

CHIT-CHAT



East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF

[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)

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GOOSED



Who's being goosed here? Find out where it was all happening in *Groups*.

GOOD AS GOLD



Find out where this exotic creature can be found in *Picture Gallery*.

CHAT LINE

Chit-Chat needs readers to keep sending in pictures, anecdotes, funny stuff etc. You can send it to me at chit-chat@eru3a.org, or post it on the [ERu3a](#) page in Facebook.

MAKE CONTACT

Use the link incorporated in the *Chit-Chat* heading to access our website. By using the links in the [Contacts](#) section of the website you can access any of the post-holders listed there. Safe links to other websites may also appear in *Chit-Chat*.

The interest groups featured in *Groups* are just a few of those now available. They are all listed alphabetically in the [Groups](#) Section of the website. Facilitators can be contacted by clicking on the links incorporated in all the group headings.

If you don't have access to the Internet, phone 0743 712 3921 for information about groups etc.

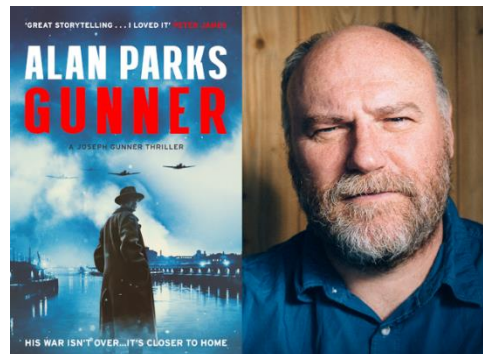
Jim Hamilton

THE BIZ

AUTHOR EVENTS

Gillian Hamilton, East Renfrewshire Council's Library Development Officer, has announced a programme of author events.

Alan Parks, will be at Clarkston library on Tuesday 7th October. He is the award-winning and critically acclaimed author of the Harry McCoy series, which has won the McIlvanney Prize for Scottish Crime Book of the Year, the Prix Mystère de la Critique award and an Edgar Award. *Gunner* is the first in a new and thrilling international crime series set during the



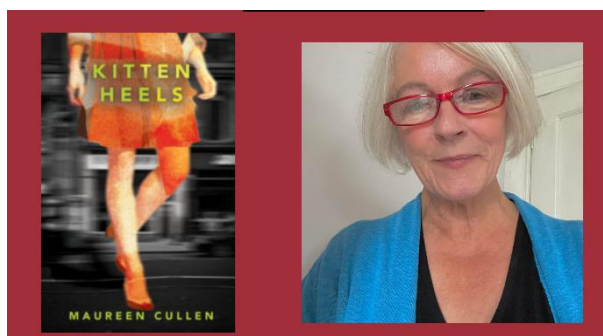
Second World War featuring Joseph Gunner. Alan worked in the music industry for over twenty years before turning to writing. He now lives and works in Glasgow.

Sarah Smith will be at Barrhead Foundry Library on Wednesday 8th October. She is a writer from Glasgow, whose prose and poetry have been widely published. Her debut novel, *Hear No Evil*, was shortlisted for awards by Bloody Scotland, the Historical Writers Association, and the Crime Writers Association. It was Waterstone's Scottish Book of the Month in February 2023.



Lesley McDowell will be at Clarkston Library on Tuesday 18th November for Book Week Scotland to share her latest novel based on the true crime case of Madeline Smith.

Maureen Cullen will be at Giffnock Library for a Book Cafe on Thursday 20th November. Her book *Kitten Heels* is a moving coming-of-age story, set in 1960's working class Clydeside and told from thirteen-year-old Kathleen's perspective. Dealing with issues of poverty, mental health, and the role of women. It follows Kathleen as she



finds comfort and support in the community of women around her — learning from the way in which these women find ways to grow, nourish and heal each other, despite hardships and institutional obstacles set in their way.

OUR COMMITTEE

Here are brief outlines of the members of the new 2025/2026 Committee. Compliance Officer Anne Barry is, not included as she was on holiday in China when the information was being gathered.

1) Mary Fyfe Chairperson & Business Secretary

Mary is the new Chairperson and she represents ERu3a at the Glasgow network of u3a's and the Central Belt u3a network. Mary will continue in her role as Business Secretary and she also facilitates the Sewing Group and is a keen gardener. but she is most well-known for her fabulous home baking.



2) Annie Wills Vice Chairperson & Membership Secretary

Annie has often been the first person that new members meet when they join East Renfrewshire u3a and gives them a warm welcome at the monthly meeting. Annie will continue to do this in her new role as Membership Secretary.



3) Alison Gordon Treasurer

Alison has vast international banking experience and we are very lucky that she has volunteered to take over the role of Treasurer.



4) Shirley Thorogood Hospitality Coordinator & PAT Tester

Shirley often calls herself 'the tea woman' but to the rest of us she has one of the most important roles!



5) Les Rigg Minutes Secretary

Les has been a member of ERu3a for many years and he is the facilitator of the Keep Moving and Golf Swing and Coffee groups. Les often hosts the new members table at the monthly meetings and helps members decide on which groups they would like to join.



6) Allison Kershaw Groups Coordinator & Webmaster

Allison is the facilitator of the Around East Renfrewshire Dining Group1, Quiz, Garden Visits, Tuesday Bridge and Friday Bridge groups. Allison was previously on the committee of u3a Scotland. She would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to set up a new group, even a short Pop-up group, or who needs help with using Beacon or to load a photo onto their webpage.



OCTOBER MEETING

At the meeting in the Broom Church on 15th October the guest speaker is Ian Gunn and his talk is entitled *From Sicily to the Sopranos.....and Beyond: The Global Menace of Organised Crime*. The doors are open at 1.30pm and the meeting starts at 2.00pm. Refreshments are served after the talk. If you can, please bring your own mug.

THE BUZZ

MONTHLY MEETING

This month's Guest speaker was Ian Matheson. His talk, entitled *A Storm from a Tea Party: Origins of the American Revolution* began with the 1765 Stamp Act, by which the Government in London imposed a direct tax on British colonists in America. The Act was repealed following riots in Boston, New York and Rhode Island but subsequent duties imposed on paper, lead, paint, glass and tea led to further protests and the infamous Boston Massacre on 5th March 1770. These duties were also repealed, except for the one on tea which of course led to the famous Boston Tea Party in December 1773.

On 20th November 1772 a pamphlet drawn up in Boston listed the rights of colonists, including legislative power and freedom from arbitrary power. A list of infringements of the colonists' rights included the British Parliament's assumption of power to legislate and raise revenue without the consent of the inhabitants, the payment of the Governor and judges from tax revenue, the Governor acting on orders of the British Parliament and the threat of colonists being taken for trial in the UK.



Ian concluded that there was a fundamental disparity between interpretations of the constitutional status of the colonies and a failure on both sides to understand each other's purposes, procedures and practices.

HEARTBEAT

Jason from Heartstart, assisted by David and Eilidh delivered a most informative CPR course, in which participants were shown several short films and were then guided on how to put someone in the recovery position, try out chest compressions on 'Resuci Annie'. They also looked at a defibrillator.

Thanks go to Norman for suggesting this course, which everyone agreed was superb.



Just over 20 members attended another fantastic and informative session on 22nd September, at which Jason was assisted by David, a volunteer who helps with the training of groups.

The course was taught using a simple, but really effective, four-step process in which the attendees watched a realistic video showing what to do in certain circumstances, before being talked through the process by Jason.

They then had to coach Jason through it, before getting some hands-on practice on putting someone in the recovery position, carrying out CPR, knowing what to do if someone has a heart attack, is bleeding badly or choking, and operating a defibrillator.



The big message the group came away with was that, whether or not they remembered all the steps, it was so important to just do something. If you ever get the chance to attend a similar session, don't hesitate. You really could save someone's life!

JAMBOREE

Teresa Joiner, a member of the u3a Climate Matters Internet Group Online (IGO) and of East Renfrewshire u3a has sent in some words about the Edinburgh Jamboree experience. The IGO spans the UK with 90+ members in all four nations and they meet over Zoom on the last Friday of the month from 10.00–11.30am. From time-to-time they also meet up in person, either for lunch and a walk

somewhere or for a summer school. In 2023 they met for four days at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in West Wales and this May they met for another Summer School at Warwick University.

At the Jamboree many people stopped at the stall to chat, take part in activities and take away some leaflets. 50% of people at the event who expressed an opinion were either concerned or worried about our climate. Thankfully, the two most anxious options (Scared/Terrified) only scored 27% of recorded answers. Many revealed that they are already trying to reduce their carbon emissions and their 'next steps' showed a determination to do more. The most popular actions already carried out were 'walk to local places' and 'use a reusable shopping bag'. By far the most popular next step was to 'delete old emails to reduce energy use' and 'offset travel carbon emissions'.

You can find out more details about the group at. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/interest-groups-online/interest-groups-online-groups/climate-matters?highlight=WYJtYXROZXJzIlO=>



GROUPS

AROUND THE WORLD DINING

Most of our globetrotting diners had a very enjoyable lunch at the American diner, NYC Bar and Grill, in Hope Street. There was a big choice of burgers, hot dogs, Mac'n' Cheese and Nachos. The service was efficient and friendly.





GARDEN VISITS

This month our jardinophiles visited the stunning gardens at the Carriage House, Blair Estate near Dalry on a beautiful mild autumn day towards the end of September. On arrival the owners, Caroline & Luke Borwick, offered the group a welcome cuppa and a slice of delicious chocolate cake.

The visitors were then taken on a tour of the impressive gardens, where Guinea fowl wandered about, and the new arboretum with one hundred and fifty specimen trees.





Afterwards the group had a light lunch at Dalgårven Mill before heading home.



Many congratulations go to Margaret Duncan, winner of the Garden Visits Group Tallest Sunflower Competition.



Here are last month's visitors lunching at Lochgreen Hotel, following their walk through The Pines in Troon.



LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

Led by Susan Hunter and with kind prior permission of the local farmer, the Group found and explored the site and remnants of Polnoon Castle, the surrounds of Craig Mill and Eaglesham Church Cemetery.



OUT AND ABOUT

Despite the light rain and poor visibility, our outandabouters had a most enjoyable cruise commencing in Balloch and proceeding up the River Leven to Loch Lomond as far as Inchmurrin, before returning to Balloch. The excellent commentary on board explained that the loch was formed at the end of the last Ice Age, about 12,000 years ago, and is the largest freshwater lake or loch in Britain. Not far into the loch the cruise crossed the highland fault line, which runs from Stonehaven to Arran and marks the boundary between the Lowlands and the Highlands. Many of the islands were once owned by King Robert the Bruce and used for hunting. Today red deer and wildcats are native to the surrounding shores. The Loch hosts 20 species of fish and the introduction of catch and release has increased the variety of birdlife in an area where golden eagles and osprey are often seen. On their return the outandabouters could see the *Maid of the Loch*, the last paddle steamer built in Britain. Built on the Clyde in 1953 and brought to the Loch in sections, it operated on Loch Lomond for 29 years and is now being restored.





After the cruise the outandabouters lunched in Frasers at Lomond Shores. After lunch some browsed the shops while others went for a walk, the rain having ceased. Some even managed to do both!

QUIZ

Many Congratulations go to the winners of the September Quiz Team '4 for Tea', Margaret, Myra, Alan and William who had an impressive score of 87.5.

READING

This month Group 3 read *The Secrets We Kept* by Lara Prescott. Based on a true story, it tells of the decades-long affair between Boris Pasternak and Olga, who inspired the heroine Lara in *Dr Zhivago*, and how two typists were charged with smuggling the book back into Russia, following its publication in Europe.

Afraid of its subversive nature, the Russians, wanted that book banned, but the CIA planned to use it to tip the Cold War in its favour. This true-life back story came to light in 2014, when the CIA's books programme was revealed.

Group 4 had a free choice month and Phillippa prepared a brief synopsis of all the books brought to the meeting.

The Journey by Abdul Musa Adam and Ros Wynne-Jonesw. True story of a seven-year-old from Darfur, brought out of the horrors of his home, and ending up working for therapy horses and racing horses, while being desperate to find out what happened to his brother.

The Vegetarian by Han Kang. A Korea woman with mental health issues becomes vegetarian, and a painter becomes obsessed with her in their bizarre relationship – beautifully written.

Star of the North by D B John. Thriller based in North Korea about an American woman who disappears, and her twin sister going undercover to find her. Quite horrific details about life in Korea.

A Fathers Story by Lionel Dahmer. True account from the father of serial killer – Geoffrey Dahmer. Concerned he had passed it on by working so much, drugs, etc, the parents blame themselves for how their son committed approx. 17 murders.

The Glassmaker by Tracy Chevalier. As a stone skips and jumps when skimmed on the water, so this historical novel jumps through time. Women were not allowed to make the beautiful glass, but were permitted to make glass beads. A well-written unrequited love story through the ages.

The Housemaid by Freida McFadden. Psychological easy reading thriller about Milly going to work for a perfect family. Lots of stories and truths come out – and don't jump to conclusions.

Portrait In Sepia by Isabel Allende. Raised by wealthy but cold grandmother, Aurora struggles with memory loss from early childhood trauma. In 19th Century Chile, she becomes a photographer uncovering family secrets, political conflict and the legacy of love, betrayal and resilience. A lovely read.

The Romantic by William Boyd. A sweeping fictional biography of an adventurous 19th century life spanning continents, wars, love affairs and shifting identities capturing the restless spirit of the Romantic era.

Persuasion by Jane Austen. Such an enjoyable read, great style and descriptions. A quick read, but the intricacies of the lies were well thought through. The insight into the role of women and family life was a strong theme. Captures a time past and always a joy to read.

THEATRE

Our Theatre group are looking forward to an exciting autumn programme of theatre visits starting with two matinees in Eastwood Park Theatre in October. The first, on the 11th, is *Legally Blonde* and then on Saturday the 25th it will be Giffnock Theatre Players' production of *Whisky Galore*. This latter is of particular interest as our Stage Craft Group are helping with the set, costumes and props.



WALKIE TALKIES

For their September outing the Walkie Talkies enjoyed a very pleasant walk from Crookston Station to Paisley. On the way, they called in to Ross Hall Park, where they admired the handsome building of Ross Hall itself and were given a potted history of its interesting past. After a quick look at the grotto, the walkers followed the national cycle route 75 to Paisley, where lunch was taken at the cosy and friendly Kennedy's Bar. A short bus ride and walk then took them back to the station at Crookston.

Despite an uncertain forecast, the weather was good, with the only rain shower taking place whilst they were having lunch.





Another very enjoyable few hours with a lovely group of people.

WALKING

In September, our walkers took the train down to Wemyss Bay on the Clyde Coast for a 5.5 mile circular walk – a route last enjoyed by the Group in May 2022. On arrival, they were greeted by the stunning interior of the historic Wemyss Bay railway station. Serving the village of Wemyss Bay in Inverclyde, the station also incorporates the Caledonian MacBrayne Ferry Terminal, which links the mainland to Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. Designed in 1903 by architect James Miller for the Caledonian Railway, the station is celebrated for its sweeping glass and steel curves and is protected as a Category A listed building.

Leaving the station, the group climbed gently uphill before the route opened out onto farmland and woodland paths, offering excellent views across the Clyde towards the Cowal Peninsula.



After descending back towards the seashore, the walkers stopped to enjoy a picnic lunch before returning to the station for the train home.



The weather was fine on both walking days, though some of the paths remained muddy after recent rain.

Next month, the group will be heading to Mugdock Park and Reservoir.

DID YOU KNOW ...?

LEG CRAMPS

According to the NHS Website Leg cramps are common, usually harmless, and only last a short time. They can happen at any time, but most people have them at night or when resting.

Cramps happen when a muscle in the leg tightens and causes a sudden pain that can make it hard to move. Lasting from a few seconds to ten minutes, they can affect the calf muscle, below the knee at the back of the leg and (less often) the muscles in the feet or the thighs. After the cramp has stopped, the muscle might feel sore for up to 24 hours.

During a cramp, stretching and massaging the muscle may ease the pain, although most cramps go away without you doing anything. Standing up and putting your weight on the leg with the cramp may also help.

[Paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#) can help to ease muscle soreness after a cramp, but they will not help when it's happening as they take too long to work.

Regular calf-stretching exercises may help to reduce cramps but may not completely stop them from happening.

How to stretch your calf muscles

1. Stand facing a wall and stretch out your arms until your hands can just touch it.
2. Make sure you're able to stand up straight and that your feet are flat on the floor.
3. Lean forward, pressing your hands against the wall until you feel your calf muscles stretch. Hold for 2 or 3 seconds.
4. Stand up straight again.
5. Repeat a few times for 5 minutes, 3 times a day (the last time just before bed).

If the number of cramps reduces, you might only need to do the exercise once or twice a day.

Leg cramps can sometimes be caused by:

- ageing
- putting too much strain on muscles during exercise, which can be worse in hot or humid weather
- pregnancy (usually in the later stage)
- certain medicines – for example, medicine for lowering cholesterol ([statins](#)) or high blood pressure (diuretics)
- not drinking enough fluids ([dehydration](#))

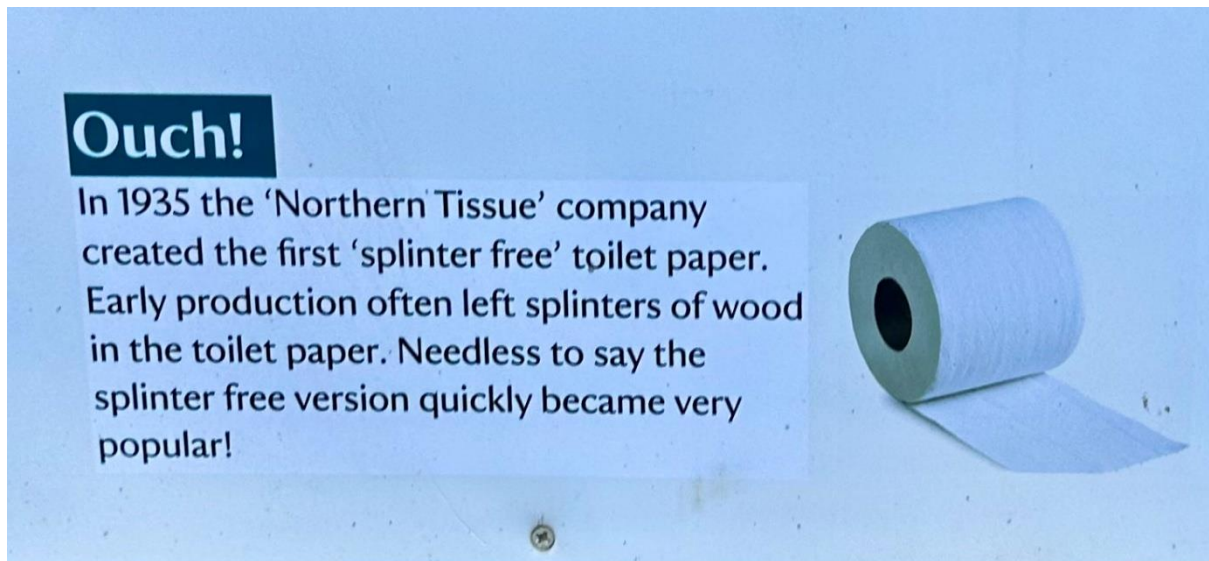
- liver disease because of drinking too much alcohol

The reason for some cramps is unknown.

WHIMSY

PROGRESS

Willie Dyer sent in this.



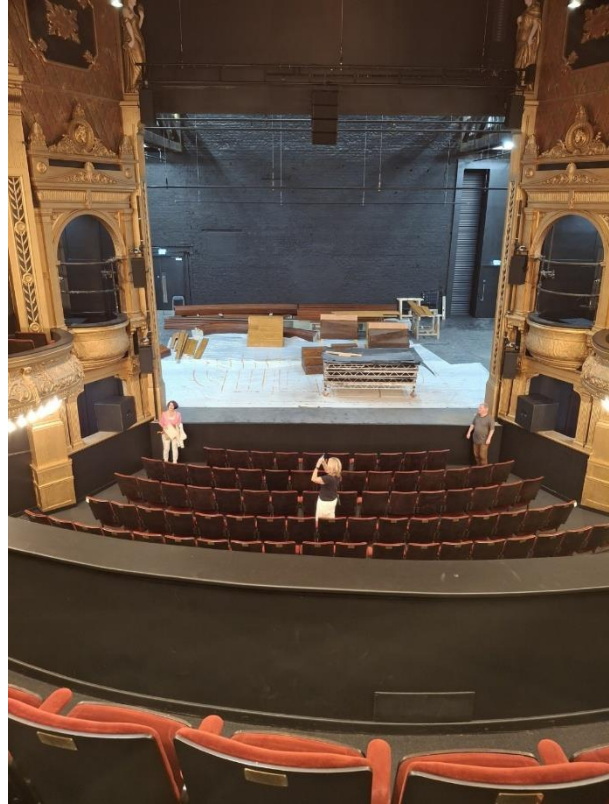
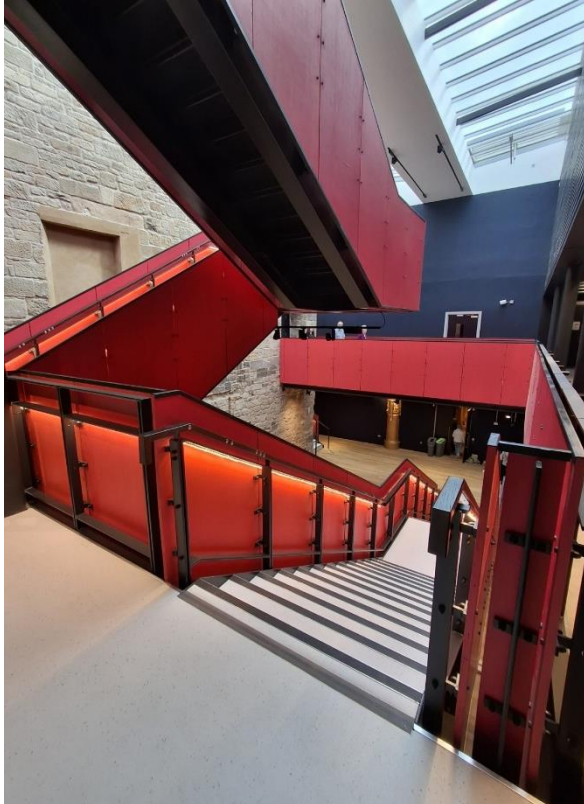
And Sandra Rigg posted this.

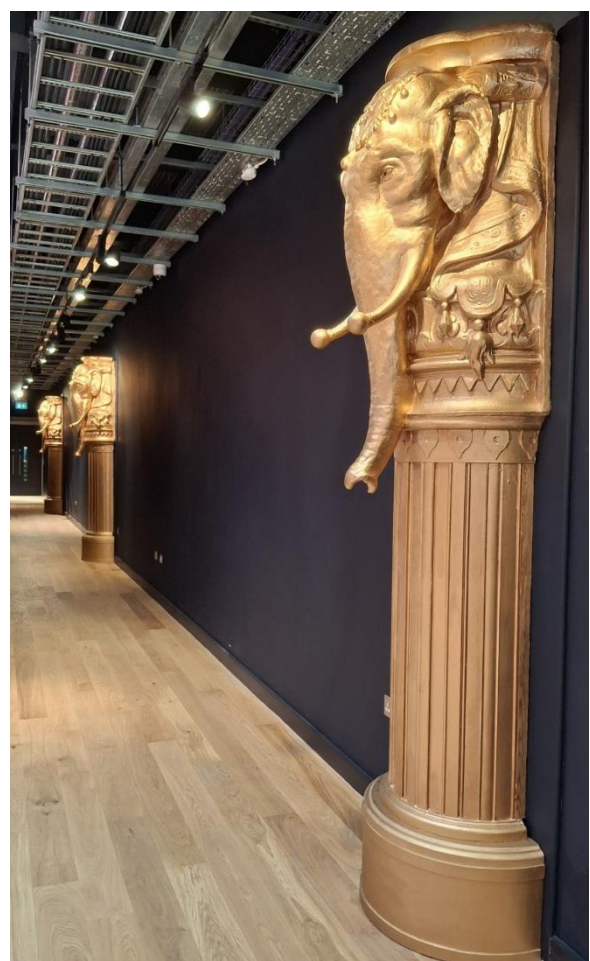
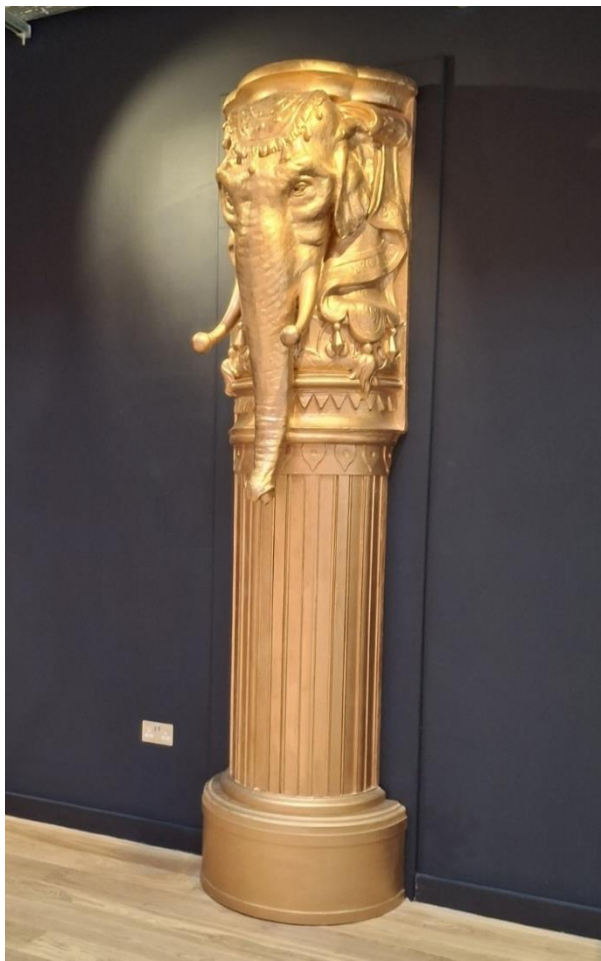
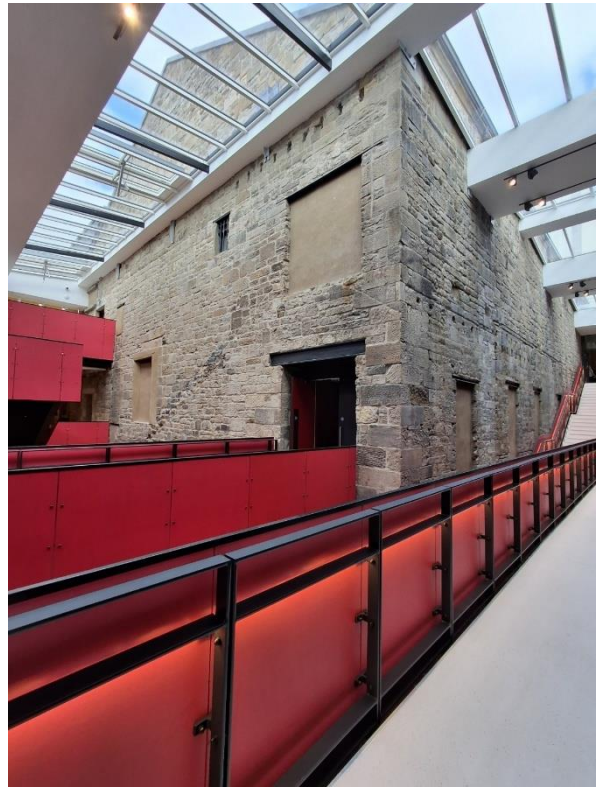
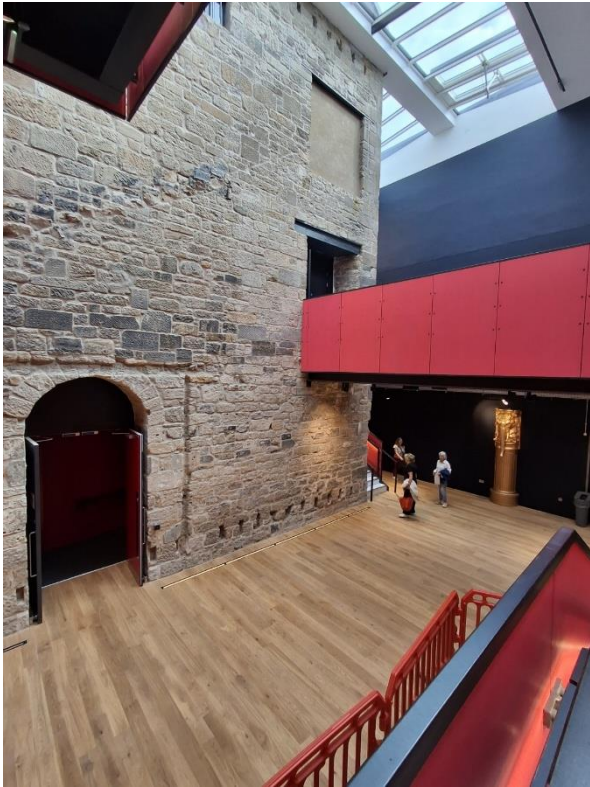


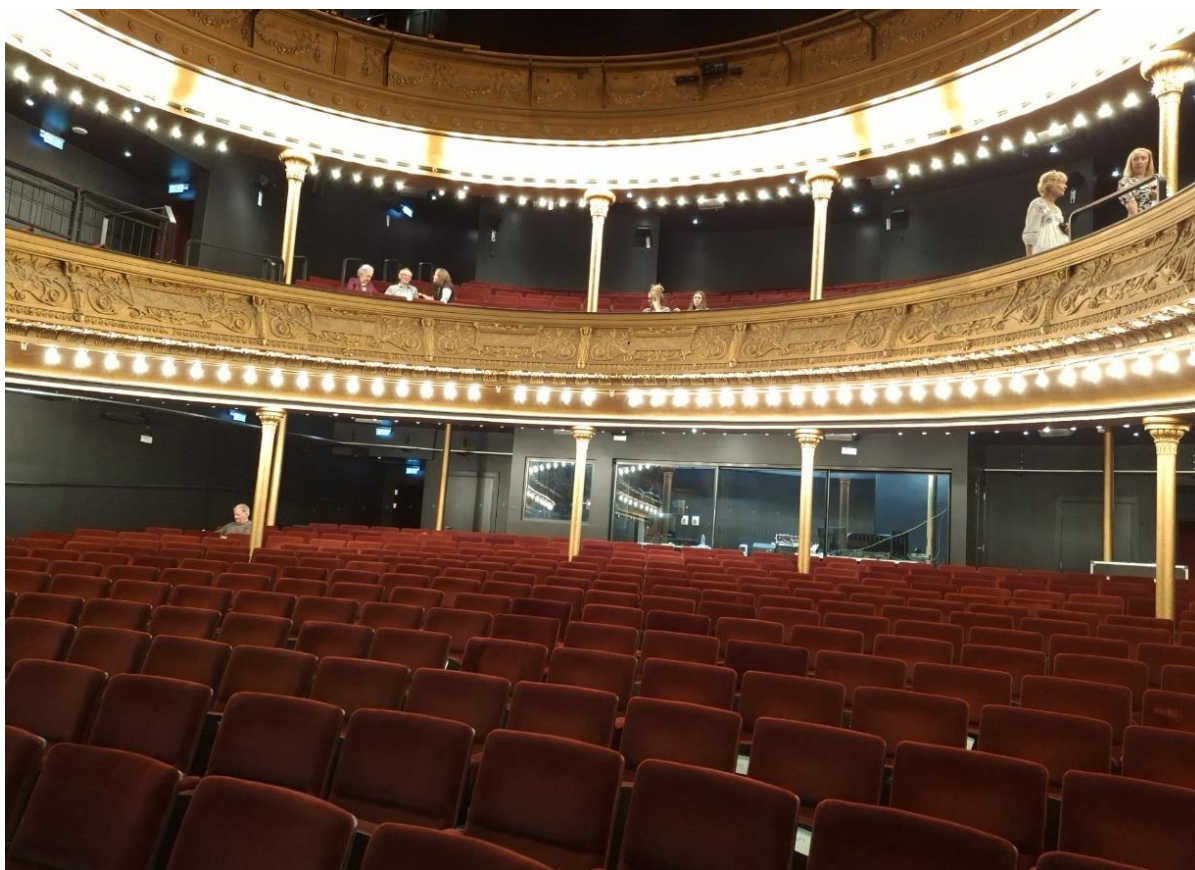
PICTURE GALLERY

CITZ GLITZ

Rosemary Bremner has been to the re-opening of the Citizens' Theatre and sent in these photos.







Small Acts of Love, the reopening production which finishes on the 4th October, has received great reviews. A very good review describing what the play is about can be accessed on https://www.whatsonstage.com/news/small-acts-of-love-at-glasgows-citizens-theatre-review_1694531/.

EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	15 th October	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Ian Gunn - 'From Sicily to the Sopranos.....and Beyond: The Global Menace of Organised Crime'
Wednesday	19 th November	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Barbara Graham - 'Andrew Carnegie'
Wednesday	17 th December	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Christmas Party - Clarkston Community Choir will provide the entertainment

SUPPORTING u3a



The [Riviera Travel Affinity](#) scheme donates 10% of the cost of holidays booked by members.

East Renfrewshire u3a doesn't endorse any commercial organisations.