

## JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER



[obanu3a@gmail.com](mailto:obanu3a@gmail.com)

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### Chair's Remarks

I hope you have managed to get out and about during our recent lovely weather. What a boost to see the sun! Whether you spend the Summer gardening, playing with children or holidaying in exotic locations, we will still be here when you have the time. However, be aware that some of our groups will not be meeting again until the Autumn.

Our Annual Open Morning will take place on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. Come and see all the opportunities available for you to exercise your brain or muscles. This is a perfect time to suggest that your friend or neighbour has a look at what we have to offer.

Following the Open Morning, we will hold our Annual General Meeting. Formal announcements and nomination forms will soon be wending their way. Are you interested in joining the committee? We are still looking for folk with computer skills to help with membership but enthusiasm is the most important quality! Have a chat with one of the Committee members at a coffee morning or [drop me a line](#).

Sue  
Interim Chair

### Welcome to New Members

This month we are delighted to have Bruce, Josephine, Lyn, Paul and Tony join us.

### Monthly Member Meeting: David Alcock



Chinoiserie was all the rage in the 18th and early 19th centuries. What sources were available to the enthusiastic gardener? What were the results? How did this compare to the real thing? Why did Chinoiserie give way to Japonisme, and what's the difference? What of Scotland? The talk will touch on all these issues. David was formerly a volunteer at Biddulph Grange, Staffordshire, which boasts a Chinese-style garden dating from the early 1850s, the most ambitious of its kind prior to recent times.

**National U3A Talks** - Do you know that U3A nationally offers a range of talks online - some current offerings you can sign up for include Flight, Artificial Intelligence, Victorian Painting, and the Venetian Lagoon, among others - see <https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/events/educational-events>

### Third Age Trust Marketing Plan

The Trust is aiming at raising the public profile of the u3a movement. As part of this a new PR agency has been appointed and they need your help. If you have stories from members who'd be willing to feature in the national press they'd love to hear about it.

Key themes for the coming months are

- finding community and purpose through u3a
- how u3a helps to combat loneliness in later life
- learning something new in retirement through u3a

The Trust can be contacted at [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk)

**Oban u3a Group Reports** (click the Group's name to go to its webpage):

#### [Art visits](#)

The [Open Draw with Renuka](#); The Rockfield, Oban  
Last Friday of the month (29 May) 5.30 - 8.30p.m.

[Film-making with Alasdair Satchel](#): a 6 week online course for adults;  
Tuesday evenings 7.30 – 9.30pm 26th May – 30th June

**Fish Parchment making and Bookbinding on Iona:** 13th September to: 16th September. Mull, (Iona Village Hall) - A unique bookbinding workshop in a unique place. The course begins with making our own fish parchment using fish caught locally and ethically in the waters around the island by our local fisherman. This is a CHARTS event - for future CHARTS events, please see: <https://www.chartsargyllandisles.org/events/>

**RSA200 Moving Image Programme film screenings:** Culture Above and Beyond - Part 2; An Tobar, Tobermory, Mull - Mon, 1 Jun - Fri, 19 Jun.

A date for your diary: The 19th annual Artmap Argyll open studios trail takes place from Friday 21 August to Monday 31 August 2026

### Astronomy

It has been confirmed that our group will be meeting in Corran Hall with several dates and times to be decided by interested members (email to follow this week). Our first meeting will likely be in late June as many folks will be traveling during the summer holidays.

Also, if you are interested in a map of the night skies for June, and a possible merit badge for binocular observing on your own, please send me an email to: [e.picklosmith@gmail.com](mailto:e.picklosmith@gmail.com)



### [Bridge Group](#)

We continue to meet weekly to exercise our little grey cells while playing relaxed social Bridge. A new group of beginners will be joining us on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm in Kilmore Hall. Anyone of any standard wishing to come along is welcome but please let Sue P know.

### [Craft Group](#)

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

### [Creative Writing Group](#)

Creative Writing can't be run if you're on holiday  
Just sitting somewhere in the sun and swigging Beaujolais!  
So if you wonder where we've gone please try hard to remember  
That we're on our summer break and will restart in September!

Look forward to seeing you then, raring to go and full of ideas!

### [Discussion Group](#)

The Discussion Group continues to sort out the world on the first and third Thursday of every month and is well attended, but still no space for new members. The lunch held for the conveners was much appreciated.

### [Drama](#)

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

### [French Conversation Group](#)

The French Conversation Group meets every Friday afternoon, during school term times, in the Lancaster Hotel dining room. Our last meeting before our summer break is on June 26th, and we will return after the school holidays on August 21st. If you would like to join us, we still have a few spaces left for new members of intermediate French conversation level or above. For more information, please contact either Anne-Marie Robertson, or Kathy Murgatroyd at the monthly coffee mornings, or Kathy via the Oban u3a website.

### [Gardens and Wildflower Group](#)

It is hoped to have a visit to a Lismore garden towards the end of June. Planning is underway.

A visit to Achnacloich Garden on a Saturday in the near future is thoroughly recommended as it is at its best at the moment. Saturdays only. £5 donation to charity via Scottish Gardens Scheme.

### Geology Group

During the 'summer recess months' for the group we will try and provide some interesting ideas to further our coverage of the topic presented during the winter season. This month may we point members to the website and a specific webpage: <https://www.geologybites.com/alec-brenner> with the title 'When Tectonic Plates First Moved'. This takes us back to the early stages of the formation of continental crust that we met in the first of our Geology of Scotland sessions. Alec Bremner has researched the palaeomagnetic evidence for one of the oldest known cratons, the Pilbara region in Australia, going back to 3.5 billion years ago, contrasting it with the Kaapvaal craton in Africa. You may find other podcasts of interest in this website – worth exploring.



*The ancient red rocks of the Pilbara region, Hamersley Ranges, Western Australia, deposited c. 2.8 Ga on the underlying craton. Photo: Alastair Fleming*

### German Group

Die Deutschgesprächsgruppe trifft sich wochentlich bei Graham, Donnerstags 10:30, obwohl wir bald eine Sommerpause machen. Am anfang chatten wir über eine vorausgewälte Thema, z.B nächste Woche „Was findest du total überwertet das viele Leute gern haben?“ Dann lesen wir ein Buch, aber leider

haben wir „Emil und die Detektive“ jetzt zu Ende gelesen. Zu letzt schauen wir ein Video an und quatschen ein bischen darüber.

The German conversation group meets weekly at Graham's house, Thursdays 10:30, but soon will have a summer break. We start by chatting about a preselected theme, eg next week, "What do you find totally over-rated that many people like?" Then we read from a book but sadly we have just finished "Emil and the Detectives". Lastly, we watch a video and chat about it.

### [Mahjong Group](#)

Mahjong continues over the summer at the Royal Hotel 2-4pm every Monday. No experience or tiles required. Everyone welcome to come and try it or just see what it's all about.

### [Out and About Group](#)

The Group is attending a short pop up opera by Scottish Opera in Connel Village Hall on 14th June at 4pm.

### [Picklball - Competitive](#)

The group plays in Atlantis from 09:00 to 10:30 on Friday mornings. We now have an active membership of 27 and regularly play on four courts instead of three. Please contact the convenor if interested

### [Pickleball - Recreational](#) and [Pickleball Plus](#)

The Recreational Pickleball groups continue to prosper on Monday and Wednesday as new players continue to join.

The Starter Group is designed to explain the basic rules of the game of Pickleball and in the event of the member wishing to continue their Pickleball journey, to assist them in reaching a level whereby they feel comfortable joining the larger u3a Pickleball groups of which currently, there are three.

The Starter Group also allows for an assessment of fitness and skill level for any member wishing to try the sport, since an adequate level of fitness and mobility is required for health and safety reasons.

It has been decided that a once monthly session will be held at Atlantis, but unfortunately the previously announced June date has had to be cancelled because of hall maintenance' it's hoped to arrange another date asap. Members wishing to play should contact Caroline Dalglish directly.

### Poetry Reading Group

Thanks to Maurice for putting together the Anthology on poems relating to Food.

At the May meeting it was decided to skip the usual first Tuesday date in June as it can't be held at the usual location. Also, as not everyone could make the first Tuesday in July, we agreed on Tuesday 30th of June for the next meeting. I hope this will be convenient for most regular attendees. We chose BIRTHDAYS/SPECIAL DAYS as the theme for 30th June, as several of our long-standing members have important birthdays in June/early July. Lots to celebrate, so come if you can! There may be cake ...

The theme of Parody, which was lined up for the next meeting, will be held over until the August meeting, which will be on Tuesday 4th.

### Reading Group 1 - General

Our May meeting to discuss Denise Mina's "Garnet Hill", a crime story much enjoyed... a page turner, set in Glasgow. As one member commented "she deals with social issues and her characters tend to be underprivileged feisty folk." The meeting was especially enjoyable as we were hosted by Sue on Kerrera in great style. Our next meeting is on 29th June in Connel (at Joy's) to discuss "The Blue Afternoon" by William Boyd.

### Reading Group 2 - Crime

From the labyrinthine world of Venice in April to the bucolic small town of Three Pines, Quebec in May, we followed yet another thoughtful and sensitive detective. This time, in 'A Trick of the Light', Louise Penny's Chief Inspector Armand Gamache discovered darkness in the Montreal art scene; gentle rather than cosy crime.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June at 5pm in The Falls of Lora Hotel, Connel when we will discuss 'A Schooling in Murder' by Andrew Taylor.

Crime is fully-subscribed, for those wishing to join a new Book Club with the emphasis on crime, please contact Julia Bateson at [juliabateson@outlook.com](mailto:juliabateson@outlook.com)

### Reading Group 3 - Fact and Fiction

#### **The Place of Tides' by James Rebanks (2025)**

A fascinating account of 70 days spent on a remote tiny rocky outcrop off the far north Norwegian coast. On the island Anna, Ingrid and James have a common purpose, preserving an ancient tradition of collecting down from the Eider ducks.

Alongside this central purpose is the “conspiracy” between Anna and James Rebanks to record the last time Anna would spend on the island, which sets up further tension and has it risks for both James and Anna. The book illuminates the long process of preparing for the ducks’ arrival, the perils of working with nature’s variables and finally the quiet satisfaction of it all coming together.

There was universal admiration and empathy for Anna, "understated with an ability to stand up to men". James gives us a portrait of Anna, in the context of the landscape and the eider ducks, adding his own thoughts as brush strokes on a canvas. It is a partial view but one which reveals her character, as he slowly discovers the back story of her losing the family island to her brother, and illustrates her methods of coping with solitude and obstacles to her preferred way of life.

There is a strong feeling of time and place, wonderful descriptions of a particular landscape embedded in its seascape. The reader enters the harsh reality of living on the edge where the land has provided a particular way of life and traditions difficult to maintain in our modern world. In working this land, the people are in touch with and dependant on nature, they have attained the knowledge of their forebears who have scraped a living over generations.

In a world crisis it may be those who are able to live on the edge who will survive whilst city dwellers with no such inherited knowledge and practice of harvesting the land will not.

Our group was divided between those who found *The Place of Tides* soothing, calming, totally absorbing and warm hearted and those who were disappointed, found the note taking style repetitive and thought that the subject would have been suited to a couple of articles rather than a book.

#### [Reading Group 4](#)

The June meeting will be at 2pm at Ganavan. The book for June is 'Difficult Women' by Helen Lewis.

#### [Reading Group - Classic Reads](#)

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

#### [Science and Technology Group](#)

The 2025/26 season of Science Group meetings has now finished, and the group is taking the usual break for the summer. Activities will resume in September. Our thanks to all who have attended our meetings and helped deliver another successful season, especially the speakers who have presented a wide range of interesting and inspiring presentations.

During the summer we will start planning future activities and we welcome your thoughts and feedback. So please do let us know your suggestions, interests and possible contributions. All ideas are welcome! Please write to us at [obanu3ascience@gmail.com](mailto:obanu3ascience@gmail.com)

### Scottish History Group

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

### El Grupo Español

El mes anterior, El Grupo Español hicieron una visita a liha de Deus, es decir la casa y jardines de John Innes en Tioran, Isla de Mull. Ahí tuvimos una experiencia inmersiva en español que incluye:

- Un paseo por los jardines con descripciones de las plantas y los flores dado por John
- Una sesión normal que consta de cuatro rondós
- Un almuerzo de tapas, albóndigas, tomates, pizza, quiche y un postre gigante de ruibarbo con crema
- Una seleccion de musica Espanola
- Y un juego de cartas.



De vez en cuando, necesitamos a hablar en Ingles, pero generalmente hablábamos en español.

Estamos muy agradecidos por la hospitalidad extendido al grupo por John.

Os veo pronto

### [Table Tennis Group](#)

We continue to meet on Monday from 2.00 to 3.00pm at Atlantis Leisure Centre. All new members are very welcome whether you're a beginner or experienced. If you wish to join please contact the convenor through the u3a website.

### [Ukulele Group](#)

How about joining us as we sing and play our ukuleles? We would like new members and hope you'll come along and be part of our friendly and welcoming group. We plan to meet throughout the year. No ukulele? Members have kindly offered to bring along ukuleles to get you started and tuition is at hand.

Be good to see you - Tuesday evenings, 7 till 9, Congregational Church, Tweedale Street (Just up from Chalmers shop. Enter street level, middle door.)

### [Walk and Lunch Group](#)

Anyone who is interested in the Walk and Lunch group is welcome. The co-ordinator will send correspondence by e-mail.

Help required: Have you got any favourite cafes? What about leading one walk locally with your preferred cafe for lunch?

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