



Dear All

I hope you are all enjoying the summer break.

I was on holiday so unfortunately missed the June monthly meeting but I understand that we had an excellent presentation from Allan Mauchline, a Volunteer Team Leader with ScotServes which is a Volunteer-Led Emergency Medical Transport Charity. It was also an opportunity to spotlight our groups (see on page 3) - it really is very pleasing to see so many new groups starting up, as well as the groups that have been running since the start.

There is, as you know, no monthly meeting in July and we return to the hall in Novar Drive in August.

Another June highlight was the sausage sizzle which took place in Banavie Gardens on Friday 23rd June. The rain just about stayed off and I think those who came

along had a most enjoyable evening. Many thanks to all those who helped on the night - from cooking sausages to putting up the gazebos and a hundred and one things in between. As you know the u3a relies on members to volunteer their time and skills and it is great when everything comes together.

There are a few spaces left for our quiz and fish and chip night at Kelvindale Bowling Club on Friday 1st September. Please [let me know](#) as soon as possible if you would like to reserve a space.

Thank you for your continued involvement and support.

**Gail Donaldson - Chair u3a GWE**

## Groups

The following are the activity groups that are currently running. Contact a group via its page on our website via [this link](#).

2 Art Appreciation Groups,  
2 Book Groups,  
Bridge Social/Informal  
British Sign Language,  
Cinema,  
Coffee and Chat,  
Creative Writing,  
Crime Fiction,  
Current Affairs,  
Film Lovers,  
2 French Conversation groups,  
French Intermediate,  
Genealogy,  
German Conversation,  
History Book Group,  
Italian Conversation,  
Knitting,  
Latin,  
Local History,  
Longer Walks,  
Lunch Bunch,  
MOTO (Members on their own),  
Painting and Drawing,  
Photography,  
Poetry Appreciation,  
Quilting,  
Recorder Playing,  
Science & Technology,  
Social Bridge,  
Spanish Conversation,  
Sunday Lunch Group,  
Table Tennis,  
Theatre,  
Ventures with a Bus Pass,  
Visiting Gardens,  
Walking with a Bus Pass,  
Wine Appreciation,  
Yoga.

## Coffee and Chat

Coffee and Chat will start up on 5 August at 2 pm in the Puppet Theatre, (£2.50 per person).

See you there!

[Get in touch here.](#)



## British Sign Language (BSL)

BSL have had a short summer break but hope to begin again on August 22nd

See more details or contact them [here](#).





## Photography group

Photography group members took to the open air on a fine summer's day. The venue was Rouken Glen park and the theme was to capture anything to do with the park, its visitors or its residents. Those included a charming family of swans on the boating pond, including the two

youngsters snapped by one of our members.

The group meets monthly on Zoom to present each member's interpretation of that month's photography theme. From time to time we get together in person. Before the park outing the group assembled in the Burrell Collection, the Transport Museum and Lochwinnoch Bird Sanctuary.

The next challenge to our members is to capture images of architecture. It's a broad theme that allows outdoor shots when the weather allows, and details indoors when the Glasgow climate threatens.

We are open to new members: no experience is needed – just a camera or smartphone, and a liking for snapping! Find out more [here](#).



## Science and Technology Group

The Science and Technology Group is not meeting over the summer months but will recommence meetings in September. These will take place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 3pm at Partickhill Bowling Club 46 Partickhill Road, Glasgow G11 5BY. We are currently working on next session's programme and details will be posted on the website once the programme is agreed. For information about the group and to join, just click the pigeon on the group web page [here](#).

## Sunday Lunch Group

The Sunday Lunch Group had our highest attendance at lunch in July at Pescado. We were thrilled that so many new members have joined the group and were able to come along and meet us. The food was great and the company even better, just what was needed on a typical Glasgow summer afternoon.

We are now planning venues for the rest of the year so emails will be



coming out shortly and will even mention the C word (Christmas)!!

If you are interested, we meet for a late lunch on the second Sunday of every month, choosing a different local restaurant

each time. Restaurants that we have recently visited include: The Prancing Stag, Café Andaluz, Oran Mor, The Bothy, Pescado and The Lovable Rogue. Menus are sent out to members

of the Group before booking. Everyone is encouraged to suggest their favourite places.

We know that not everyone will be able to make every lunch but we hope lots of members can join us when they are able. It's a great opportunity to meet other members and pass a relaxing Sunday afternoon.

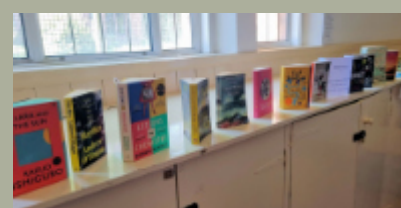
For further details, please contact the Group Leaders at [this link](#) and click the pigeon.





## Groups Showcase

At the June monthly meeting members got a lively and varied taste of the range of activities of GWE u3a groups. As well as short explanations by group leaders and pictorial displays, there were displays of Knitting and Quilting and of books read by the Book Groups. The highlights were the first ever public performances by our Recorder Group and a British Sign Language 'choir'.



## Visiting Gardens

The Visiting Gardens group enjoyed a glorious sunny day in June, at Glenarn Garden Rhu. See the garden [here](#). Find out more about the group [here](#).





## Art Appreciation Group 2 and Local History group: Joint Event

On 19 June the new Art Appreciation 2 group had its first outing, a joint visit with the local history group to the Glasgow School of Art Archives and Collections. It's a real treasure trove, holding not only art, design,

and architecture collections, but also material about the development of the GSA itself since it was established in 1845. There was so much to see that several of us intend to go back on our own to spend more time there.



### Art Appreciation Group 2 (New)

This newly formed is proving to be very popular. We are currently planning an interesting programme of events, gallery visits and talks, informed by the interests of our members.

We recently had our first get together, a visit to the Glasgow School of Art Archives ([www.gsa.ac.uk/archives](http://www.gsa.ac.uk/archives)). This event was a joint venture with the local history group and focussed on the social history of the Art School.

Our archive guides, Helen and Stella, provided a fascinating to look at

various old records, for example the interdepartmental records of negotiations regarding the provision of live "Elephants, Camels, Zebras and other mammals brought to the school twice weekly for the use of the Animal Class" transported to the school from the nearby New City Road Zoo. "This unique opportunity has thus been afforded for the study of animals, whose forms and traits would otherwise have been possible on as seen in books and photographs". Records of well-known past students, as well as those not so well known, were available to read. We saw the correspondence between the jailed suffragette staff member and the Director, regarding

the time off work she needed to recover from serious health problems as a result of being force fed in prison.

Of course, we also saw many examples of art work and furniture made by Charles R MacIntosh and his contemporaries. Feedback from members about the visit was extremely positive, with excellent materials and very helpful and knowledgeable staff.

Overall, our first event went really well and we intend to visit the archives again, with an early suggestion for a return visit to focus on 'The Glasgow Girls'. All in all, we think this was a great start for the new art group.

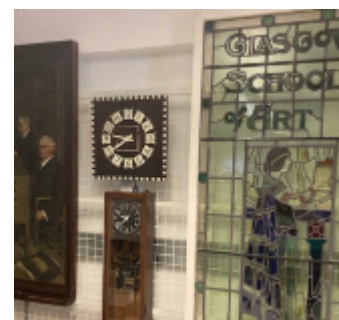
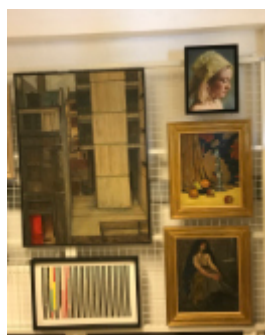
For a flavour of what's planned for the rest of the

year, please [check our website](#).

### Local History Group

The group normally meets on Mondays. We enjoy a mix of visits to places of historical interest and presentations, both in-person and via Zoom.

After our successful visit to the Glasgow School of Art Archives in June (see below), the group will be taking a break over the summer, meeting again in September. For a list of planned events for the rest of the year, please [visit our webpage](#).





## Ventures with a Bus Pass

Our July outing was to Inveraray. This was a repeat visit as we had been there last summer but the journey is beautiful with amazing scenery - Scotland at its best - so it's a destination worth repeating. Sadly, we visited on a rainy day (as indeed we did last year!) so we did not see the loch at its best but nonetheless we had a good day out fortified by homemade soup in a lovely cafe! After lunch the group split into two with the hardy souls having a lovely walk in the castle grounds and the rest returning midafternoon to Glasgow.

We are due to visit Pittenweem in August to take in the Art Festival so please [get in touch](#) if you would like to come along.



## History Book Group

The group reads non-fiction history books and meets monthly on Mondays in the Three Crows in Crow Road to discuss them.

Below is a review by one of our members of our June read, 'Ancestors', by Alice Roberts.

"What do we know about the lives of those who walked on these islands before recorded history began? How much can we know? In this book Alice Roberts uses seven burial sites as a focus for considering both the strengths and limitations of archaeology and related sciences to obtain some understanding of the lives of some of our ancestors during periods of time ranging from the old stone age to the iron age.

Most of our group reacted positively, helped by the engaging style of writing adopted by Roberts. She is

always willing to share personal insights and, although an enthusiast of these scientific developments, never

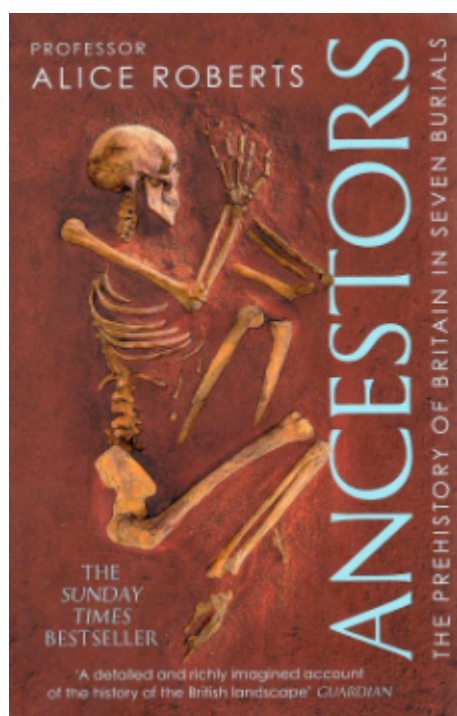
loses sight of how we cannot help but view the past through the lens of our own present-day culture.

Some found the detailed accounts of the scientific developments demanding ("it felt like homework") while others adopted a more pragmatic approach and skimmed over these parts.

The burial sites serve as a focus to various topics and the group would have liked to have seen some more external structure imposed on the text, especially when Roberts meanders her way, always entertainingly, through related topics.

Overall, despite these caveats, a book to recommend."

Our July meeting was on 10th when we discussed 'Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind', by Tom Holland. We'll put our review of it in the next newsletter. Contact us [here](#).





## About our Members

u3a volunteer Ellen Wright's motivation for making a difference in her community is entirely selfish. "You get far more out of volunteering that you give," she said. "I don't think I do anything out of the ordinary."

After retiring as an office manager five years ago, Ellen joined Glasgow West End u3a. Her cousin and husband were u3a members in Wiltshire and spoke about it enthusiastically.

"I'd never heard of u3a," remarked Ellen. However, a couple of months later, she saw a leaflet in her local library about one starting in Glasgow. Heading towards retirement, Ellen decided to find out more, and signed up. She's now in several groups.

u3a isn't her only volunteering role. Some years before retirement, Ellen took a bus service/traffic light problem to her local councillor. He resolved it, she thanked him.

"Shortly afterwards, he wanted to establish a community council and invited me to a meeting," said Ellen. "Eight years on, I still thoroughly enjoy it and I'm now the Secretary of our local branch. In local authorities, most committees and workshops are held during the day; once you retire, you get sucked into these."

Volunteering was not something Ellen did when she worked full time. "Several years before I retired, I saw a magazine article about retirement. It talked about not just preparing financially but also thinking and preparing for what you want to do with the rest of your life. When I was approached about the community council, I thought that was one box ticked. I also thought I should do something to pay back to society, so I volunteered at a local day care centre.

I did want to do something fun and light hearted so I joined u3a. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a member and becoming more active in several groups. That's how it started. I said to myself I now have three things that will take up my time. Before I knew it, I don't have a spare minute but I'm not sitting bored at home.

Since I retired, I have joined quite a few other organisations. One is Knightswood Connects, a project set up for senior residents in the area. It



offers information, connects services, and helps to tackle loneliness and social isolation. I got involved after their Development Officer gave a talk to the community council. I was asked to join their working group and help them promote local activities, create events and sustainable groups, ranging from art and crafts to belly dancing and fitness.

During the pandemic, Knightswood Connects invited me to set up a health walking group. I completed the Glasgow Life Health Walk training on Zoom. I now host a health walk each week. It's a way to get local people outdoors and talking to one another. I think we talk more than we walk!"

Ellen admits to being incredibly shy: "It takes a lot to meet people. In social situations, I'm dreadful, really awful. Yet, I'll go in and have a 'fight' with the council. More recently, I spoke out at the Scottish Parliament when the Scottish Government was reviewing its Community Empowerment Act.



I'm not doing these things from any sense of being good or looking for sainthood. Sorting little things, like a traffic light or a health walk can make such a difference in everyday life to so many people. I firmly believe volunteering is really good fun, whether it's been stewarding at the European Championships in Glasgow, or the city's annual Open Doors Day, and at this year's World Cycling championships.

I benefit too as I'm kept busy, I'm not bored, I'm not isolated, I meet such interesting people and I keep in touch with the world. It's also got to be good for my mental health, though sometimes it feels like I'm hitting my head against a brick wall!"

Drawn to the more social side of u3a activities, Ellen helps to organise Ventures with a bus pass, a Sunday lunch group, and a successful MOTO (Members on Their Own) group.

She commented: "Older age is about your attitude, it's not necessarily physical. If you want to go out and do things, you can with u3a."

Ellen talks about u3a when she volunteers elsewhere. As a result, four or five people she's met have joined her u3a. She believes if you are enthusiastic and make it sound interesting, people will be intrigued by u3a and want to know more.

Ellen is passionate about digital inclusion. "So many of our citizens are digitally excluded from events and decision making. When I was told that a book festival program was only available online I, and others, contacted our elected officials about the lack of printed programmes. I understand there is a cost and it uses up resources, however, information which is solely online excludes many older people, and others who experience digital poverty." Ellen was happy to report hard copies were made available.

Her next focus is that Glasgow City Council will appoint an older people's champion. "I tell people it's easy to write or email your local elected representatives and make your point directly to them.

"Volunteering does make a difference and is a valuable asset for the country. I can't imagine life without volunteering and everyone can have a go."