

CHIT-CHAT

u3a

East Renfrewshire

THE NEWSLETTER OF

[EAST RENFREWSHIRE U3A](#)

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PILLORIED



Nothing to smile about here, you might think, but it takes all sorts. Get the full story in *Groups*.

POT HEAD



Here's someone you might want cross the street to avoid. Find out what's going on here 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

BRIDGE CLASSES

[Online Across Scotland](#) will be starting another Beginners Bridge course led by Anne Wickens, at the end of September.

Group email: [Bridge group](#)

When: Weekly on Friday mornings 09:30
09:30 for beginners and 10.00 or 10.30 for Play and Learn.
Starting in September and October

Cost: £15 to cover bridge platform and other expenses.

Classes for Absolute Beginners start on Friday 25th Sept 2026 at 9.30 am.
Refreshers Classes for people with some knowledge start on Friday 30th Oct 2026, at 9.30am. Refreshers may play in Play and Learn from joining until then, if they wish

Play and Learn Classes are for people with a basic knowledge and run all year. The new season will start on Friday 25th September at 10.30 am. This group plays weekly throughout the year. In the winter, fortnightly topic-based lessons start at 10.00. Members may request topics.

The aim is to get members to the level where they can enjoy social bridge either at home or their local in u3a bridge group, and for keener players to play in competitive clubs.

For more information, please go to the website <https://www.bridgewebs.com/u3aoasbridgegroup/>. If you wish to join or wish more information, complete the registration form at the right and side of the webpage.

Names are being taken on a 'first come, first served' basis for the next [interest groups online u3a](#) Beginners Bridge Course starting in June 2026. The online course has been developed over the past four years to ideally suit those u3a members who have never played Bridge before. It consists of lesson handouts, videos, quizzes and exercises that you study at home at your own pace.

At weekly Tuesday afternoon online meetings key points are discussed, and questions answered. This is followed by supervised practice sessions, where you play hands with other class members to reinforce the lessons you have learned. The course lasts for 24 weeks, and you should be prepared to devote approximately seven hours per week to completing it. By the end of that time, you will be able to enjoy Bridge games with friends and play in a novices Bridge Club.

Bridge is recognised as one of the most popular u3a activities because it is fun, it keeps you mentally active, is sociable and is a great way to make new friends. The beginner's course gets you off to a great start, but you will continue

learning, improving and developing your Bridge for the rest of your life – it's a never-ending and rewarding journey. Sign-up today.

When: Every Tuesday from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Group Size & Availability: Minimum 4, maximum 38 members

You can join this group, or add your name to the waiting list, via the [Beacon Members Portal](#). To join a group, you must first subscribe to [Interest Groups Online](#). This is separate to a local u3a membership and only costs £12pa. It allows you to join many other online groups too.

STANDING ORDERS – FINAL REMINDER

Please would you ensure that if you previously had a Standing Order payable to East Renfrewshire u3a, that you have cancelled this standing order with your bank.

All 2026/2027 membership fees were due to be paid by 30th June, so any future payments received by Standing Order will be treated as a charity donation.

JULY MEETING

At the meeting in the Broom Church on 15th July guest speaker Kayleigh Maclean will be talk about The Dogs Trust. The doors are open at 1.30pm and the meeting starts at 2.00pm. Refreshments are served after the talk. If you can, bring your own mug please.

THE BUZZ

MONTHLY MEETING

As your Chit-Chat editor wasn't at this month's meeting and no notes or photos were forthcoming, what you see here isn't the usual report about the meeting but a summary of what can be found on Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance (SCAA) website.

The SCAA mission is to ensure that no one in Scotland suffers or dies because medical help can't get there in time. Their two helicopter air ambulances and two rapid response vehicles operate from bases in Perth and Aberdeen. The nation's only charity air ambulance plays a crucial role in responding to life-threatening accidents and medical emergencies across Scotland.

In many cases, receiving medical care within the first hour – the "Golden Hour" – is the difference between life and death, which is why this life-saving service is especially vital in Scotland's most remote and rural areas.

SCAA works in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) as part of Scotland's emergency response network, covering over 30,000 square miles.

It all began in 2010, when discussions around the need for a charity air ambulance service in Scotland first took flight. After years of planning and fundraising, SCAA officially launched its operations in May 2013. When the inaugural helicopter, Helimed 76, took off from its base in Perth,



it was a monumental moment in Scotland's emergency care network. The team of highly trained paramedics and pilots quickly became a lifeline for many

In 2014, SCAA added a rapid response vehicle to its fleet, extending its ground support to areas where air transport wasn't feasible due to weather or other factors, and in 2015 the charity upgraded its helicopter to the more advanced EC135, which allowed the crew to work more efficiently in challenging environments.

In a major expansion in March 2020 a second helicopter, Helimed 79, was launched from Aberdeen Airport, doubling SCAA's ability to respond to emergencies, covering even more of Scotland's 30,000-square-mile territory. This second base, in Aberdeen, meant quicker response times in regions previously harder to reach by air, such as the Highlands, Aberdeenshire, and the Northern Isles.



Allison Kershaw passed on this letter from Diane McLean, Community fundraiser for SCAA.



GROUPS

AROUND THE WORLD DINING

Italy was the destination for our travelling diners on their return to Europe this month. Maybe not as adventurous as last month's visit to Africa, but everyone thoroughly enjoyed the food and service at Piccolo Mondo in Glasgow.

The Piccolo Mondo's story begins several years ago – Tony and Giuliana Pierotti, originally from Barga in the hills of Tuscany, moved over to Scotland in 1962. They have been in the hospitality industry ever since. The original version

of the restaurant was established in 1974 in Renfrew. The Glasgow restaurant opened in 2005. The name 'Piccolo Mondo' means 'small world' as they want people to meet by surprise in their restaurants, whether it be old friends or new ones.



GARDEN VISITS

This month, Willie Dyer led our garden visitors on a tour of the Peace Garden at Barshaw Park in Paisley. They stopped for a group photo next to our ERu3a White Rowan, donated in 2022. The sorbus is now established and although still small, it's looking very healthy.



Myra looked after everyone superbly well and provided refreshments in a shady area of the Community Garden, which was appreciated as it was over 25 degrees.

They left with American Blue tomato plants and will have a competition to see who grows the most tomatoes.



KEEP MOVING

The Keep Moving group welcomed a new instructor to the group recently. Val is busy getting to know everyone and helping the movers keep healthy with a mixture of movement and balance exercises to music. Some choose to bring along light hand weights to help with muscle strength and bone density, definitely NOT as heavy weight-lifting equipment 😊



They meet on Monday mornings at Newton Mearns Parish Church and have just had some new members join them. The class is full at present but the waiting list is open if anyone is hoping to join in the future.

LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

On a visit led by Susan Hunter to the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery our Local History & Archaeology Group had the very kind benefit of having Susan's grand-daughter Emma, as Volunteer Guide – a family effort!

The plan for the day (achieved) was to have three separate tours, firstly the origins of the museum, which comes under medical, then the general museum highlights and thirdly the Roman artefacts from the Antonine Wall. The group also had a look at the Egyptian artefacts, which will be a specific topic at one of the monthly indoor presentations in the near future.





OUT AND ABOUT

This month our intrepid outandabouters braved the rain and cold weather to visit Stirling Old Town Jail, where they were highly entertained by David Kinnaird who portrayed many of the historical figures associated with the jail over the years, including Jock Rankin, known as the Happy Hangman. They were equally appalled by the poor living conditions within the prison before reforms were carried out and by the harsh punishments meted out for minor offences, such as transportation for stealing a loaf of bread. One example of hard labour was the Crank Machine, designed by its inventor as an 'instrument of repetitive and meaningless toil'. By tightening a screw on top of the drum, guards could increase internal resistance of the gears, and consequently the effort required by the prisoners to turn the crank-handle. Because of the power this tiny object gave guards, they have been known in British prisons ever since as 'screws'.



Following their visit to the Old Jail the group had a very enjoyable lunch at Darnley's coffee shop, with good food and service provided by Niall and his staff. They left for home 45 minutes earlier than planned, due to the unrelenting rain, which nevertheless did not dampen their spirits.



QUIZ

Many Congratulations go to The Team with No Names, Margaret, Myra, William and Alan who are the winners of the June Quiz by just one point.



READING

Do you enjoy listening to books and want to listen to a more diverse catalogue, or do you have sight issues which make reading difficult? Then the answer may be right here with membership of the Audio Reading Group. The Group meets on the last Thursday of the month at 2.00pm, within the community room of Mearns

Library, to discuss that month's book and decide on the book for the following month.

Members currently require to subscribe to a commercial audio book service to be able to access a wide range of books almost instantaneously, as other services are either limited in selection or have lengthy time scales to access the books.

Still interested? then contact Anne McGuire at anne.mcguire@sky.com.

SPANISH IMPROVERS

Here we see the Spanish Improvers at their meeting on 23rd May at the White Cart. The group is doing well and would welcome new members.



STROLLERS

On 23rd June the Strollers started from the Malletsheugh and walked around the Maiden Hill area of Newton Mearns, on what was then the hottest evening of 2026 so far. They walked through the amazing wild flower garden on Ayr Road and had wonderful clear views of Glasgow City and beyond.

Strollers summer walks start at 18.30 on the first and second Tuesday of the month.



TASTE THE WORLD

Thirteen of our globetrotting diners enjoyed a June get-together at Turtle Bay, a Caribbean themed restaurant on the corner of St Vincent Street and Hope Street. On this, their second visit, everyone enjoyed the quirky atmosphere and rather good food. There is currently space for up to three people who would like to join this happy band of lunchtime diners.



WALKIE TALKIES

Our chatty walkers travelled to Irvine in North Ayrshire for their June outing. After a pleasant walk along the dunes path, and return along the beach, they enjoyed lunch at the Ship Inn. It was a great morning out with a lovely group of friends.





WALKING

This month our walkers took the train from Glasgow Central to Drumfrochar Station. From there they headed up to Overton, a suburb sitting above Greenock, in order to access the start of the Greenock Cut, an eight-mile walk along well-maintained paths and tracks. The route is mostly level and gives beautiful views across the Firth of Clyde towards Arran and north to the jagged peaks of the Arrochar Alps on the horizon.

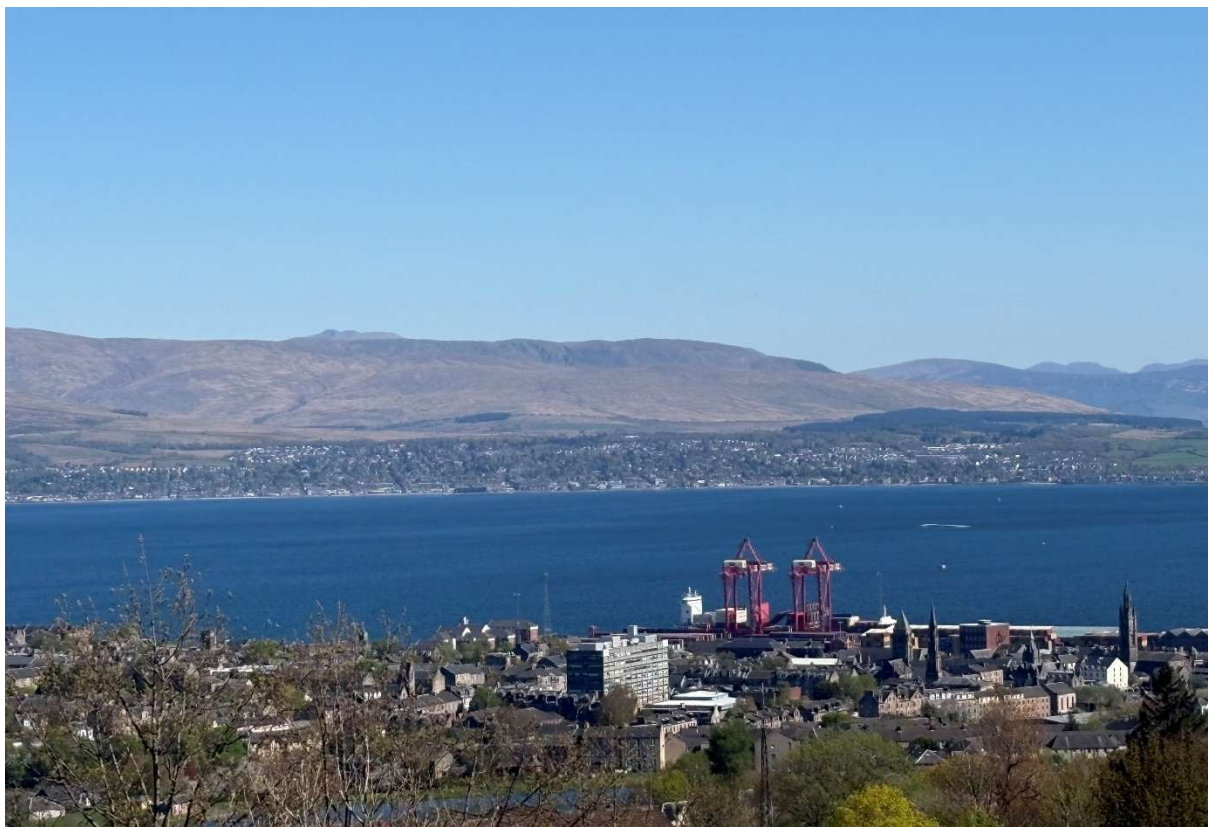
The Cut is an aqueduct built between 1825 and 1827 to supply water from Loch Thom to the mills and population of Greenock. It was designed by Robert Thom, after whom the expanded Loch was re-named. In 1971 the aqueduct was superseded by the Loch Thom Tunnel, and in the following year it was designated a [Scheduled Monument](#).



Just over halfway round the group arrived at the small visitor centre and the Ardgowan Fishery Café. The latter offers a selection of food, drinks and snacks, which everyone enjoyed.

Fully refreshed, our walkers continued on the route back to the station. On the way they passed the Memorial Well, in remembrance of the young men of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The 6th Argylls were given the

task of protecting the waters of Loch Thom. The well was a natural spring which the men turned into a drinking well and a plaque was placed at the site by the Darroch family, who built it. The well was restored in 2015 and given memorial status by National Heritage Scotland. It is currently undergoing further restoration.





DID YOU KNOW ...?

IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT

The NHS website includes a short section on night sweats

While it's normal to sweat during the night if the room or your bedding is making you too hot, night sweats occur when you sweat so much that your night clothes and bedding are soaking wet, even though where you're sleeping is cool.

Adults and children can get night sweats.

See a GP if:

- you have night sweats regularly that wake you up or worry you
- you also have a very high temperature (or feel hot, cold or shivery), a cough or diarrhoea
- you have night sweats and you're losing weight for no reason

You will not usually need treatment for night sweats, but the GP will want to check if you have any other symptoms. If the GP thinks a prescribed medication might be causing night sweats, he/she may prescribe a different one.

Causes of night sweats

The most common reasons for night sweats are:

- [menopause](#) symptoms ("hot flushes")
- anxiety
- medicines, such as some antidepressants, steroids and painkillers
- [low blood sugar \(hypoglycaemia\)](#)

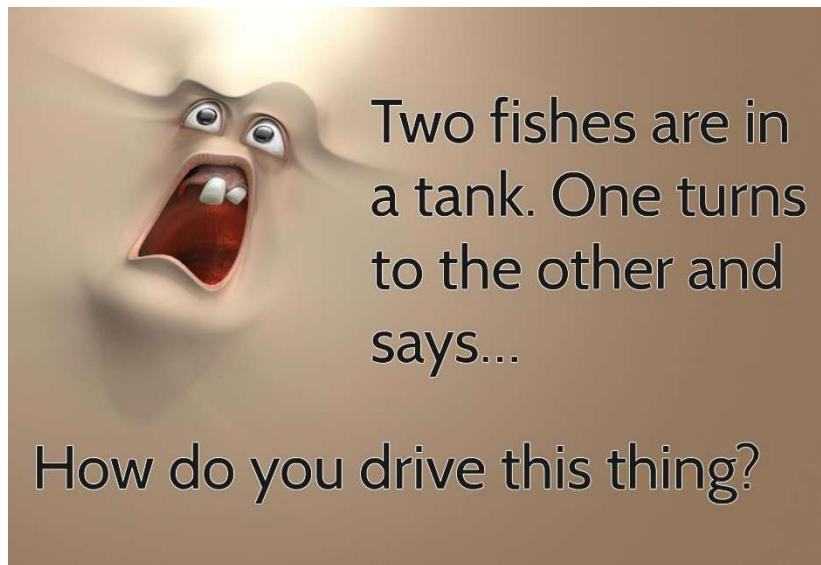
- alcohol or drug use
- a harmless condition called [hyperhidrosis](#) that makes you sweat too much all the time

Sometimes the cause of night sweats is unknown.

WHIMSY

PANIC ATTACK

This bit of nonsense was plucked from the Internet.



PICTURE GALLERY

BLOOMING GREAT

Myra and Willie Dyer both entered the Palette garden competition, representing the Friends of Barshaw Park, where they have volunteered for over a decade. The palette may only be a metre square but it takes a lot of planning and effort.

Both their entries were recognised and won awards – a Silver for Myra's *Bee Friendly Garden* and Gold for Willie's *Escape to Nature*. The Dyers also received many favourable comments from the public, which would have been reward enough, but to walk away with an award each was indeed very pleasing for them. Willie reflects that it's nice to think that perhaps over the years they have learned something about gardening.







EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT
Wednesday	15 th July	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Kayleigh MacLean - The Dogs Trust
Wednesday	19 th August	AGM and the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists in Broom Church, Newton Mearns
Wednesday	16 th September	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Catherine Crawford – Alzheimers Research
Wednesday	21 st October	Monthly Meeting in Broom Church, Newton Mearns Stuart Nisbet - Giffnock Sandstone- The Forgotten Story

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.