

# CHIT-CHAT

**u3a**  
East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)  
SCOTTISH CHARITY No. SC044004

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## LIKE THE HAIR?



Find out where you might encounter this hirsute creature in *Groups*.

## CREATURE OF THE NIGHT



Get the low-down on this freaky character in *Picture Gallery*.

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## 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](mailto:chit-chat@eru3a.org), or post it on the [ERu3a](#) page in Facebook.

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## 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

### MARCH MEETING

At the meeting in the Broom Church on 15<sup>th</sup> October the guest speaker will be David Vennard, not the previously advertised Alasdair Eckersall. David's topic is The Glasgow Tobacco Lords and Slavery.

The doors are open at 1.30pm and close at 1.55pm. The meeting starts at 2.00pm. Refreshments are served after the talk. If you can, bring your own mug please.

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## THE BUZZ

### PROSTATE CANCER CHARITY COLLECTION

Grace Norwood of Prostate Cancer UK sent this letter thanking our members for the money collected at our Christmas Party.

Dear all at The University of the Third Age (U3A)

We want to say a huge thank you for raising money for Prostate Cancer UK at your Christmas party!

**Your incredible gift of £235.00 will be life-changing for men.** Whether that's funding lifesaving research, helping raise awareness across the country to get more men diagnosed earlier, or backing our vital support services like our Specialist Nurses helpline so that men and those who love them can get advice to help them on the path ahead.

We know it's hard work to fundraise, and on behalf of all the dads, sons, partners, and mates that we support, we can't thank you enough for taking the time and effort to do it for us.

Thank you again,



**Grace Norwood**  
**Community Fundraising Executive**  
Tel: 020 3310 7033  
Email: [grace.norwood@prostatecanceruk.org](mailto:grace.norwood@prostatecanceruk.org)

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### NEW MEMBERS FAIR

Do you want to find a new interest or join some new groups?

You are invited to join us at the New Members Fair on Thursday 5th March 1.00 – 2.30pm in the Columba Hall, Broom Church, Newton Mearns. More than 20 Facilitators will be there to tell you all about their groups and encourage you to join them. There will also be a cafe area and you are welcome to come along have

a cup of tea or coffee, some home baking and a chat about East Renfrewshire u3a. You are welcome to bring a friend too.

We would also like to hear from anyone who is willing to facilitate a new group or give a talk at the monthly meeting.

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## MONTHLY MEETING

The February meeting began with a Special General Meeting at which the previous decision to change our name from East Renfrewshire University of The Third Age to East Renfrewshire u3a was validated.

The guest speaker was Alison Hepburn of Glasgow Street Aid, a charity based at 56 Union Street that was registered in January 2021 to provide medical and welfare aid to homeless people and others needing help in the city centre. The self-funded organisation has 102 volunteers and a Robertson Trust-funded ambulance. Their experienced clinicians and qualified first responders patrol in pairs from 7.30pm to 4.00am on Friday and Saturday nights. In 2025 they dealt with 2,281 incidents.

Glasgow Street Aid collaborates with many other organisations, including the Marie Trust (running soup kitchens), Police, Fire and Rescue, the Glasgow Humane Society and Say Women (supporting sexual violence victims). One of the charity's main goals when set up was to help take stress off the ambulance service during COVID and attend to jobs that would not receive an ambulance due to priority or for those who were unable to access normal services.



Stuart McColl sent a thank-you message to Alison, and she replied saying she'd collected £289.06 in donations at the meeting.

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## **GROUPS**

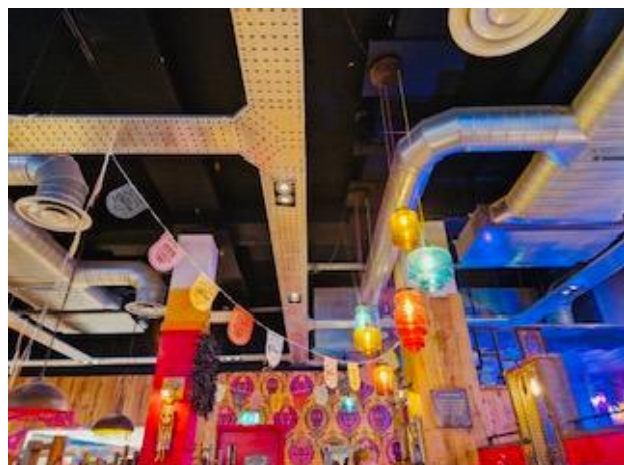
### **AROUND EAST RENFREWSHIRE DINING**

Group 1 had its first dining outing on 4th February at The Malletsheugh. Ten diners thoroughly enjoyed two-course meals. Starters included fabulous chicken pakora and tasty garlic mushrooms. Kormas, Tikkas, and Bhunas were all great, but the Bhuna seemed to be the tastiest.



### **AROUND THE WORLD DINING**

This month our travelling diners revisited the Mexican restaurant Topolabamba in St Vincent Street. It was as colourful as ever, and the express lunch was good value at £14.95. Tacos, Tostadas and Taquitos were the starter options and these could be followed by Quesadillas, large soft tortillas with fillings of your choice. Once again, this restaurant lived up to expectations!





## OUT AND ABOUT

Despite a dreich day, our outandabouters had a really enjoyable and interesting visit to Tennents' Wellpark Brewery. They met in the visitors' centre, which has a museum showing some of the history and old advertising campaigns plus a gift shop. Before starting on the tour, they had to don high-vis vests and hairnets and remove jewellery for



health and safety reasons. Their guide, Tony, was excellent and talked about the history of the brewery and the production process, interspersed with lots of Glasgow humour.

The Tennent family's association with brewing dates back to 1556 when Robert Tennent established the brewery. In 1885 a young Hugh Tennent discovered pilsner style beer while in Bavaria and returned to Scotland to launch the first UK lager at Wellpark. Every pint of Tennents contains 100% Scottish barley, water from Loch Katrine and hops from Germany. The only drink that outsells Tennents lager in Scotland is Irn Bru.

The tour started outside at the fermentation towers, where the visitors learned about the process and how the brewery propagates its own yeast. They then moved inside to the fully automated canning/ bottling plant, which fills 2,000 cans a minute with the average production being 5.6 million cans per week. As the Wellpark site is not large enough for storage purposes, all the beer is sent to a warehousing depot in Cambuslang for distribution. The brewery is committed to sustainability and has not sent any waste to landfill since 2012. Some of the by-products from their beer are used to provide animal feed.



At the end of the tour the outandabouters were shown how to pour the perfect pint and then enjoyed a complimentary drink of Tennent's lager followed by a lovely lunch at Tibo Bistro in Dennistoun.





## QUIZ

Thank you to Catriona for compiling and hosting the February Quiz which was won by 'The Team with No Name' Rosalind, Margaret, Myra, William and Ian.





Catriona will again host the Quiz on 11th August.

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## READING

Last month the Audio Reading Group discussed the books they had read and enjoyed over the holiday period, all giving rise to interesting discussions.

*The Eights* by Joanne Miller: 1920 and Oxford University's first-degree courses for female students

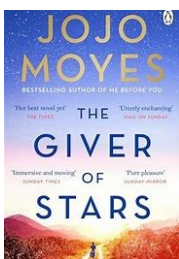
*Great Uncle Harry* by Michael Palin: Palin's research on his Grandfather's brother who fought and died in WW1

*The Dream Home* by T M Logan: A page-turning thriller!

*Peach Blossom Spring* by Melissa Fu: Epic story of a family fleeing the Japanese invasion of China in 1938.

*The Noble Path* by Peter May: Set in Cambodia in 1978 at the time of the Khmer Rouge atrocities.

Canadian author Shari Lapona's books were also recommended for those who enjoy thrillers.



Also last month, Group 4 read *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes. This novel about a group of women defying convention in depression era America, by delivering books on horseback through the remote mountains of Kentucky, follows a young Englishwoman called Alice. She marries an American man called Bennett, hoping to escape her restrictive life in England. Instead, she finds herself trapped in a stifling marriage in a small-town community.

Her life changes when she joins the travelling library to bring books and literacy to isolated rural communities. Alongside strong, diverse women, Alice rides

treacherous terrain and faces poverty, prejudice and domestic abuse from the people they serve.

The story concerns the transformative power of books, female friendship and the quiet bravery required to challenge injustice and claim freedom.

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## STAGECRAFT

Our Stage Craft group assist local drama club, Giffnock Theatre Players, with the set, costumes and props for their productions. Their latest, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, had a very simple set but provided the opportunity to showcase some of the club's fabulous period costumes, accumulated over the past 77 years. As part of its community commitments, the club regularly lends costumes and props to local schools and drama groups.





## TASTE THE WORLD

Following their January break, there was a good turn-out for our travelling diners' February lunch at Greek Restaurant Elia in George Square, where sixteen members enjoyed delicious food and the usual excellent company.



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## WALKIE TALKIES

For their February outing 11 of our chatty walkers 'stayed local' and had a walk across some of the bridges over the Clyde. It was a lovely cold but sunny winter's day, perfect for appreciating the interesting architecture and history of a few of the 23 Clyde bridges. Lunch afterwards was enjoyed in the Crystal Palace pub. Another very enjoyable morning with a lovely group of friends.





## WALKING

This month our hardy walkers faced a few uphill and downhill stretches on their six-mile circular walk through Glen Park and across the Gleniffer Braes Country Park. There was also plenty of mud underfoot, but fortunately everyone was suitably attired.

Starting at the small car park at Brownside Farm, the path led up through Glen Park, where the route took in stunning woodland views, the Lower and Upper Glen Dams and Craigiellinn Waterfall – a particular highlight.

Soon the walkers were on the Braes where they enjoyed lovely views over Paisley and beyond to the Kilpatrick Hills and Campsie Fells. As the weather wasn't that great the views were not as good as they could have been.



The Scottish Poet, Robert Tannahill, was inspired to write a song about the Country Park in the early 1800s, entitled *The Braes O' Gleniffer*. Sadly, Robert died an untimely death at the age of 35. At the time, his death was considered a suicide as he was found drowned in the shallow waters of the Cadden Burn in Paisley's west end. However, new joint research casts doubt on the long-held belief that Tannahill deliberately ended his life. There is now a view that his death was accidental due to him suffering from TB and suffering episodes of incoherent delirium resulting in him entering the burn by mistake.





On the return route back to the car park, the week one group were delighted to see a herd of highland cattle, which fortunately stayed well away. A few returned to Rouken Glen Park for refreshments afterwards.





Week 2 Walkers



The View from the Braes

## DID YOU KNOW ...?

### TALKING THE TALK

According to Professor Wikipedia, the **Indo-European languages** are a [language family](#) native to the northern [Indian subcontinent](#), most of [Europe](#), and the [Iranian plateau](#), with additional native branches found in regions such as parts of [Central Asia](#) (e.g., [Tajikistan](#) and [Afghanistan](#)), southern Indian subcontinent ([Sri Lanka](#) and the [Maldives](#)) and [Armenia](#). Some European languages of this family—[English](#), [French](#), [Portuguese](#), [Italian](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), and [Dutch](#)—have expanded through [colonialism](#) in the modern period and are now spoken across several continents.

Today the individual Indo-European languages with the most native speakers are English, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, [Hindi](#), [Bengali](#), [Punjabi](#), French, and [German](#). Over 3.4 billion people (42% of the global population) speak an Indo-European language as a [first language](#)—by far the most of any language family.

All Indo-European languages are descended from a single prehistoric language spoken sometime during the [Neolithic](#) or early [Bronze Age](#) (c. 3300 – c. 1200 BC). The academic consensus now supports the [Kurgan hypothesis](#), which posits the [Proto-Indo-European homeland](#), to be the [Pontic–Caspian steppe](#) in what is now [Ukraine](#) and [Southern Russia](#). By the time the first written records appeared, Indo-European had already evolved into numerous languages, spoken across much of Europe, [South Asia](#), and part of [Western Asia](#). Written evidence of Indo-European appeared during the Bronze Age in the form of [Mycenaean Greek](#) and the [Anatolian languages](#) of [Hittite](#) and [Luwian](#).

During the 16th century, European visitors to the [Indian subcontinent](#) began to notice similarities among [Indo-Aryan](#), [Iranian](#), and [European](#) languages. [Thomas Young](#) first used the term "Indo-European" in 1813, deriving it from the geographical extremes of the language family: from [Western Europe](#) to [North India](#).

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## WHIMSY

### A SAFE BET

This bit of nonsense was lifted from the Internet.

An old man at a bar challenges the bartender with a \$20 bet, claiming he can bite his own eye. Intrigued, the bartender accepts. The man removes his glass eye and gently gnaws on it, winning the bet. The bartender, a bit annoyed, pays up.

About 10 minutes later, the man returns with a bigger bet: he bets \$100 that he can urinate straight into a shot glass while running around it. Convinced that it's impossible, the bartender enthusiastically accepts.

The man tries but splashes urine all around, missing the shot glass entirely. Triumphantly, the bartender celebrates his victory. But a man suddenly yells angrily, 'Damn it!' When asked about his frustration, he groans, 'That guy just bet me \$200 that he could pee all over the bar and you'd be thrilled about it.'

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## PICTURE GALLERY

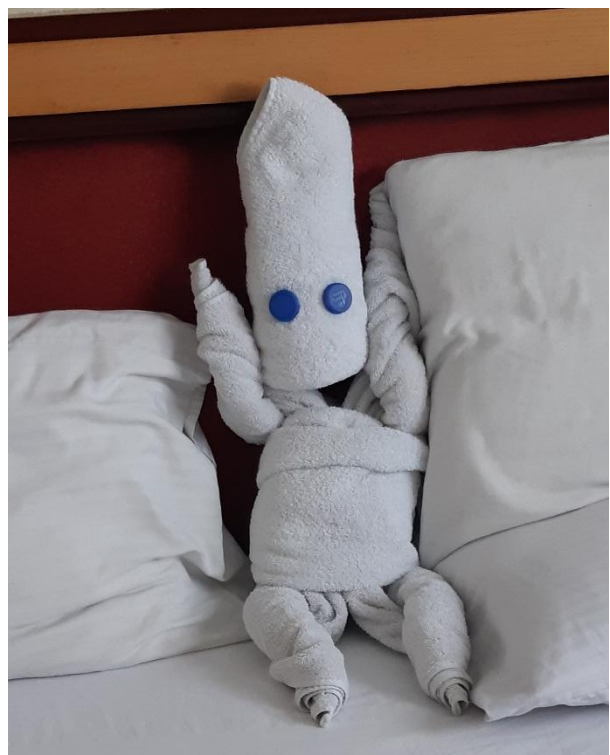
### NILE CRUISE

Brenda Mason sent in these photos taken on a recent cruise she and Denis had on the River Nile. It started in Luxor, where they visited the Valley of the Kings, as well as several temples dedicated to various Egyptian Gods and Pharaohs. They then cruised south to Aswan, where they saw the High Dam. A highlight of the holiday was a side trip to Cairo to visit the Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza, before going to the jaw-dropping Grand Egyptian Museum, which fully opened in November 2025, having taken 10 years to construct at a cost of around 1 billion \$US. It covers 500,000 square metres and houses over 100,000 artefacts, including the full Tutankhamen collection.





Brenda also included these photos of the fun ways the towels were left in their cabin by the cleaner each day.



## EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	18 <sup>th</sup> March	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns David Vennard – The Glasgow Tobacco Lords and Slavery
Wednesday	15 <sup>th</sup> April	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Rosalind Holmes – China: a hundred years of history through the lives of the women of one Beijing family.
Wednesday	20 <sup>th</sup> May	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Brian Young – The Secrets of Hadrian’s Wall
Wednesday	17 <sup>th</sup> June	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Scottish Air Ambulance Service

## 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.