

JUNE 2025 NEWSLETTER



Chair's Remarks

Again, thank you to Ray Leakey for producing the last two newsletters. He has now handed over to David Alcock, who is our new newsletter editor. A huge thank you to David for stepping into this role whilst still dealing with his house sale before moving to this area. I am delighted that he happened to be at the meeting when I appealed for help.

Have you been talking about the weather? Of course you have! Although the reason is cause for great concern, and not everyone welcomes the constant sunshine, I hope that most of us have been able to take advantage of the glorious warmth of the past few weeks. We can't do any complaining about Argyll rain for a while!

This is the time of year that some of us welcome family into our homes, or go away on grandparental duties. I wish you much joy in seeing future generations of your families grow up. Please bring their latest ideas back into our groups to keep us all contemporary!

For those of us who will stay in these parts over the summer, we hope you can enjoy the groups that are still meeting. By the time this newsletter goes out, some of us will have enjoyed a trip on The Waverley. I was lucky enough to be on last Tuesday's tour, when CMS Thunderer saluted The Waverley in grand style. What a wonderful part of the world we live in. If only we could share the luxury of our peace here with other places.

Penny obanu3achair@gmail.com

[Penny's photo of *CMS Thunderer* is reproduced on the next page...]



Monthly Member Meeting Speaker:

David Hughes

David is set to describe the sights and experiences on a camping safari in southern Africa, taken in October last year - a far cry from his earlier role of research and teaching at the SAMS marine laboratory! 3rd June, Corran Halls, 10:30 for 11am.

U3A in Scotland AGM, Tuesday 17 June, 11am-3.15pm

This event will take place in the Clarise Pears Building of Glasgow University at 90 Byres Road, G12 8TB. It will be possible to attend either online via Zoom, or in-person. It will include an address by Colin Smyth MSP on “Why we need a Commissioner for Older People”, and also by Bella Kerr of “[Generations Working Together](#)”.

If you'd like to attend, please contact obanu3@gmail.com in the first instance.

Scottish Jamboree - A Scottish Celebration of Learning & Fun

A reminder: all-Scotland u3a Jamboree takes place on **Friday 29 August** at Edinburgh Napier University's beautiful Craiglockhart Campus. This is your chance to dive into the vibrant world of u3a activities from across the country. Many u3a groups will share their skills and experience and it's hoped that members from all over Scotland will share in the gathering.

- Connect: Meet fellow u3a members, catch up with old friends, and make new ones.
- Discover: Try your hand at exciting new activities or enjoy familiar favourites.
- Enjoy: Most importantly, have a fantastic time celebrating

Oban U3A Group reports (click the Group's name to go to its webpage)

[Art visits](#)

Nothing is scheduled for June and July, but please get in touch with Joy if you've got some thoughts about Studios/Exhibitions you'd like to visit in August with [Artmap Argyll](#). Let Joy Sullivan know if you can offer a lift to another member, or if you'd like a lift to a venue.

Bridge Group

We continue to meet weekly. Having mastered the basics of bidding, we are now trying to improve our play both as declarer and in defence. There are SO many numbers to remember - the rule of 7 is our latest but easily confused with the rule of 11 or rule of 14! Anyone is welcome to join us for a relaxed afternoon of Bridge but please contact Sue first.

Creative Writing Group

The Creative Writing Group is a light-hearted bunch of people who are invited to write a piece for each meeting on any subject of their choice, prose or poetry. A number of prompts are given, but otherwise we use our imagination, of which we usually have plenty. Everyone has a story inside them! We generally meet on the island of Kerrera, but sometimes in members' houses on the mainland.



Another fun thing we do is to invite a member to bring a 'Mystery Object', which is only uncovered when a timer has been set for ten minutes. Scribbling begins immediately as we describe our reaction to the object. A recent MO turned out to be a child's rattle, woven at Kilmartin House Museum from willow and containing some

small stones. When we want to be, we can be really creative! We'd love to have more members, so if you're interested do get in touch.

Discussion Group

There's no update this month. Please see details of meetings on the website.

French Conversation Group

The Group meets every Friday afternoon in the Lancaster Hotel and now would be a very good time for new members to join as we're about to start reading a new book. We're a friendly, relaxed group and welcome people with intermediate and above conversational French.. We will soon be taking a summer break, our last meeting being on June 27th and restarting on 15th August. Please contact either Anne-Marie Robertson or Kathy Murgatroyd either at the monthly coffee mornings or via the Oban u3a website if you would like more information.



[Gardens and Wildflower Group](#)

There will be a visit to Dal an Eas garden near Kilmore at 2 pm on Monday 16th June, opening for us by private arrangement. A donation of at least £5 is requested to go to the owner's favoured charity. The owner, Mary Lindsay has offered refreshment, and an extra donation for this will be appreciated. We were very well looked after last time. The garden is varied, colourful and extensive, including a delightful large meadow with orchids which we hope to see in flower. We were lucky to see butterfly orchids last time. Group members will be emailed with directions

nearer the time - a reply will help with the catering. Meantime, let's hope for good weather on the day!

[Geology Group](#)

This month a couple of talks on video via YouTube from past monthly talks given at the Glasgow Geological Society which may interest you:

- [The Geology of Colonsay:](#)
- [Tectonic Deformation in the NW Highlands](#) - a deeper look into the ideas we gave last month
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In addition, here are two updates for the Life Story series:

- [First breaths of a hospitable Earth: The early history of oxygen updated - perhaps;](#) an editorial + open access paper in 'Nature'
- [Archaean oxygen oases driven by pulses of enhanced phosphorus recycling in the ocean](#)



An article in 'New Scientist' gives a new angle on the origin of complex life, but beware you need a subscription to New Scientist to read the full text

[A whole new world of tiny beings challenges fundamental ideas of life](#)

Finally, for the more adventurous, how about a visit to Papa Stour in Shetland - dramatic coastline of faulted and folded

Devonian rocks, with multiple sea caves, all best seen from the sea.

[German Group](#)

The German group continues to meet at Graham's house 10:30 to 12:00 on Thursdays. It has a very wide range of abilities, and could easily take a couple more members. We are reaching the end of the book "How to be a German in 50 easy steps", and are searching out a new book.

Mostly the group is talks, reads and listens. Despite the Convenor's enthusiasm for grammar, he has largely failed to infect the members.

[Mahjong Group](#)

We meet every Monday afternoon at the Royal Hotel, 2pm. We don't take ourselves too seriously, and it's very easy to learn the basics.

[Out and About Group](#)

There's no update this month. Please see details of meetings on the website.

[Pickleball - Competitive Group](#)

We've had several Competitive Pickleball group sessions in May. We generally play four or five 12-minute periods, and change partners and opponents randomly at the end of each period. Instead of playing to 11 points, we carry on playing for the full period, and record the number of points won. The total number of points won at the end of the month determines that month's winner!

We have also trialled occasional 15-minute drill periods at the start of the session, offering the opportunity to practice dinking, drop shots, executing and returning lobs, and other elements of the game.

[Pickleball - Recreational Group](#)

The recent change from one to two U3a Pickleball groups (Recreational and Competitive) has now been running successfully since implementation at the beginning of May. The Recreational group meets on a Monday morning, at Atlantis Leisure, and has been averaging an attendance of seventeen players. The players have mixed well together creating an enjoyable environment to play pickleball. One new player has recently joined as well.

[Jane Austen Short Course](#)

We'll be discussing *Emma* on Wed. 11 June at 4pm in Joy Sullivan's home. July will see us on the last of her completed novels, *Persuasion*. All welcome.

Poetry Reading Group

We meet next on Tuesday 3rd June at 2.00. There is no theme for this month, so please bring/send to Maurice poems of your choice. This will be our last meeting until September: I look forward to seeing those of you who can make the 'live' meeting. Please let Joy know if you're able to come.

Reading Group 1 - General

Our Reading Group has just been treated to a visit to Kerrera at the invitation of Sue, one of our members. We met in the Waypoint restaurant (on the day they're closed) and discussed *Lost for Words* by Derec Longden - we're reflecting on the realities of ageing!

Reading Group 2 - Crime

The Group will meet at 5pm on Thursday 12th June at the Falls of Lora Hotel, Connel, to discuss 'The Other Americans' by Laila Lalami.

Reading Group 3 - Fact and Fiction

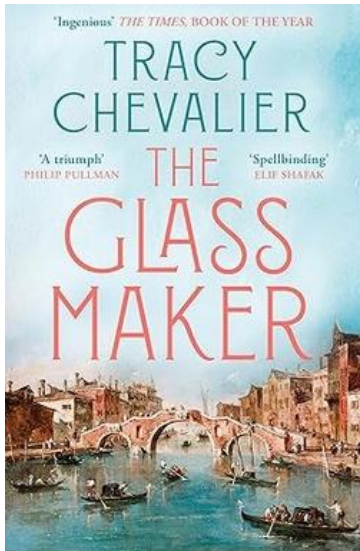
The Bookbinder of Jericho by Pip Williams (2023) : The novel was based on archival material located in the Oxford University Press, discovered when the author was researching her first novel 'The Dictionary of Lost Words'. The Bookbinder story focuses on the women in the OUP bindery during the Great War, including a number of real people directly connected to the OUP or Somerville College.

This story is about the lives of twin sisters, Peggy and Maude, and their friends and neighbours, but is really about 'Women' - women who worked and those who were forced to flee during the war, women's rights and struggles for recognition and equality, women who chose to go to the front line despite all the obstacles and barriers, as well as those who stayed at home, grieving, waiting, hoping. Or like Peggy reading, studying and striving for an education denied to her by her class, status and position in life.

We all felt that the various characters were beautifully drawn and wholly credible. The arrival of the Belgian refugees in Oxford, following the destruction of Leuven, and the love story between Bastiaan and Peggy was beautifully crafted. We all thought that Maude, the autistic twin with echolalia, was utterly delightful and her growing independence rang true. The story was told through the eyes of Peggy and followed a traditional, seamless trajectory, a bit of a relief from the non-linear narrative, increasingly common in contemporary literature.

This novel about the Great War was an easy, accessible but surprisingly unsentimental read. The horrors of war became apparent via Bastiaan and Lotte's 'stories' and Tilda's letters, but the main focus in this book was on the printed word and the hidden riches therein. Peggy's all-consuming passion for literature and the printed word comes to fruition when she finally gains a scholarship to Somerville College in 1920.

[Reading Group 4](#)



We meet every fourth Thursday of the month, at 2-4pm at the Convenor's house in Ganavan. The house is accessible. At our last meeting, we had read "The Glassmaker" by Tracy Chevalier, and this was enjoyed on several different levels, with a lively and interesting discussion taking place. We also briefly discussed a previous read: "Maurice and Marilyn", which led to some diverse responses and some surprises. Our next meeting will be on 26th June, and we will be reading "Travels with a Donkey" by RLStevenson, which should be a change to a classic style by an established and well-known author. If you are interested in joining us, please come along and contribute to a wide

variety of books in a friendly and relaxing setting.

[Science and Technology Group](#)

There's no update this month due to the summer break. Please see details of meetings on the website.

[Scottish History Group](#)

We will restart in September.

[El Grupo Español](#)

Al momento estoy seguro que el grupo Español sienten que esten en el Costa del Sol a causa del buen tiempo que estamos disfrutando aqui en Escocia. A pesar del calor inusual, continuaremos a reunir en el hotel Lancaster cada miercoles.

At the moment I am sure that the Spanish group feel that they might be in the Costa del Sol on account of the good weather we are enjoying in Scotland. Despite the unusual heat, we will continue to meet in the Lancaster Hotel every Wednesday.

Table Tennis Group

The group meets at Atlantis at 2.00 on Monday afternoons and is looking for new players. The charge per session is currently £2.50. Players of any level, including beginners, are very welcome to join us for some fun and light exercise. (Note - closed for school summer holidays 1st July to 14th August)

Ukelele Fun and Sing-a-Long Group

The Group plans to meet throughout the year and warmly welcomes new members of all levels of expertise, including beginners.

No ukulele? Members have kindly offered to bring along ukuleles to get you started, and tuition is at hand from our friendly group. We sing as we play our

ukeleles and enjoy the craic at tea break. So, why not join us?

If you're intending coming along, please text me if you have my number or contact me on the email address at the bottom of the page. Due to holidays, we may not meet every Tuesday - it would be good to see you - Tuesday evenings, 7 till 9, Congregational Church, Tweeddale Street, Oban. (Just up from Chalmers shop. Enter street level, middle door.) Membership of u3a from 31 May £5. £4 per evening. Helen Anderson.



Walk and Lunch Group

The Walk and Lunch group is planning a walk towards the end of June, but the destination is under review due to the ferry/cafe times. U3a Members might also wish to join the 10k walk (or

run) starting at Oban Hospital on 8th June - details on your left!