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Chair's Update

Hello everyone,

I hope this finds you well and looking forward to spring and getting out and about more.

Our u3a got off to a great start with some of our members attending a St Valentine's afternoon tea event, hosted by East Renfrewshire u3a. This was a terrific occasion and we saw the most incredible selection of hats created by students at Clydebank college.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the executive committee has been busy preparing for the AGM due to take place on [Thursday 7 March 2024](#). Come join us at the Salvation Army Hall for refreshments at 1.30pm. It would be encouraging to see as many of you as possible, as this is an important event in our calendar.

I am pleased to announce that our membership is sitting at 142 and it has been very heartening to see high turnouts at these monthly meetings. We thank you for your ongoing support.

Thinking ahead, we have a number of interesting outings to look forward to. The first of these events is a trip in early May to Culzean Castle, including a guided tour of the Castle and gardens. We will also have the opportunity to have a lunch together. (Details and costings to follow.)

I hope you enjoy this bumper edition of the newsletter, which covers the next three months. Thanks to all our Group Leaders and to the editorial team for producing this edition.

I look forward to welcoming you to the AGM.

Kathy (Paisley & District u3a Chair)



INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Information about all of our interest groups can be obtained by going to our website, using the following link ... <https://u3asites.org.uk/paisley/contact>. You will be contacted as soon as possible by the relevant group leader.

Architecture

Duncan MacIntosh (Usually Mondays)

Duncan is proposing a morning Architecture group visit to the Watt Institute and McLean Gallery (15 Kelly St, Greenock PA16 8JX) on **Thursday 24 March**. He is investigating one or two other places to see nearby as well. Folks can meet at the Watt Institute at 10.30am. The nearest train station is Greenock West, about a 10 minute walk from the Institute.



In early May, the Architecture group will be part of a whole membership trip to Culzean Castle in Ayrshire. This cliff-top masterpiece was originally designed by Robert Adam in the late 18th century. It showcases his unique style, including an oval staircase which makes a dramatic centrepiece to the building.

You can message Duncan, on the Contact page of our website, to find out which venue the group will visit in April. You'll be made very welcome.

Art Appreciation

Rod Ferrier, (Monthly, Tuesdays or Thursdays)

Is the painting on the right the greatest painting ever? Many prominent artists and critics of the time thought so. It's called *Las Meninas* by Diego Velasquez painted in 1656.

While we have not made it to Madrid just yet, why not join our group and visit various galleries in places like Ayr, Paisley, Glasgow and Edinburgh. We aim to go to venues which offer good public transport links, though sometimes members can provide a space in their cars, if needed.



The photo on the left shows our group at Glasgow's Gallery of Modern Art, visiting Sam Ainsley's exhibition, "*Wednesday is Cobalt Blue. Friday is Cadmium Red*", currently showing until **25 June**. Sam Ainsley is pictured in the centre of the shot in front of one of her paintings.

While this year's programme is still being finalised, here are some diary dates for you: **Tuesday 26 March**, **Thursday 25 April**, **Tuesday 28 May**, **Thursday 27 June**, and **Tuesday 23 July**.

If you are interested in coming along please contact me, Rod Ferrier. I'm happy to answer any questions via our u3a website's Contact page.

Board Games

Rod Ferrier (Kilbarchan Old Library, 1st Tuesday of month, 2.00 - 4.00pm)

We are very fortunate to be able to meet up, on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month, in Kilbarchan old library. It's bang in the centre of the village. It is a wonderful venue, run by local volunteers, and is both comfortable and ideal for our needs. We regularly have 12 to 15 members who split into smaller groups and play various board games. These range from Cribbage, Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit (old version), dominoes, Ticket to Ride, and Lanterns, to name just a few.



Chris Dykes (c)



Chris Dykes (c)

Public transport is currently limited to an hourly service from Johnstone Square to Kilbarchan. If this is of interest to you, please let me know and come and try our group. Some of our members may be able to provide a space in their car. If you have any questions, or want to join us on [5 March](#), please contact me, Rod Ferrier, via the Contact page on our website.

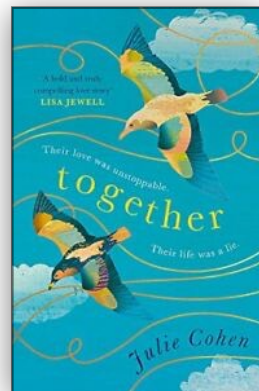
Book Club

Dee Barnfield (Paisley Central Library, 11am-12pm, first Thursday of the month)

I'm glad to report that the Book Group is still going strong. May I take this opportunity to thank all the members who read the books, turn up to the meetings (whatever the weather!) and contribute wholeheartedly to the discussions (some even sending in their thoughts ahead of time if they're unable to attend) – thank you all!

We're now established in the new Paisley Central Library and meet on the first Thursday of the month at 11am. We've just read *"The Trouble with Goats and Sheep"* by Joanna Cannon, which, it's fair to say, got mixed reviews.

Our next book is *"Together"* by Julie Cohen, for discussion on [7 March](#). We meet after on [4 April](#), with us looking at *"Etta and Otto and Russell and James"* by Emma Hooper. We hope to be in Paisley Central Library again on [2 May](#) (dependant on availability) and the selected book is still to be confirmed. If you want to ask anything or to join us, please do message me, Dee Barnfield, via our u3a's Contacts page.



Finally, just a reminder that the 5th Paisley Book Festival is being held between [25 and 28 April](#). The programme will be announced shortly. This will be a terrific opportunity to see some world-class authors on our doorstep.

TRIVIA QUESTION

Which 2 months always end on the same day every year?

Bridge Buddies

Chris Dykes (Member's home, Paisley. Wednesdays 1.30-3.30pm)

We are an advanced beginners' group, slowly improving thanks to the expertise of our more experienced members. The group is currently full but if you are interested in learning bridge or are an intermediate player who wants to improve and would like to be added to our waiting list, please contact Chris via our u3a website Contact page.



Conversational Spanish

May Diver (Mondays 2pm-3.30pm: Kilbarchan Old Library)



The photo on the left shows our group leader, May Diver getting a big thank you. Our group has been busy reading the world's most translated non-religious book: 'The Little Prince.'

We have had a go at understanding and reading aloud '*El Principito*', the Spanish title of this short fable. It's a story for adults and children by French writer, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. The novella is now in 300 languages, with film and theatre adaptations of the story.

In between meetings, group members can access a Whats app group to practice everyday vocabulary. Mondays are a lot of fun. We don't worry if we make mistakes because we are all still learning. If you'd like to join in, please message me, May Diver, using our u3a's Contact page.

Crochet

Wilma McPherson (Tuesdays 11.00am, monthly)



The Crochet group is currently full but if you are interested in learning to crochet or you can already crochet and want to perfect your skills, contact Wilma via the Contact page on our website. If there is enough interest, it may be possible to set up a second group.

Film And Theatre

Kathy O'Donnell (Variable, as and when there are performances scheduled)

We enjoy attending various theatre productions at the Theatre Royal, Oran Mor and the Conservatoire. Members can also enjoy going to the movies and watching the latest films. Future events are being arranged and details will be made available shortly. If you want to come along, please email me, Kathy using our u3a's Contact page.

Garden Gang

Valerie Reilly (Generally 2nd Wednesday of each month)

The first two Garden Gang meetings of 2024 were indoor talks held at Johnstone History Society Museum. In January our subject was *'The Root That Never Ends'* – the story of liquorice, chosen because the group leader hails from Pontefract! In February, we explored Botanical Illustrations and as 'homework,' various members sent their favourite illustrations to be included in the presentation. As well as defining the difference between 'botanical illustrations' and 'botanical art' we looked at some of the best-known botanical illustrators through history.



Valerie Reilly (c)

This month, on [13 March](#), we are back outdoors again. Our first garden visit this year is to a three-acre walled garden at Gargunnoch House near Stirling. This is followed on [10 April](#) with an exploration of two Kilbarchan gardens. Our May destination will be part of a whole membership trip to Culzean Castle in Ayrshire. This trip, arranged by the Executive Committee, will be a great opportunity for everybody to enjoy the beautiful gardens. So we have a lot to look forward to and we are crossing our fingers for clement weather! Come and join us. Just get in touch with me, Valerie, via our u3a's Contact page.

Local History

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

Unfortunately, Katrina has had to step down as leader of the Local History group due to other commitments.

Do you think you would like to be involved in running this very popular group? Maybe two of you could work together planning an agenda and liaising with the other members? It's a great way to meet other members and to learn about the local area together.

If you think you'd like to be involved or simply want more information, contact [CHRIS DYKES](#) (group coordinator) via the Contact page on our website.

To save on washing up
PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR OWN CUP
to our monthly meetings. Free refills!

Lunch Club

Kathy O'Donnell (dates vary per month)

Ours is a sociable group which meets once a month. We go out together for a meal and enjoy a bit of conversation. We are open to trying food from different countries as well as traditional Scottish fayre. The photograph below shows several of our members at the January meet up in the Chaakoo restaurant.

Our February lunch get together was at Bella Vita, a family run Italian restaurant, in Mossspark Boulevard. The photo below shows the happy diners! Future lunch dates include [12 March](#) with a trip to the Bothy restaurant in Ruthven Lane. On [2 April](#) you are invited to join us at the Prancing Stag in Jordanhill. Please get in touch if this of interest to you. You can contact Kathy, using the Contact page.



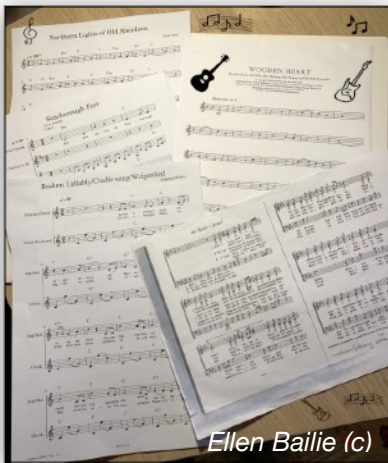
Allana Parker (c)



Bothy Restaurant (c)

Music Makers

Ellen Bailie (Thursdays)



Ellen Bailie (c)

During January and February, the group have been working with simple arrangements of 'Wooden Heart' from the German folksong 'Muss I Denn', 'Scarborough Fair' and Brahms 'Lullaby', with 'The Northern Lights (of Old Aberdeen)' as the next project. Members also enjoy playing pieces familiar to them, such as 'Dark Island' by Mike Oldfield, Bert Kaempfert's 'Wonderland By Night', music by Bob Dylan and folk songs. There's lots of fun, and laughs too when we all playing the same piece, and then the counting goes awry and we finish at different times!

If you are interested in joining us, please come along and see what we do. There is no audition, and the only expectation is you'll be willing 'to have a go'. Currently, we have members of varying abilities playing acoustic guitar, classical guitar, harmonica, mandolin, with some doing piano and keyboard. The Music Makers meet next on [Thursday 21 March, 11 April](#) and [9 May](#) where we will continue with some new pieces of music. We

hope to see some new members there too. For more details about our group, please go to the Contact page on our u3a's website.

Nordic Walking

Rod Ferrier (Usually one Tuesday per month at 10am)

What's better than walking for exercise? How about Nordic Walking? You can take your walking to the next level by trying this. Although there's no set route, we usually manage one Nordic Walking session per month. If you are interested please get in touch. The Decathlon store sells basic Nordic poles for £15, so it's not too costly. For more details, please email Rod via the website.



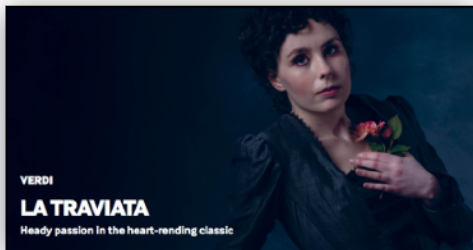
Opera Appreciation

Kathy O'Donnell (Variable, depending on performance schedules)

We are supportive of Scottish Opera's productions at the Theatre Royal. We also attend the talented students' productions at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Our members also enjoy the live cinema screenings of productions from Covent Garden and the Metropolitan.

March is a busy month for members of the Opera Appreciation group. Future events include:

1. *Friday at One* at the Royal Conservatoire on **8 March**. This is a concert to mark the 200th anniversary of the publication of Schubert's song cycle. This international Women's Day all female concert should be a real treat.
2. On **14 March**, we are attending *Scottish Opera's Highlights* tour in Johnstone Town Hall.
3. On **Friday 22 March at 6.30pm**, we are attending Mozart's '*Idomeneo*' at the Royal Conservatoire.



There is also interest in attending '*La Traviata*' in May. If any of these productions are of interest please get in touch with me, Kathy, via the Contact page on the website.

Outdoor Sketching

Kate Colyer (Tuesdays or Thursdays. Monthly)

Our last two meetings have been at the Burrell. The first was mostly spent looking at the collection and the second in drawing some of it. Our next outing will be to the Museum of Rural Life in East Kilbride on **Tuesday 12 March at 10.30**. NTS members free, concessions £9."



Kate Colyer (c)

WHAT'S ON AT A GLANCE

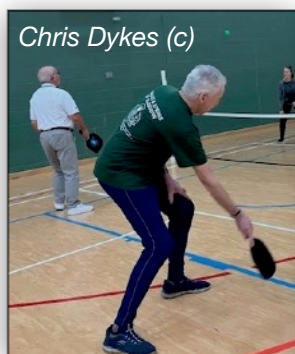
Trying to keep track of events, dates and locations?
Go to the "Events" page of our website to view our upcoming programme

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

Pickleball

Irene Keith (Monday 1pm-2pm, Onyx Leisure Centre, Linwood)

We continue to meet weekly and as our numbers have grown, we now use 3-4 courts regularly. Everyone is improving but most importantly have fun and a catch up over a cuppa after play. If you are interested in joining or would simply like to know more about what the game entails, contact Irene via the Contact page on our website.



Science and Technology

Bob McNair (Monthly, 2pm on last Thursday)

The first meeting of our new Science and Technology group was held in Paisley's Bianco È Nero cafe on [Thursday 25 January](#). Five people came along.

After an ice-breaker, we talked about what everyone would like to do in this group. One key idea was to start off by visiting places of interest. Given the small number of members, it would not be feasible yet to hire premises or arrange guest speakers.

Initial ideas for Science and Technology group visits included the Watt Institution in Greenock, Glasgow's Vintage Vehicles, and the Railway Training School at Larbert. So we met again on [Thursday 22 February](#) in Bianco E Nero to plan a programme of visits. Other Scottish u3as have well established technical groups and some of their members are willing to give talks. We discussed which subjects would be of interest. Anyone is welcome to join this group, whether you have a technological background, or not. If you'd like more details or want to come along, please message me, Bob McNair, on our u3a website Contact page.



***ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION
March and June***

Walking

George Baillie/Jane Hughes (Day varies)

The walking group has organised two more walks, in March and April. On Friday, [22 March](#), May McFadden will take us to Glengarnock. This is a circular walk with a cafe treat at the end. On Thursday, [11 April](#), George Baillie will show us the Forth and Clyde canal, from Kilpatrick railway station to Clydeside. This walk is linear - out and back. There is a cafe half way and a bus service, which gives folks an option if they need to leave early.



Forth & Clyde Canal walk



Lochshore Circular walk

Several walkers have expressed an interest and it looks like these will be interesting outings. We will be putting details of future walks on the u3a website. Please let me, Jane Hughes, know if you would like to join us. Just message me via our u3a's Contact page.

OTHER NEWS

The East Renfrewshire u3a's 2024 "Hatwalk" afternoon tea held on St. Valentine's Day, was a huge success. As you can see from the photos below it was well attended and the Paisley u3a had a table of 6. Proceeds went to the Prince and Princess Hospice.



REMINDER

u3a in Scotland Summer School 2024
Tuesday, 22 August, University of Stirling

<https://u3asites.org.uk/scotland/page/79029>

WHAT'S ON MARCH, APRIL & MAY

2 March 2-4pm : Local Art Sale
25 St. James St. In aid of FYF amputee charity

8 March-18 May: Teenage Kicks" exhibition
Glasgow Women's Library, Bridgeton. Looks at the everyday lives of 6 girls who grew up in the 1960's.

13-31 March: Glasgow International Comedy Festival
Various venues and shows to choose from

Sun. 13-Mon. 14 April : Ann Macleod Exhibition
Aurora Art Studio, Silk St, Paisley. (Free)

Sunday 28 April: Glasgow charity Kiltwalk.
Choose from 3 levels of walk.

1 May-28 June : "The Teardrop Explodes"
A Paisley Pattern exhibition
The Art Department, 2-10 Causeyside St.

EVERYDAY COMPUTER PROBLEMS?



Contact Andy Fairley via the contact page on the website. He will do his best to solve your problems!

GROUP UPDATE

Do you have an idea for a new group?

Want more information about one of our current groups?

Contact Chris Dykes, the group coordinator, via the website. She'd love to hear from you!

MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAMMES

Thursday, 7 March: "Barshaw Park Peace Garden" Irene McDonald

Thursday 4 April: "Chocolate" Valerie Reilly

Thursday May: 2: "Alex Gray, Crime writer" Sandra McGruther

Doors open at 13.30pm for a cup of tea and catch up. Meeting starts at 2.00pm