



It is Volunteers' Week, 1st-7th June. This celebration of volunteering is organised by NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations). The Third Age Trust were looking for great examples of volunteering and of course we put someone forward. We are very proud that two of our longest-serving and most dedicated volunteers, Alastair and Zoe Fleming, are to be featured in the u3a's contribution to Volunteers' Week. Alastair and Zoe have run the Geology Group since Oban u3a was formed almost 15 years ago (yes, we celebrate our 15th birthday in September). Their enthusiasm inspires us all, without that spirit there would be no Oban u3a. Thank you Zoe and Alastair, especially since their contribution to the u3a is only a part of their volunteering! And thank you all the other members who contribute so much to Oban u3a. Congratulations to Alastair and Zoe, and to all volunteers.

Bob

## NATIONAL NEWS

### u3a: Online Across Scotland

This u3a was started during the pandemic to offer u3a members opportunities to keep in touch with each other through online groups. It has been a great success and will be continued in order to reach those who cannot attend face to face groups due to distance from a u3a, illness or caring duties, and to those in social isolation.

There are a wide variety of groups to join from all over Scotland. Take a look at the list on the link below. Any member in Scotland can join any group.

It is hoped to include monthly talks later in the year and possibly some day workshops on topics relating to Scotland. More information is available at:

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

### U3a Scotland AGM

Members using email will have received notice of the Scottish AGM, which will be on 20 June. Please inform our secretary if you would like to attend in person. Numbers are limited to two per u3a. The registration deadline is 6 June. Please contact [obanu3asec@gmail.com](mailto:obanu3asec@gmail.com) or speak to one of the committee.

### Third Age Trust AGM

This meeting will be held in Milton Keynes on Wednesday 18 October 2023 and via Zoom. If you would like to attend, either in person or remotely, please contact [obanu3asec@gmail.com](mailto:obanu3asec@gmail.com).

## LOCAL NEWS

### June talk:

Tuesday 6 June 2023; 10:30 coffee, 11:00 talk; Corran Halls.

### **"The Book of Kells: understanding ancient art, its meaning and methods"**

An insight into the art and purpose of the Book of Kells, a highly-decorated manuscript produced on Iona in about the year 800

Rosemary Power, Scottish History Group Convenor

Talks will be available as a hybrid meeting using Jitsi Meet. Please request to join by Jitsi by replying to the chairman's email reminder for the talk, which will follow this newsletter.

### Pickleball

You may have seen an article in *Third Age Matters* about the new sport, Pickleball. It's a cross between table tennis and badminton and is being enjoyed by many u3a groups across the UK. Would you be interested in joining a new Pickleball group here? Better still, would you be interested in helping to set it up? If so, please send a message to the email at the bottom of the page so we can gauge interest in order to go forward with this fun idea.

## GROUP NEWS

### Membership of u3a local groups:

Please remember that, for insurance reasons, you cannot join the activities of a u3a group more than once if you are not a member. If you renewed your membership you will have received a membership card last autumn. If you are not sure, please contact Graham Cameron at [obanu3amemsec@gmail.com](mailto:obanu3amemsec@gmail.com) .

### Calligraphy Group:

The group is taking a break over the summer. It will be offered again at the u3a's September meeting, when existing group members and new people can sign up for the coming autumn and winter.

### Craft Group:

The Craft Group met on the 18 May (as far as the group convenor knows!). It was one of the few meetings that she has missed and that was due to a family get-together in Strathyre. There is no date yet for June's meeting.

### Creative Writing Group:

The Creative Writing group, which convenes on Kerrera at Sue's house, continues to provide an opportunity for self expression, reflection, talent and laughter...accompanied by a big measure of encouragement and mutual support. There are diverse contributions from the participants - happy, sad, mad, sometimes gripping, always interesting and a shared pleasure to the members. The meetings are taking place on the fourth Tuesday of the month throughout summer, thus the next will be on 27 June.



### Discussion Group:

The discussion group is meeting as usual on first and third Thursday of every month in the Royal Hotel at 2.30 p.m, i.e. 1 June and 15 June, when we hope to discuss artificial Intelligence and its implications. All robots welcome.

### French Conversation Group:

The French Conversation Group meets every Friday afternoon in the Lancaster Hotel, to speak in French and to enjoy a coffee, tea or hot chocolate together. We are also reading a book. Having finished *La Tresse*, we have turned our attention to *Le Silence de la Mer*, by Vercors. We welcome new members who have an intermediate or advanced knowledge of spoken French.

The group will have its last meeting before the summer break on 30 June, and reconvene on 18 August, roughly coinciding with the school summer holiday.





## Gardens and Wild Flowers Group:

Click Beetle at Glasdrum.  
Bob Batty

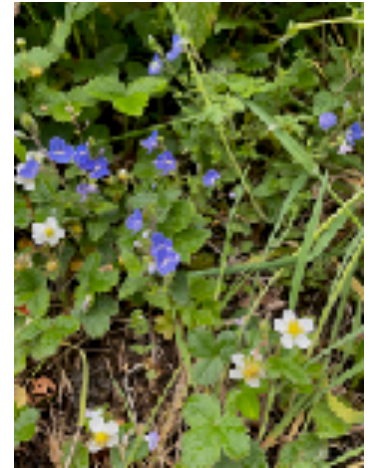
Spring at Arduaine Gardens.  
Linda Dickson



Chequered Skipper Butterfly, Glasdrum  
Bob Batty

Weather permitting, and subject to a prior recce, a visit to Braevallich Farm, PA33 1BU, has been arranged for Monday 12 June at 2 pm. Admission to this garden, open through the Scottish Gardens Scheme, is £5, with the owner's chosen charity being Mary's Meals. The farm is situated SE of Loch Awe on the B840, 15 miles from Cladich, 7 miles from Ford.

There are two gardens at Braevallich, one at a lower level with Azaleas, Primulas, Mecanopsis and mixed herbaceous perennials and shrubs, plus a kitchen garden. The other garden is further up the hill, developed from birch and oak wood in a glen, with burns and waterfalls. Members of the group will be further informed by email nearer the time.



Germander Speedwell and Wild Strawberry flowers. Dot Dahl

## Geology Group:

The Geology group is on a summer break. Anyone else wishing to join the proposed field trip to the North-West Highlands (4/5/6th October) should contact Patrick and Virginia Bird as soon as possible to register their interest - email address at the bottom of the page - and reserve their accommodation at the [Inchnadamph Explorers Lodge](#) for as many nights as they wish to join in. The complete trip would involve the nights of 3/4/5/6/7th October, but some may wish to come for just part of the time.



## German Group:

German group membership has stabilised at nine people, and meets on Thursdays, 10:00 at Graham's house, and coffee is provided. The group will reconvene on 7 September.

## Mahjong Group:

To avoid clashing with the Garden and Wildflower Group outings, which are also on a Monday, we have decided to vary our meeting time. We will still play on a Monday at 2pm, except when an outing is organised, when the meeting will be in the morning at 10:15am, in the Royal Hotel. We expect to meet all through the summer months and, as always, are happy to welcome new members.



## Out and About Group:

No plans for June.

## Poetry Group:

The Poetry Reading group meets on Tuesday 6 June at 2.00pm to read our choices on the theme Arrivals & Departures. The anthology will be circulated after the meeting - please send in any suggestions by the 6th or bring them with you if you are coming. After this we will take a break during July and August.

## Reading Group 1:

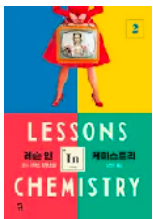
We will continue to meet monthly throughout the summer, as we always have done. This group has been meeting for fifteen years! At the time of writing May's meeting is still to take place and we will be discussing *Islands of Mercy* by Rose Tremain.

## Reading Group 2 (Crime):

The next meeting is at 2pm on Thursday 8 June at The Falls of Lora Hotel. The book chosen for this month is *March Violets* by Philip Kerr.



## Reading Group 3 (Fact & Fiction):



We all agreed that *Lessons in Chemistry* was excellent in almost every way. Garmus captures people brilliantly. The writing is witty, joyful, full of comedy - often black. Her criticism of the pharmaceutical industry is astute and she writes with authority on misogyny and women who bully in the workplace. She brings together tough subjects with lighter ones but it is not a grim tale. We (nearly) all laughed out loud at times and we'd all read it again, especially as a panacea for miserable times. Our favourite character - Six Thirty, of course!

Our next meeting is on Thursday 15 June, when we will discuss *Still Life* by Sarah Winman.

## Science Group:

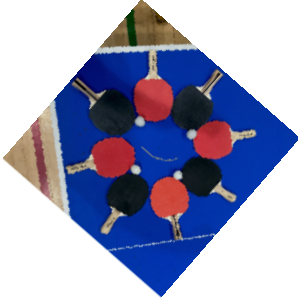
The Science Group is taking a summer break and will meet again in the autumn. If you have any thoughts on the programme, or a talk to offer, please get in touch.

## Scottish History Group:

Scottish History will meet on 6 June at 2.30pm in Oban Library. This will (probably) be the last session this year, and was scheduled to be about the eighth-century Iona masterpiece, the *Book of Kells*. As the convenor is herself that morning's speaker on this subject at the main get-together, the Scottish history session will be a further discussion, looking at other imagery and the tools, techniques, trade, human input and colours required to make a work of this kind on the western seaboard of Scotland in that period.

## Spanish Group:

The Spanish group meets in the Lancaster Hotel at 11am on Wednesdays. We have some structured, prepared sections and we also try our best to have conversations. All levels of Spanish speakers, including beginners, are welcome.



## Table Tennis Group:

The table tennis group will continue to meet until the end of June in the main hall at Atlantis, from 2-3pm on Mondays, followed by tea/coffee and a chat before the school children sweep in.

Players of any experience, or none, are very welcome. Equipment is provided and we each pay £2.50 per session.

## Walk and Lunch Group:

We are planning our next walk to be on the island of Mull on Tuesday, 27th June.

We will catch the 9:55 ferry from Oban to Craignure, then walk to Torosay Castle and back. This walk of around 6km (3.75 miles) is on fairly even ground. We will have lunch at Blazeys in Craignure before getting the 15:40 ferry back to Oban

From 'WalkHighlands': *This out-and-back walk heads through lovely woodland with great views to reach Torosay Castle (a private residence) and then visits an attractive bay overlooking Duart Castle.*



Fairy Bridge, Loch Creran. Anne Archer