If you pay by standing order you will need to contact your bank or make the change via internet banking. Please note that u3a cannot make the change on your behalf.

A great deal of work is required by our membership secretary to reconcile payments which are incorrect. It is now over 2 years since the changes were introduced; please take urgent action and double check your existing payment amount and payment date and correct these if necessary. You will already have received a number of communications on this topic!

Thank you for your cooperation in this important matter.

If you have any queries about your own situation, please email me, Liz at [membership@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@edinburghu3a.org.uk)

## Monthly Meetings



**Our Monthly Meetings take place on our usual third Wednesday but in a new location – the Charteris Centre, the Church Halls of Greyfriars Kirk, 138–140, The Pleasance. You can use the same bus stops as for the old Methodist Church Hall, but you'll need to walk a little further east towards Arthur's Seat or you can take a No 19 bus to West Richmond St.**

**Binks Hall at the Charteris Centre accommodates about 50 more than our old venue in the Epworth Halls. We'll continue to meet at our usual time, 2:30pm.**

**Monthly meetings are usually on Zoom for those unable to make the journey and recordings may be available on YouTube if the speaker permits.'**

Over the summer we have been treated to talks by **Caroline Wyatt** on the work of the Koestler parapsychology unit here in Edinburgh. Other summer talks are summarised below.

### David Clarke

In May, David Clarke spoke to us about the early connections between Scotland and Malawi, between one small mountainous country and another. David is a secondary level History teacher at Stewart's Melville in Edinburgh and has a passion for connecting the heritage of the city to the wider world. He spoke about the 19th Century Church of Scotland Mission movement and how the mission at Blantyre became a hotbed for radical anti-racist action in an age typified by the

worst excesses of the imperial government and the white "plantocracy". The visionary Rev David Clement-Scott, during his time as head of the Blantyre Mission, advocated racial & gender equality, ruffling establishment feathers by campaigning against the East African slave trade out of Zanzibar, which thrived on the slaughter of elephants, considered to be a nuisance, and the transport of ivory, by slave labour to the coast in order to supply the European fashion for a piano in every front room.

Two mission boys, Mungo Murray Chisuse and N'timawanzako Nacho, became the first Malawian boys to be educated in Europe and returned home to help build a fine church and establish a printing press to produce books in the local Nyanga language.

### Andrew Wilson

In July, Andrew Wilson took us to the sunny shores of the eastern Mediterranean, and, in particular, to the early Christian monuments of Byzantine Ravenna designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.

Quite a few of the audience had visited Ravenna and he led us through a mesmerising assortment of emperors, empresses, perfidious deeds, internecine skirmishes, all illustrated by slides of magnificent, rich mosaics adorned by lavish gold leaf and shimmering tesserae angled to catch the early morning sun.

He left us with unanswered questions such as: "Why was Christ wearing a kilt"? How did the solid stone roof of the baptistry at Ravenna get up there? What happened to the 50 young men given as a wedding gift to the empress Galla Placidia.?

If you missed these talks, recordings are available on Youtube:-

[https://youtu.be/\\_ocxcgB9lGM](https://youtu.be/_ocxcgB9lGM)

<https://youtu.be/wYYih7htFuO>

## Wake up to Mozart?

On September 20th, Dr Mark McKerrow spoke to us on how music affects the body, mind and mood, in our new venue at Greyfriars Charteris Centre.



The sun shone, the Binks Hall was bright and airy with a high vaulted timber ceiling, the sound system with quadrophonic speakers, worked well and the slides were clear and bright. Most of the 200 seats were taken. For those hoping to access the talks on Zoom, there are still a few glitches to sort out but we'll get there!

Mark trained as a nuclear physicist but soon found that he was more interested in people and music, having been inspired by a performance of the *St Louis Blues* at the Tattoo on the Castle esplanade. He traced the development of music reproduction from the parlour piano, through phonographs and radiograms to smart phones and wireless earbuds. He described how tempo affects mood and which part of the brain elicits different responses, all illustrated by sound recordings.

Looking to the future, there is a fascinating list of speakers lined up for the coming months at our new venue:-

**Stewart Houston, Carrie Lennon, Kenneth Williamson, Morag Austin and Dr Stan da Prato**

Details of these future talks and speakers are listed opposite and on the Edinburgh u3a website. There is no charge for attendance, and the venue will supply refreshments following the meeting.

### **October 18th: Stewart Houston : *Tales from the Courts***

Stewart was a member of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal (PF) Service for 34 years. He was the PF at Lanark for 26 years and retired in 2007, but continued to work on a part-time basis, appearing in courts throughout the Central Belt, the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway until 2015 when he retired completely. He lives in Biggar and is a member of the u3a there. His talk consists of stories, some true, others apocryphal, with very light-hearted content and very little legal court technical language.

### **November 15th: Carrie Lennon Cancer Research UK (Followed by Edinburgh u3a AGM)**

Carrie Lennon is a local 'Legacy Relationship Manager' at Cancer Research UK. She will be giving an overview of Cancer Research UK as well as highlighting local research, including local information and celebrating research in Scotland.

A lot of important initiatives are happening on our doorstep!

### **December 6th: Christmas Party: Charteris Centre.** *Details are yet to be announced but this will include contributions from dancing, singing, ukulele and creative writing groups .*

### **January 17th 2024: Kenneth Williamson *The Caledonian Railway's Barnton Branch.***

In 1861, the Caledonian Railway, in an effort to gain a foothold in Granton and Leith, opened a line from Slateford to Granton with a connection to Granton Harbour. The CR further built, at great expense, an elevated line to Leith Docks in an effort to establish itself in one of Scotland's busiest ports. Significant dock traffic never materialised however and the CR's 1903 Leith New Lines failed.

Kenneth Williamson, a lifelong Edinburgh resident, is an authority on trains and trams. He hosts the website [trainbuff.net](http://trainbuff.net). He has written books on the Edinburgh, Granton & Leith Railways which contains a wealth of rare and previously unpublished images and on the Old Edinburgh Trams.

## Monthly meetings (cont'd)

**February 21st: Morag Austin.** *Phoebe Anna Traquair and her work*



Mansfield Place Church, which is home to some of the best known of Phoebe Traquair's Murals

Phoebe Anna Traquair was an important figure in British Art. She born into a Dublin medical family and then moved to Edinburgh with her palaeontologist husband. She was a member of the Arts and Crafts movement in Scotland and like many artists of the period, worked across many disciplines. Her work embraced illustration, painting, and embroidery, and she also engaged in jewellery-making and book illumination.

This talk promises to give fascinating insights into the life and work of this multi-faceted artist who included in her circle of friends a number of Edinburgh Intellectuals of the period including Patrick Geddes.

**March 20th: Dr Stan da Prato** *Crimes Behind the Compost Heap.*

Stan de Prato is a judge for "Beautiful Scotland" Awards.

He grew up in North Berwick and still lives in East Lothian. He learned his practical horticulture from his father, a professional gardener, before taking up a career in education. His spare-time studies of songbirds in the Lothians led to a Doctorate from Edinburgh University.

Stan is Chairman of the Advisory Group for Aberlady Bay Nature Reserve, past president of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club, former secretary of the Scottish Begonia Society, a

successful exhibitor of alpine plants and on the council of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society. He also edits the journals, *Scottish Birds* and *The Caledonian Gardener*, as well as helping out with several gardening clubs in East Lothian.

He has an RHS Community Champion award and enjoys visiting local groups where he is often asked to speak on gardening, wildlife, and travels which so far have ranged from Antarctica to Greenland and the continents in between.

**April 17th: Ian Buchan:** *The Life and Times of a Children's Entertainer.*

Ian is a retired Civil Servant who has been performing magic for children and adults for almost 35 years and a longstanding member of Edinburgh and West Lothian Magic Circles. As one of Scotland's most sought after and popular children's entertainers, his fun-filled, laughter-packed magic shows have all the ingredients to create events to remember. He will tell us about his life as a professional magician and the famous magicians who have influenced him. You never know, maybe he will even perform some tricks for us!

**May 15th David Clarke**  
*To be announced.*

**June 19th: Ailsa Clarke:** *Elsie Inglis and the Scottish Women's Hospitals.*

Elsie Inglis was a pioneering 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century Edinburgh-trained medical doctor and surgeon, as well as being a teacher, and suffragist. She was the founder of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Services, which provided nurses, doctors, ambulance drivers, cooks and orderlies.

This talk promises to give insights into the life and work of this notable woman.

**Many thanks to Joanna Morris and her Speakers Committee who work hard to find a fascinating and varied programme of speakers.**

# Spread your Wings!

## Off the Wall: A festival for Curious minds.

On the 10th of May this year u3a members from all over the country got together to celebrate Hadrian's wall and the influence it has had, and continues to have, on our creative lives. The gathering kicked off with lectures on the archaeology and history of the Wall by experts and the CEO of nearby Vindolanda, Dr Andrew Birley. The rest of the day was filled with a variety of workshops and activities. Groups went for tours round Vindolanda, hikes and cycle rides. One of the highlights of the day was a cooking workshop by Wendy Barrie, editor of the Scottish Good Food Guide, on the influence of the Romans on our cooking today.

I led a charcoal drawing workshop. Charcoal lent itself very well to the rugged, grey, rocky countryside of this part of Northumberland. Some of the drawings were of Sycamore Gap which has now sadly lost its sycamore tree. There was a buzz of energy and enthusiasm throughout the day.

## Festival 24 York

Next year, from the 18th. to the 20th of July at York University, u3a are hosting **Festival 24**. The festival is planned to be an exciting insight into the learning and fun that goes on in u3a groups throughout the UK. Already many groups have offered to run workshops and activities.

If you are interested in taking part please email [festival@u3a.org.uk](mailto:festival@u3a.org.uk).

**This festival is not just for members living in the York area but for all u3a members.**

Ann Keating

## Motoring along (the highways and byways of life)

It is not always easy to laugh at life, but we can try. Sometimes things seem to contrive to irritate and we let them 'get' to us. Increasingly this year I have been, shall we say, unappreciative of the huge potholes that open up on our roads.

On the other hand, I am pleased to see some little inattention to detail, resulting in wild flowers such as cowslips in springtime, lining the grass verges of our dual carriageways, and primroses spreading themselves through the grass on roadside verges in towns.

Although a fan, in general terms, of no-mow May, the month of May is now well behind us and so, I think the Highways Department could now do a better job of trimming roadside verges – at least at T-junctions– so that I could see in both directions before I take my life in my hands and launch myself under the path of a truck wheeling down a trunk road. One thing that absolutely incenses my husband is tree branches that obscure the approach to a major intersection, meaning that you can't see in advance which lane you should get into and find yourself in the wrong lane, having to turn left for Inverness when you should be going right towards Brighton.

I do not cope well with the regular heatwaves here in the east of England. But I persevere and enjoy an outing now and then to gardens that open their gates for various charities – always assuming that I can get around the diversion signs! On a warm day it's likely I'll be frazzled around the edges on arrival. Having admired the peonies, drunk in the scent of the roses, I picture myself in a cool farmyard barn, or under a shady tree, enjoying afternoon tea, perhaps with a slice of gooey chocolate cake that would no doubt melt in my lap– not a happy prospect but, all the same, I like to think I would laugh it off.

Perhaps I should say, at this point, that though I am a member of Edinburgh u3a, I am not resident in Scotland. I am however, a member of Edinburgh's laughter yoga group and, like my laughter friends, I find that laughing in the face of frustration eases tension. So instead of becoming apoplectic when I'm sitting in a traffic jam, fuming at the delay, thinking about boxing the ears of drivers behind me who are honking their horns, we ladies who like to laugh (where are the men?) just crank up the air conditioning and laugh instead; at ourselves, and the situation. It's a great way to de-stress.

Lynne Hammond

## u3a Climate Summer School, Centre for Alternative Technology, Wales.



In early September, thirty u3a members from all over Britain gathered at the Centre for Alternative Technology at Machynlleth (pronounced something like ma-chun-tleth, ch as in "loch"). We represented Edinburgh u3a, and indeed Scotland.

We were attending the "Climate Change and the Environment" Summer School, organised by the [Countdown to CoP](#) group. The group operates under the umbrella of [Interest Groups On-Line](#) and is open to all u3a members, wherever they live. This was its first Summer School, and the first opportunity for some of its members (as well as spouses and friends, as long as they were u3a members) to meet face to face. We're sure it won't be the last!

We travelled there on a grey Monday, winding along undulating roads that became narrower, bendier and steeper as we approached our destination. The Centre, known as CAT, is in a disused slate quarry on the side of a mountain, a few miles north of Machynlleth. The final part of the approach was up a water-energised funicular railway!

This year is CAT's 50th anniversary. It has outgrown its hippy-ish beginnings, and was very busy, with several other groups there as well,

including high-powered politicians from councils and the Welsh Government.

Buildings and facilities are an eclectic mixture. Early experimental efforts, many now fallen into disuse, sit cheek by jowl with modern and comfortable accommodation, lecture rooms and catering facilities. Building insulation was exemplary. Solar panels were everywhere.

The best thing about the summer school was the excitement of meeting and sharing ideas and experiences with like-minded people. The programme of lectures and tours was interesting and varied, starting with a tour of CAT led by Anne McGarry – who lives in Machynlleth, and worked in the centre for nearly 30 years – and continuing with a series of excellent [talks and discussions](#), some led by CAT staff and associates, some by members of our own group. Four participants brought electric cars, which was really interesting. Owners were enthusiastic about them. Even our self-confessed "petrol-head" was totally happy with hers, a long range dual-motor Tesla 3.

The rooms were comfortable and spacious. The catering was vegetarian, which was fine, and apparently working to a tight budget. (Enough said!) The bar was a convivial focus for the evenings, with interesting local ales.

Much of the conversation was about peoples' efforts – generally very successful – to maximise comfort and minimise energy consumption in their homes and lifestyles. There is no need to sacrifice creature comforts in pursuit of a low carbon lifestyle, though we might rid ourselves of the habit of accumulating unnecessary "stuff"!

We drove home via a windfarm a few miles from CAT, where the cloud lifted briefly to let us enjoy the view. There was a lot to think about. We returned inspired and enthused about accelerating our own efforts to retrofit energy-saving measures in our own homes, very grateful to the organisers for their efforts and to the other participants for their company and conversation.

**Hillary and Rona Sillitto, Edinburgh U3A**

## Groups

Eu3a has about 200 groups run by and for our members. They are about meeting other like minded people, sharing skills and knowledge, trying out something new and learning along the way. Some groups are about doing things together (like photography), others about exploring a subject and learning from each other and from guest speakers (science or geology), or about keeping active, such as walking and cycling. Here we feature some recent group activities.

For a full list of groups and contact details, please see the u3a Edinburgh website.

### Anyone for Bridge?



There are new opportunities for Edinburgh u3a members to play bridge, whether they are newcomers to the game or seasoned players.

For those new to bridge, Edinburgh membership secretary Liz Bell, is running an introductory course of eight sessions, meeting on Thursday mornings in Musselburgh. These sessions aim to give members a feel for the game so they can decide whether they want to progress to a more advanced level of play and perhaps join a club. Since bridge is such a popular game, especially for retirees, we hope that members will come forward to form their own bridge groups.

A new bridge group, based in Murrayfield and led by Richard Peoples, met for the first time on 5<sup>th</sup> September and welcomes new members with some knowledge of the game. The group will meet fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons at first but may switch to weekly if there is enough interest.

Bridge is a game that can be enjoyed at any age. The basic rules are relatively simple and can be learned quite quickly, especially by those who have played whist or other games that use trumps, such as solo, euchre and bezique. At the same time, bridge players love the mental challenge as each game presents a unique set of problems and solutions.

Bridge is also an excellent social game: players get to meet new people, make new friends, take on new challenges and learn the many subtleties of the game through regular playing. As with

any sport, whether a physical or 'mind' sport, playing bridge is good for you and has been shown to improve reasoning skills and both long and short-term memory.

To find out more, please contact Liz or Richard  
Liz Bell: [xlizbell@gmail.com](mailto:xlizbell@gmail.com), or Richard Peoples: [rptpeoples@gmail.com](mailto:rptpeoples@gmail.com)

### The French Network (*Le réseau français*)

The *réseau français* aims to provide a forum where u3a members can practice their French, at whatever level, in an informal setting. It also encourages contact with French speakers in France. Over the years, it has offered meetings for French conversation, occasional lunches and visits to similar groups in France. Members have made three trips to Lyon, and one to Nantes. We were poised to welcome a return visit from Nantes, when Covid shut us all down.

At present, we have two activities:

- A twice-monthly drop-in gathering for French conversation at Costa Coffee in Princes Street
- An online Zoom encounter with members of the Université Permanente de Nantes three times a month,

In line with the u3a principle of self-help, this latter is a '*rencontre bilingue*' in which the language is alternately English and French offering a platform to our Anglophone friends in France in return for their conversational French.

The *réseau* is a group open to all Edinburgh u3a members and is never full! We do not provide instruction – other groups do that. We offer space to practice in an informal setting.

Further details from **Dorothy Buglass**:  
[buglassdorothy@hotmail.com](mailto:buglassdorothy@hotmail.com)

## Geology Group's trip to Anglesey



In early September, 16 members of the Edinburgh u3a Geology Group spent three warm and sunny days driving and walking around Anglesey examining the diverse geology, all of 1,800 million years of it! We were in the Anglesey UNESCO Global GeoPark. Our geologist guide was extremely knowledgeable, patient, and engaging, and commented to some of us that we were the best organised group he's ever had! For this, huge thanks to our four-person planning team.

Our guide gave us a better understanding of some of the geological features of the island: We looked at the amazing geology and industrial archaeology associated with Parys Mountain, once the world's largest copper mine, deriving from the Bronze Age, and some of us walked down into the mesmerising Great Opencast with its myriad colours;

We saw the extreme folding of blue schist caused by tectonic forces;

We heard about the origins of jasper, a beautiful ornamental stone and inexpensive gemstone;



Blue Schist and (right) Red Jasper



We discussed many other parts of the geological story of Anglesey.

There are interesting displays in the GeoMôn Visitor Centre (Môn means Anglesey in Welsh). The centre is located in the former Watch House, in the old harbour in Amlwch Port, in a building that originally housed the pilots waiting to guide ships in and out of the port when the area was the world's major copper exporter.

Members of the group shared their knowledge of other aspects of the natural world, and those of us with an interest in archaeology wandered through a ruined church and an ancient hut circle.

We were based near Rhoscolyn, at [Outdoor Alternative](#), a family-run business since 1985, providing accommodation for up to 41 people. There are two large bunkhouses with airy, clean, fresh rooms and bright and comfortable lounges and meeting rooms. We opted to have our meals prepared for us and enjoyed cooked breakfasts, a packed-lunch buffet, and home-cooked dinners with vegetables straight from the garden. The food was great and the staff were very friendly and helpful. The building was in a beautiful location with good paths for a walk in the evening. It was nice to have it all to ourselves." One member said it was *"the best place of its kind that I have stayed in"*, and another described it as *"luxury bunkhouse accommodation"*. If you're looking for bunkhouse/hostel style accommodation and don't mind accessing it via narrow roads, Outdoor Alternative is ideal.

Outdoor Alternative is not just for geology enthusiasts – guided walks, sea kayaking, and coasteering are offered on-site; the peaceful atmosphere and generous spaces suit yoga, Qi Gong, and other exercise and meditation pursuits; and astronomers will appreciate the dark skies over the area.

Anglesey is not just for geology. The vast majority of the island's coast is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, attracting people interested in archaeology, bird-watching, other wildlife, botany, history, photography, walking, cycling, painting, the Welsh language, and much more.

**Susan Miles**

## Pickleball –

**It's a fast growing and popular sport. Not many folk know John McEnroe plays Pickleball..!**

**(Well, he is knocking on a bit..!)**

The game was invented in the USA in 1965 and there are over 5 million players there. In Scotland the most recent figure is 10,000 and growing.



Briefly Pickleball is a racket sport but the racket is called a 'paddle' and is made of solid material. The ball is about the size of a cricket ball but is made of plastic and is hollow with perforations. (it is designed not to hurt you!) The court is the same size as in badminton. The net is two inches lower than in tennis. The serve is always under-arm.

To see Pickleball in action you will find many videos on YouTube or you can come to one of our u3a sessions and be amazed at the agility and great skill of the enthusiastic amateur. Or, you can quietly chuckle to yourself.

See [What Is Pickleball? A Complete Guide](#).

Our u3a group began in mid-July and numbers 16 members at present and we look forward to more joining the group in the future. We play at 11.00 on Wednesdays at the Edinburgh Leisure venues of Meadowbank and Craiglockhart. All equipment is provided and normal Leisure Centre charges apply.

We were all new to the game, although quite a few have played other racket sports before. Everyone will be made welcome, regardless of ability.

**Peter Jones**



In the photo are:-

Louise Grimm; Stuart Mathieson; Patrick Corbett  
Kim Hamilton; Mary Ann Vaughn; Rachel Frith;  
Malcolm Lavery; Clive Preston

## P-I-N-G ... YOUR SERVE!

Our Edinburgh u3a **Table Tennis Group** has been batting the little orange and white balls over table tennis nets for almost ten years, at various locations across Edinburgh.

**Stuart Mathieson** leads our group, which started out at Meadowbank during the final few years of that facility's life, and then moved to the light and bright squash courts at Craiglockhart for several years.

The pandemic put us on hold for a few months, but before long, a few intrepid members were playing outdoors at Inverleith Park, observing social distancing, of course.

Now we're playing at the brand new Meadowbank Leisure Centre every Tuesday, from 2pm – 3pm, typically using two tables, but we've occasionally had to book three tables (Stuart asks people to confirm in advance whether they're playing).

We do a lot of playing during these one-hour sessions. We almost always play doubles, which is challenging, because partners must take the shots in turn. This means that players can bat the ball over the net, but must then get out of their partner's way in case the opponents manage to return the ball. All good fun ...

We've got a good mixture of men and women, a wide range of ages, lefties and righties. We try to make sure everyone gets a chance to play with everyone else at least once during each session, and we currently have a couple of vacancies.

**Jo Grimm**

## Edinburgh u3a Singers

### 'Oliver's Journey Home'

The u3a Singers, under the leadership of Lesley Hartley, sang the story of 'Oliver's Journey Home' on 26<sup>th</sup> June at the Reid Memorial Church.

The show which tells the story of Oliver, talented musician and son of fish-and-chip shop owners in Bridlington-on-Sea.

He is studying at Huddersfield Music College and decides to cycle home at the end of his first year. He gets sunstroke and takes refuge in a pub where he enjoys local folk musicians. He sets off again via York where he meets the buskers. He eventually cycles on to the coast to meet up with his worried parents.

I very much enjoyed the show and seeing my friends performing. The excellent choir were supported by Ailsa Aitkenhead their regular pianist and by guests Paul Carroll on accordion and synthesiser, Sarah Swindells on flute and Eun-Joo Yoon as 'Oliver's violin'. Guest singer, Ross Hartley, played the entertaining role of Oliver.

It was an amazing and fun occasion, and everyone's performances were great. I think it is best illustrated by the photos I took from the back of the room.

**Alison Bramley**

### Coffee and a Stroll.

(Fourth Tuesday, of the month, March – October, 10.30am–12.30pm)

This is a new group in which members meet for a friendly get-together for coffee (10–100 kcal), cake (100–350 kcal) and a chat, followed by a gentle, 45-min stroll around a local park or quiet area of interest. Anyone not wishing to walk could just come for coffee and a blether. We will go to a different coffee outlet every month, all within Edinburgh and suburbs, all with or near toilets, most with a choice of indoor/outdoor seating, and all easily accessible by public transport.

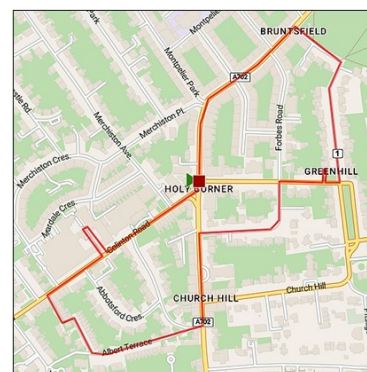
See city map for potential venues



City map from  
Wikimedia Commons, the free media

A typical stroll might start from McLarens at Holy Corner, visit the Napier Tower (15<sup>th</sup> century), the attractive, secluded 'Georgian' housing of Albert Terrace, John Livingston's evocative plague tomb (off Chamberlain Rd), the site of a former quarry on Bruntsfield Links that provided the stone used to build Napier Tower, and finally, a return to Holy Corner. (Distance 1.5 ml; energy expended 200 kcal.)

A Stroll from Holy Corner.



Roy enjoys a post-stroll coffee!



If you are interested in joining us, please contact Roy Thompson: [roy@ed.ac.uk](mailto:roy@ed.ac.uk)

## Tapestry Weaving



### u3a Tapestry Group to take part in St Columba's Hospice Art Exhibition, 2023

We are a group of 12 weavers (not stitchers!). Previously we have held exhibitions in Dr Neil's Garden; this year we are invited to join the annual Art Exhibition at St Columba's Hospice at the end of October. This is an annual fundraising event which attracts some well known artists. This year a total of 65 artists: painters, ceramicists, sculptors and weavers are involved, and the Hospice has agreed to include a tapestry room in the exhibition. All members of our u3a group are exhibiting, and we have helped to invite other local weavers to contribute pieces for sale. It is a great opportunity to display our work alongside professional artists, so the standard of work is quite high and, we hope to support the hospice through sales.

There are as many choices of style, size, colour and materials in tapestry weaving as there are in painting, (it just takes much longer!). Traditionally, warp threads are cotton, and weft threads are wool, cotton or silk but inventive weavers now use linen, tencel, bamboo, acrylic, twine, and even plastic.

Two pieces (displayed in the exhibition) illustrate how weaving has evolved. 'Deep Water' (See front cover) is a 3-dimensional piece by **Barbara Clarke** using pulled warps, which are then threaded onto a piece of flat weaving. The work represents the tragedy of small boats upturned in stormy seas.

Barbara was drawn to weaving in 2016 when she attended the Edinburgh u3a 25th Anniversary Celebrations, where tasters of various groups were available.

Since then, she has taken courses with several tapestry teachers and joined the u3a Tapestry Group, which she now leads. Her name might ring a bell with some members, since she started the Geology group in 2011 and was Clarion Editor from 2007–2013.

**Joan Houston's** tapestry is an abstract depiction of the coming of the Edinburgh trams. Its vibrant colours and materials pay homage to the artist Kaffe Fassett.

Joan is also an accomplished embroiderer. She worked on Panel 5 of The Great Tapestry of Scotland (Galashiels) which depicts the return of trees and animals, and the arrival of Pioneers in Scotland at the end of the Ice Age, c.8500 BC.



EDINBURGH TRAMS, by Joan Houston, 2023: ribbon, chenille, slub, cottons

**Come to the Art Exhibition at St Columba's Hospice, 17 Boswell Road, 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 10am – 4pm.**



**Barbara Clarke**

## Visits

We were pleased to offer a full monthly programme of visits over the summer. These visits offer Edinburgh u3a members the chance to relax and enjoy a good day out by coach with someone else looking after them! The visits are open to all members but members are advised to book early as these visits are very popular and the coach is nearly always full.

Full details and booking forms for the visits are available on the website <https://u3asites.org.uk/edinburgh/events> as well as at Monthly Meetings. For further information [visits@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:visits@edinburghu3a.org.uk)



**Thirlestane castle**

In May a group enjoyed a visit to Thirlestane Castle and Melrose. The weather was beautiful – sunny and warm the whole day. On our arrival we were met by our tour guides who made us feel welcome. Thirlestane Castle was built towards the end of the 16th Century since when it has been in the ownership of the Maitland family and has been passed down through the generations up to the present date.

The party enjoyed a fascinating tour of the Castle and there were plenty of interesting paintings and pieces of furniture in each room. After a very interesting and informative morning, we enjoyed a welcome cup of tea and Coffee with biscuits kindly laid on by the excellent staff. Thirlestane Castle is open during the Summer months and is well worth a visit. Advance booking is required prior to your visit and can be made by logging on to the Thirlestane Castle website.. <https://thirlestanecastle.co.uk/>

We left Thirlestane Castle and made our way to Melrose for lunch. Some members of the party had lunch in one of the many local restaurants and cafés, whilst others brought their own packed lunches. In the afternoon the majority of the party split into two groups in order to visit the

Trimontium Museum, with its displays relating to the Roman occupation of the Borders. There were number of interesting relics used by the Romans at the time of their occupation. Some members of the party chose to visit Melrose Abbey and the Priorwood Garden owned by the National Trust for Scotland.

A few of us could not resist going to the local bakers to buy the famous Selkirk bannock which makes a good addition to and meal of the day.

After leaving Melrose, the bus driver took us back the scenic route where we enjoyed beautiful views of the Borders countryside.

I would encourage anyone to book early and come on the visits because we visit interesting places and it gives the opportunity to meet with existing and new friends.

**Alan Grant**

## Miscellaneous

### Morningside Justice and Peace

Every Wednesday morning, we have a talk and discussion on an issue of social justice. Why not come along? October – March. 10.30 – 11.30 a.m. From October 11, Morningside Justice and Peace group will meet in the Eltham Suite, at Holy Corner Eric Liddell Community, 15 Morningside Road, EH10 4DP. Buses 11, 16, 15, 23 and 36 pass the door.

Topics local, national and international, such as energy and climate change, homelessness in Edinburgh, also USA and China.

Visit [www.morningsidejandp.org](http://www.morningsidejandp.org)

Pay £30 for the session or £3 when you attend. This is NOT an Edinburgh u3a Group but several u3a members are regulars.

Barbara Darcy [b.darcy20@gmail.com](mailto:b.darcy20@gmail.com)

### Members abroad

For a future issue of *Clarion*, we are looking for u3a Edinburgh members who have moved abroad. We would like to interview them about their current lifestyle, what made them move abroad etc. If you know of anybody, please let us know, and if they are agreeable, how we can contact them.

Judith Cunningham:  
[clarion@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:clarion@edinburghu3a.org.uk)

### Zone 2: Training for Body and Soul

It's good to know that what we do is doing us good. Well, we always thought so, but now the scientists have made it official. **Moderate intensity** is the name of the game.

In a scale of 1–5 zones of physical activity, **Zone 2** is when you use fat as fuel rather than the carbohydrates burned in the higher zones, and is gentle exercise with the option of a chat. Forty five minutes to 1 hour of Zone 2 is the ideal time to spend, be it running, cycling or brisk walking. The reward is "a calming, life-enhancing hour of your life with a rich array of health benefits".

What's not to like about Zone 2 and Edinburgh u3a's Jogging for Fun group?  
Tell all your friends.....

David Syme

### Workshop on Tuesday, 7th November 2023:

This workshop is aimed at U3A members who would like to give talks at group meetings and illustrate their talks with visual aids, typically using PowerPoint or other presentation software. We will look at ways of working with digital images, creating presentations and projecting the presentations onto a big screen.

No previous experience required. It will be held at Napier University, Colinton Road and the workshop is to be led by Mike Lewis.

If interested, his details are within [Group Leaders Contact Details](#).

### u3a in Scotland Summer School 20th– 22nd August 2024

Here's a plug for something else outside Edinburgh u3a. The 2024 Scottish u3a Summer School will be run once again at Stirling Court Hotel on 20th–22nd August next year. A varied programme is planned over the three days with tutors lined up to lead sessions on:

Technology in the home,  
Drawing, (we can't have painting)  
Drugs from bugs and plants;  
Needlecraft;  
Playwriting.  
There will also be a taster session on Qi Gong from yours truly!

if you are an expert on something please consider offering your services, it's not too late. Your reward would be free B & B for 2 days, travel expenses and enjoying the company of other u3a members.

Please contact Anne Walsh, Chairperson u3a in Scotland

I have never attended a summer school before, but I understand that they as much a social event as a learning one. The summer schools are popular, so keep your eye on the u3a Scotland website for the full announcement, and we'll alert you in the Bulletin when the school is announced.

George Cleland

## Current Committee

Chair: **George Cleland**

Vice Chair: **Louise Grimm**

Secretary: **Chris Young**

Treasurer: **Alistair Christie**

Membership: **Liz Bell**

Assistant Treasurer: **Jenny Clarke**

Group Coordinators:

**Anne Cardew** (Groups A-C)

**Mary Cranston** (Groups D-I)

**Dave Duncan** (Groups J-P):

**Susan Miles** (Groups Q-S)

**Louise Grimm** (Groups T- Z)

Internal Communications: **Graham Golding**

External Communications: **Pat Williams**

New Members: **Dierdre Duffy**

Technical Support: **Don Kennedy**

Web Administrator: **Maureen Rooney**

Clarion Editor: **Maggie Gilvray**

Bulletin Editor: **David Baird**

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion: **Suhail Shehade**

Safeguarding: **Jane Garrett**

Speakers Committee: **Joanna Morris**

Contact details can be found in the **Contact** (password protected) area of the website.

## Editor's note

A special thank you to all those who contributed to this edition, particularly the input from a record number of activity groups. So many in fact that we had to defer a few contributions that are not time-limited to the Spring Edition which is now off to a flying start!

Guidance for submitting articles will be available in the Bulletin and on the Edinburgh u3a website.

Contributions should be sent, preferably by email, to [clarion@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:clarion@edinburghu3a.org.uk)

### Guidance

Roughly 225 – 300 words (half A4 page) or 500 – 600 words (full A4 page) will give an article of the right length accompanied by good quality and interesting photographs. Shorter notes on group activities are equally acceptable. Articles should be saved as a Word or Word compatible document (Click on "save as" and select appropriate format) or just send in an email. Don't worry about fonts or text formatting, but if you include photographs, these should be sent as a separate image file (JPEG or TIFF) rather than

embedded in articles or emails as these might be compressed so much their resolution is too low for publication. If you don't have access to a word processing device (computer, tablet etc) contact Maggie on 07808 319485.

We welcome **Judith Cunningham** to the Clarion team which now comprises **Norma Emm, Trish O'Brien, Judith Cunningham** and myself and we would welcome other volunteers with publishing, writing or editorial skills.

Except where otherwise credited, all photos are taken by the author(s) of the article.

**Paper version.** If you want a paper version of this magazine, please contact the membership Secretary, Liz Bell [membership@edinburghu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@edinburghu3a.org.uk)

**Maggie Gilvray**