



## GLASGOW WEST END U3A April 2021 Newsletter

Dear All

I hope you all had a nice Easter and are enjoying the Spring weather and the easing of restrictions. Haircuts and vaccines are the topics of the day.

Thank you to the many of you who completed the survey. The committee are just collating the results and will use them to plan for next year. There were many supportive and constructive comments. While many long to meet face-to-face, there is a recognition that Zoom groups have a role to play in the future for a number of groups. There are opportunities for new groups to start, for instance an evening book group needs coordinating, and French for beginners may have your name on it.

The monthly coffee and chat is a good way for new members to meet others and hear more about GWEU3A. We divide into smaller groups on Zoom to make it a bit easier.

We are delighted that we are attracting new members, many of whom are joining Zoom groups and meeting people virtually. If any of you have contacts with church/community groups where we could advertise, please email me at [lizervine@hotmail.com](mailto:lizervine@hotmail.com) with details.

Beatson Walk 21st April: Our charity walk has attracted 24 members and we are having a morning and an afternoon walk. Details will be issued on the 14th April. The details for donations are included at the end of this Newsletter and of course anyone can donate. It is a nice walk and we hope for a sunny day. There is still time to sign up for a shorter walk so please email me at [lizervine@hotmail.com](mailto:lizervine@hotmail.com) if you are interested.

Hope to see you at the monthly meeting on the 15th April at 10 for 10.30 am. Our speaker is Ian Buchan - a magician!

Take care  
Liz Ervine  
Chair  
GWEU3A

## April Monthly Meeting

**Thursday, April 15, 10am for 10.30: Ian Buchan a.k.a. “Magic Ian” - My Magic, magicians and more.** Ian is a retired civil servant who has been performing magic for 35 years, and is a member of Edinburgh and also of West Lothian Magic Circles. He will talk about his life as a professional magician and about the famous magicians who have influenced him. He has met and seen many of the greats in magic, and has some anecdotes he will share, along with performing some tricks as part of the entertainment.

Look out for the Zoom link which will be sent to everyone in the next few days.

## Non-Fiction History Book Group

The non-fiction history book group continues to meet monthly on Mondays via Zoom. Below is a brief review by one of our members of our last read, ‘Tamed: Ten species that changed our World’, by Alice Roberts.

*In ‘Tamed’, Roberts takes a look at the domestication of dogs, wheat, cattle, maize, potatoes, chickens, rice, horses and apples, concluding with a last chapter on humans. It is filled with up-to-date scientific research – the prospect of which, frankly, initially terrified those of us without a scientific background. However, Roberts writes so well that it’s possible to cheat and skip over the ‘hard’ bits yet still understand and, more importantly, enjoy what she has to tell us. The last sentence of the book serves as a useful summary, “There are divisions here between the wild and the domesticated, the untamed and the tamed. But in the end, it’s all one: a tangled bank, beautifully intertwined for eternity.*

Our next read, which we’ll be discussing on 19 April, is ‘Prisoners of Geography’ by Tim Marshall.

On our webpage you’ll find a list of our planned reads until July 2021.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/85727>

## Science and Technology Group

Our next Zoom meeting will be on Wednesday, 21 April at 2pm. In a change to our planned programme we will have a talk on the planet Mars by geologist, Dr Simon Cuthbert. His talk is called **Mars: A Strangely Familiar World**. Simon will be familiar to some of you; his very well received presentation on the geology of the Glasgow area was given at the last normal meeting we were able to hold before the pandemic struck.

As usual, I will send an email with a Zoom link to members of the group a few days before the meeting. If anyone not on my mailing list wishes to attend, they should contact me using the pigeon link on the page which is linked below.

Please get in touch if there is a topic you would like to learn more about at one of our future meetings.

Alan Watt

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/77856>

### **Glasgow West End u3a Recorder Group**

Our Recorder group has been meeting up and kept in touch with Email and Zoom sessions since the start of restrictions 15 months ago.

We have enjoyed playing recorder and and have discovered that playing in turn was a good way to keep practising everyone's favourite tunes.

We are looking forward to meeting up again, either in each other's house or in alternative accommodation.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/85729>

### **Local History Group**

The local history group has a programme of presentations via Zoom that are open to all GWE members. These take place on Monday afternoons at 2.00pm. There's no need to register an interest. A couple of days before each talk all U3A members will receive an email containing the Zoom link, and can click on this if they want to listen in.

In March we had great turnouts for our talks, firstly from Professor Lynn Abrams of the University of Glasgow who spoke about 'Living High in Glasgow: women, washing and verandas'; and, secondly, from Peter Mortimer, Glasgow historian, who gave us a presentation on 'Entertainment in Glasgow'.

As we're now in spring, with the prospect of regulations easing, we will be reverting to monthly presentations. The next of these, on 19 April, will again be from Peter Mortimer, when his talk will be **The History of Partick**.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/84166>

### **Current Affairs**

The next meeting is on the 30th April at 12.30, Details of the topic will be issued around the 20th of the month. The political landscape changes so quickly that topics need to be amended frequently.

We have had two discussion groups so far which have been interesting and stimulating and of course respectful.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/110399>

### **Coffee and a Chat**

Zoom Coffee and a Chat is currently taking place on the first Saturday of each month at 2pm.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/page/97567>

## Local history group research project – can you help?

As you may know, a few months ago some members of the Glasgow West End and Paisley & District history groups launched a research project, “Learning from Adversity”. We thought it would be a good and interesting challenge for us. We’ve broken into small groups looking at the following topics:

- Our Dancing Days
- The Emancipation movement in our areas
- Public health developments in our localities
- Statues and forgotten heroes
- Our impact on the environment
- The anniversary of the UCS work-in
- The impact of WW2 in our localities

Over the coming months we’d love to involve more people in the project and, in particular, we’d love to hear memories about some of the above. The first of these that we’d like specifically to ask your help with is the topic, **Our Dancing Days**. This group is looking at how some of us spent time in our youth in the dance halls (we’re not just interested in those in Glasgow or Paisley).

We’d be really grateful if you could have a look at the attached questionnaire and consider filling it in and returning it to the co-ordinator of that topic group [Dancingdaysu3a@gmail.com](mailto:Dancingdaysu3a@gmail.com) – we don’t need you to put your name on the questionnaire.

The group has still to decide how it will present the information it gathers but, if it decides to put it on our U3A webpage or present its findings to other U3A members, someone from the group will contact you first to check that you’re happy with this.

Also, if the Dancing Days topic doesn’t appeal to you but you’d like at this point to be involved in any of the other topics please contact [u3agwelocalhistorygroup@gmail.com](mailto:u3agwelocalhistorygroup@gmail.com)

## Charity Walk for Spring

For our next Charity Walk we hope to support the local Beatson Charity. For more information, the Beatson’s website has some great examples of where funds can be allocated. The Charity funds a wide range of activities and supports patients in many different ways.

You can donate via their webpage: <https://www.beatsoncancercharity.org/mri/>

<https://www.beatsoncancercharity.org/my-light/>

## Event with author and historian, Tom Devine

Sir Professor Tom Devine will present a talk entitled: “*New Perspectives on the Clearances*”  
Hosted by u3a:Online Across Scotland

This will take place on 22 April at 2pm. For more details, see below:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/onlineacrossscotland/events>

### **Our Range of Interest Groups**

The following are the interest groups that, as far as we know, have kept up or are resuming activities in one way or another. Please note that this list can change at short notice. Contact a group via its page on our website.

Art Appreciation, Book Groups, Bridge Group, Cinema Group, Coffee and Chat, Conversational French, Conversational German, Conversational Spanish, Crochet Group, Current Affairs, Exploring Glasgow, History Book Group, Knitting Group, Local History Group, Photography, Poetry Appreciation, Quilting, Recorder Playing, Science & Technology Group, Shakespeare Reading Group, Sign Language, Survival French, Theatre Group, Wine Appreciation, Yoga.

Would any member who is experiencing problems with contacting a group please let Jean Broadley, our Small Groups Coordinator, know. Jean can be contacted via:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/glasgow-west-end/groups>

### **u3a in the Time of Corona**

The second printing of the book 'u3a in the Time of Corona' is now available.

The book was created as part of a shared learning project led by Jo Livingston and Jennifer Simpson. It sold out quickly, but has been reprinted just one year on from the first lockdown.

u3a members from all over the country contributed, and the book chronicles our reactions to the virus and isolation, as well as how to get a supermarket delivery, how to cut your own hair and what to do with all that free time. Some people sent drawings, photographs and poems which have been included.

It costs £10 including post and packing and the order form is at:

<https://u3auk.wufoo.com/forms/m1f42ml40rx4fdj/>

### **Doon the Water, in Lockdown**

These paintings associated with the Ayrshire coast, were put together by the South Ayrshire U3A Art Appreciation Group.

<https://artuk.org/discover/curations/doon-the-water-in-lockdown>

### **Special Subject Week – Open to all u3a members in the UK: Exploring World Faiths: 12th-16th April (apologies for short notice)**

To register click on: <https://u3asites.org.uk/west-midlands/events>

(There is a different subject each morning between 10 and 11.30 am)

## **Research on Balance/Preventing Falls**

Doctor Toby Ellmers (a researcher at Brunel University London) is currently conducting an online research project to explore how psychological factors such as anxiety influence balance. These results will inform new NHS strategies to reduce the risk of falls. Participating in this online research will take approximately 10-15 minutes, and will involve answering questions regarding health, balance, and anxiety. All information provided will remain completely confidential.

For further information, and to participate in the research, please follow the link: <https://brunel.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/balance-vigilance-and-awareness-pilot>

Alternatively, you can email Toby at the following email address: [toby.ellmers@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:toby.ellmers@brunel.ac.uk)

## **Gresham College**

Their lectures are free and open to all. It has been recording its lectures since the 1980s and live streaming them for those unable to attend in person.

There are now over 2,000 lectures freely available online on their website from Vaccinations (Sir Chris Whitty) to Aristotle via the Politics of Judging. Visit: <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/attend/>

## **Countdown to COP**

Are you concerned about climate change? Scottish u3a members can become involved in COP26 this November in a variety of ways.

If you are interested, please contact Brenda Ainsley at [b\\_ainsley@hotmail.com](mailto:b_ainsley@hotmail.com)

## **A note from Peter Taylor**

We surveyed our members and got a great response. The many very positive comments show the success that GWE u3a has had in involving people during the pandemic, and how much this is valued. But other responses remind us that many people feel antipathy to using technology for social and learning purposes.

We will continue to look for the best ways to reach out to and include people. Our committee, with the help of our special subgroup on inclusion, will be looking at specific actions that we can take.