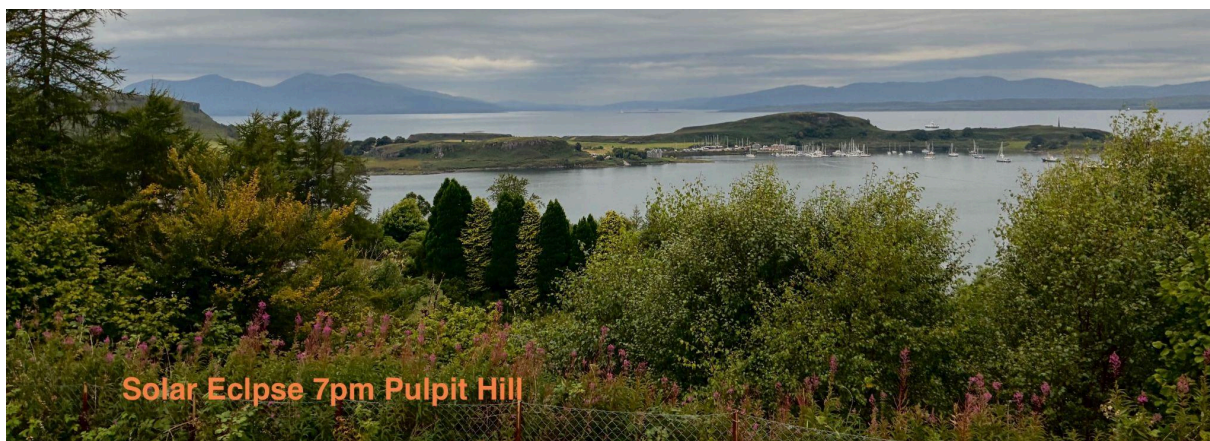


SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER



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Chair's Remarks

As my first year as Chair comes to an end, I would like to thank all the members of the committee who have supported me. With this backing, I am confident of remaining in post for a wee bit longer.

As membership numbers continue to increase, we need to increase the opportunities in terms of both creating new groups and cloning existing groups. If you have any ideas, do let [David Hughes](#) know.

The first meeting of the astronomy group has taken place and potential new groups include line dancing and music for beginners. Come along to our Open Morning, enjoy a free cuppa and see what we have to offer. Even better, bring your friends!

Following that, it would be good if you could stay for our AGM as we elect a committee and decide the way forward for our organisation.

Sue

Monthly Member Meeting

On Tuesday 6th October, we are back to our normal timetable with our coffee morning followed by the first talk of the new year, "Journey into Climate" by new member Paul Mayewski, an internationally renowned glaciologist, climate scientist, and polar explorer.

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

[Art visits](#)

Ceilidh na Mara exhibition in Argyll, September 11th - October 12th The Rockfield, Oban

A celebration of Argyll's unique marine environment and cultural heritage through creative practice - features work from the 2025 Argyll Hope Spot Snorkelling Residency cohort, spanning sculpture, poetry, illustration, animation and filmmaking. Open everyday from Saturday 12th September - Sunday 12th October, 10am-4pm. Opening: Friday 11th September, 7 pm

Fish Parchment Making and Bookbinding Workshops, Baile Mòr Books, Iona, £525-625, 13 to 16 September

ISLANDNESS GATHERING: Late Summer Edition, Isle of Ulva, £ various, 24 to 28 September

[Argyll Collection on Tour](#) will give communities across Argyll the chance to see paintings by renowned artists, including Elizabeth Blackadder, John Byrne, Leon Morrocco, Robin Philipson and David Donaldson, as this unique collection takes some of its works directly to local audiences. The tour will visit:

- Rothesay Library 2 September 2-4pm
- Dunoon: Queens Hall 8 September 2-4pm
- Glendaruel: Village Hall 18 September 6-7.30pm
- Colintrave: Village Hall 19 September 2-4pm
- Campbeltown Library 23 September 2-4pm
- Campbeltown Grammar School Gallery 30 October 5-7pm
- Dunoon Library 7 September and through to June 2027

Some of the exhibitions are accompanied by a talk: please see the link above for more information:

[Astronomy](#)

Following the successful initial meeting of this group, we plan to meet on Tuesday afternoons, probably the 3rd Tuesday of each month but avoiding a clash with geology.

Bridge Group

We have experienced low numbers recently due to ill health and summer holidays but we hope to be back to full strength very soon. Whether you are a grand master or an absolute novice, you are welcome to join us in Kilmore on Thursday afternoons.

Craft Group

We continue to meet at a member's home most months. This group is full so let us know if you would like to start another one.

Creative Writing Group

*We'll be meeting again on the 9th September
At 2.30pm in the Rockfield Café.
That's not far ahead so please try to remember
To wear your creative headgear on the day!*

Discussion Group

The discussion group meets in the Royal Hotel in Oban at 2pm - 4pm, where we enjoy a cup of tea or coffee whilst we discuss whatever subject comes up. Anyone is free to put a suggestion forward. If you want to join us please register via the Beacon website

We discuss any subject; however, most are of a political nature. This month the subjects have included:

- Which kind of prisoner should be considered for early release from our overcrowded jails?
- Should working from home be banned/discouraged by both Scottish and UK governments? Does WFH increase/decrease productivity?
- Has university education been devalued by the introduction of what were previously taught in colleges as vocational subjects, now offered as a degree?

Hope to see you all at the AGM in September.

Drama

Depending on how many sign up at the AGM morning or contact the convenor direct, the first meeting will be Tuesday 22nd September at 10.45 in Dunbeg church and 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month thereafter.

[French Conversation Group](#)

The French Conversation Group meets every Friday, during school term time, in the Lancaster Hotel dining room. We normally have general conversation first, and then we discuss our current book. There are a few places remaining for new folk, of an intermediate or above level of French conversation, to join us, and I look forward to meeting everyone at the Open Meeting on 1st September.

[Gardens and Wildflower Group](#)



The photo is indicative of the wonderful things we have seen on our visits with the Gardens and Wildflower Group. However, the convenor is wanting to stand down, and the future of the Group will depend on some person (or people) coming forward to run it. If you're interested, please email [Dot](#)

A small group of us were treated to an amazing afternoon with Mark Brent, head gardener, at NTS Arduaine Garden. He is such a fund of knowledge, which he is only too happy to share. So many interesting and, in some cases, unique to UK plants, especially trees and shrubs, which he pointed out to us. He also told us about the history of, and the characters involved, in establishing the garden. A stunning afternoon of weather in an amazing setting, with tea and carrot cake at the adjoining hotel as part of our treat!!

Geology Group

The new season is about to start with our North West Highlands field trip in late September. As a result, indoor sessions for the winter will start in October.

6th October: Geology of Scotland. After several months break, we need to recap briefly what we have covered so far for the Hebridean and Northern Highlands Terranes, as far south as the Great Glen Fault. Then we need to deal with the range of granitic intrusions north of the Great Glen Fault which include the Ross of Mull granite and Glensanda.

13th October: Life Story. We are now in the Cenozoic Era following the asteroid impact at 66 Ma that is always said to have wiped out the dinosaurs. If true, it didn't do a thorough job as they are still with us, flying everywhere around us; we just happen to call them birds! In this session and two further sessions in November we aim to complete the story of life to the present. We will be partly recapping what we covered before the summer break, taking a broader look at the changing environment of the planet over the next 65 million years and a closer look at some of life's developments in the Palaeogene and Neogene periods.

27th October: Geology of Scotland. South of the Great Glen Fault this time, into the Grampian Terrane dominated by the Dalradian sequence that surrounds us in Lorn and stretches all the way to Stonehaven, and what then happened to produce the plateau area that covers much of Lorn on top of much of the Dalradian.

Did someone mention slate? Well, yes. Work is about to commence in September on the reopening of slate quarrying on Luig after nearly 60 years since they closed.

German Group

Die Deutschgruppe fängt am 24. September wieder an. Wir haben unsere Name geändert und heißen jetzt „German Conversation Group“, weil sie keine Lehrgruppe ist. Das heißt aber nicht das sie nur für Fortgeschrittene geeignet ist. Mann braucht nur einfache Gespräche verstehen zu können. Wie immer, lesen wir zusammen ein Buch, dieses mal „Vom Ende der Einsamkeit“ von Benedict Wells. Das ist ein ernst und etwas störendes Buch das ich selber ausgesucht habe. Ich habe es gewählt weil die Sprache ziemlich einfach ist und weil es 80 wochen lang in der Deutschen Bestseller Liste stand. Ich habe trotzdem Angst das es nicht ideal für die Gruppe ist. Das werden wir herausfinden.

[Mahjong Group](#)

The AGM gives us the chance to demonstrate how the game works, for those who might be interested but have never seen it played.

We play every Monday from 2-4pm in the Royal Hotel. Some people play every week, some occasionally, or in the winter time only. We are always happy to welcome new members

[Out and About Group](#)

There is no event planned for September but we'll be meeting later in the year.

[Picklball - Competitive](#)

The group plays in Atlantis from 09:00 to 10:30 on Friday mornings. We 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](#)

For less competitive players, there are sessions on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Please contact the [convenors](#) for more information.

[Pickleball Startup](#)

This group is for members who have little to no experience of racquet sports but enjoy exercise, who would like to see if Pickleball would suit them. A class will be arranged when there is sufficient interest to make it viable. Please contact [Caroline](#) if you are interested.

[Reading Group Classic Reads](#)

Classic reads will be starting shortly. We're starting with Oscar Wilde's 'Picture of Dorian Grey'. We may then go on to other works by Wilde.

[Poetry Reading Group](#)

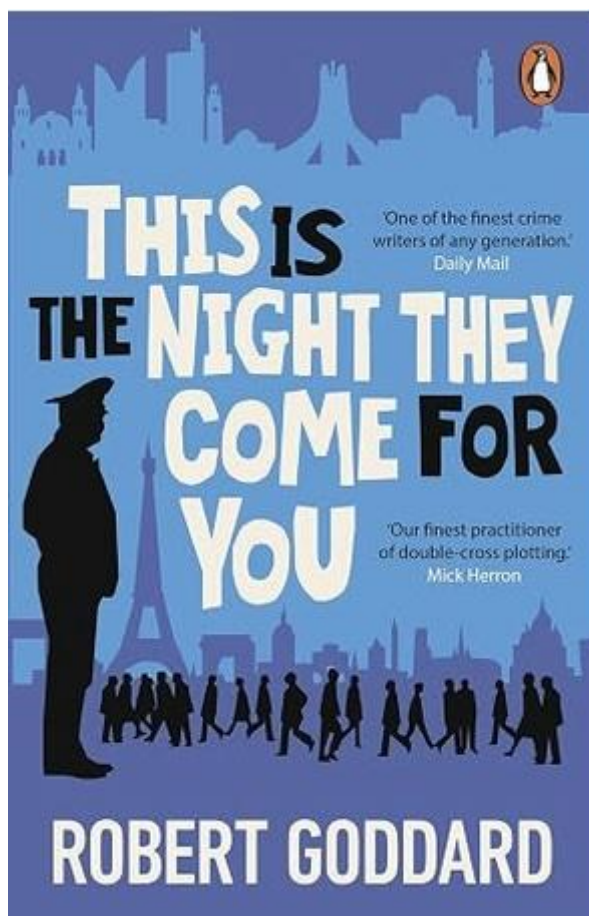
Our next meeting is at Joy's house on Tuesday 8th September at 2.00 p.m. (please note it's not on the 1st, as this is the date of the u3a Open Day).

Our theme is **Listen**. Please send poems to Joy in advance, if you'd like them copied for the meeting, and to Maurice for the Anthology.

[Reading Group 1 - General](#)

For our August Book we returned to a recently read author, Denise Mina. Our first book by this author was 'Garnet Hill' and our second is 'The Field of Blood '. Both books are page turners with the added dimension of being local, as in

having Glaswegian characters and plots. Our September book is 'Middlemarch' by George Eliot. Quite a challenge lengthwise.



Reading Group 2 - Crime

In the 'This is the Night they Come for You', a man seeks answers to the 30-year-old disappearance of his sister. A woman searches for answers about her late father's shady life. An ageing policeman and a young secret service agent strive to work together and the powers that be - le pouvoir - operate against all of them. These interwoven strands are set against the backdrop of the turbulent years following the independence of Algeria in 1962; the cruelties and realities of which, as a group, we knew little about.

This clever, well-researched thriller by Robert Goddard blends fact and fiction seamlessly and with sustained suspense.

We are taking a break in September, so we meet next on 8th October, usual time, usual place. We will discuss Martin Walker's 'Death in the Dordogne'. Our popular group is fully-subscribed. Anyone interested in joining a new Crime Club should contact [Julia Bateson](#).

Reading Group 3 - Fact and Fiction

The Bird Skinner by Alice Greenway (2014)

We had very mixed views about 'The Bird Skinner', however, I think it's fair to say that we concurred that the title was pretty off putting. Notwithstanding, we read it and most of us found aspects of the story interesting, even intriguing. The protagonist, Jim, is a second world war veteran and renowned ornithologist. He is an angry, damaged man suffering from PTSD, depression following the loss of his beloved wife to suicide, constant pain from his recently amputated leg, acute alcoholism and complete disaffection with life. He is a bitter man,

rendered so as a result of the bullying suffered during childhood at the hands of his cruel but wealthy grandfather and his terrible wartime experiences. From the start there is a sense of foreboding of how it might end.

The story blends Jim's past ornithological life with his current geographical isolation, using shifting time frames. (A device that can be annoying for the reader and disruptive to the narrative flow). The references to birds are luminous and vibrant blurring Jim's memories both with his reality and dreams, past and present.

Central to Jim's story is his wartime experience as a soldier in the Solomon Islands and his time with Tosca, his young native scout, who guides him behind enemy lines to spy for US naval intelligence. Tosca becomes his pupil and friend. Jim teaches him how to track, observe and skin birds thus leaving him with a skill for life. Together they survive the war but the 'bird skinning' is referenced morbidly through the wartime experiences - and crimes - committed by both Japanese and Americans 'trophy gathering', and at the very end of the book this is also referenced as a cultural practice for Solomon Islanders to clean and save the skulls of their dead ancestors.

There are a number of additional threads running through the story from the Robert Louis Stevenson biography, the intrigues and relationships during Jim's years at the University, his dysfunctional life with his son, Fergus, the brief but important visit of Cadillac, Tosca's vibrant, intelligent, beautiful daughter, but nothing seems to lessen the central themes of tragedy, loss, unhappiness, guilt and relentless suffering.

Our September book is 'The Correspondent' by Virginia Evans (2025)

[Reading Group 4](#)

There will be no meeting in September. The next meeting will be at 2pm on 29th October at Ganavan, and the book is 'Leonard & Hungry Paw' by Ronan Hession.

We have read a wide variety of different books. We would welcome new members to join us.

[Science and Technology Group](#)

Science Group meetings will resume on Wednesday 7th October in the Studio Theatre, Corran Halls. The first meeting will start a theme on Diet, *Glucose: The Sugar That Made the World Go Round?* This theme will continue later by considering Lipids and then Nanoplastics in the brain. Other topics that we will address will include: Climate Change, People in Science - following on from the

last session on women in science but expanding it to maybe include some men who have made important, interesting but largely unrecognised contributions to science, the IgNobel Prizes for some light but thought provoking relief and maybe a Nobel prize if it is of general interest. And more...

Scottish History Group

Scottish history will restart in the new year. The plan is to invite speakers on various periods over the course of the winter months. There will be the delayed session on the 'Declaration of Arbroath'. The aim of the group is to help members understand the events that created Scotland today. New members are welcome to join.

El Grupo Español

Espanol es probable lo mas facil a aprender, deletrear y hablar, sin embargo es muy, muy dificil tener fluidez. Por este razon, continuamos a encontrar cada semana para charlar, leer y escuchar por un rato. Gracias a todos qué han asistido a pesar de la mal tiempo.

Table Tennis Group

After a break during the school summer holidays the Table Tennis Group will recommence play at 2.00pm on Monday afternoons in the main hall at Atlantis Leisure, starting on the 31st August. The charge per session is £2.00, payable to the Convenor. We are a happy Group and welcome all new members, whether beginner or experienced. If you would like to join us for some fun and light exercise please come along and give Table Tennis a try.

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, Tweeddale Street (Just up from Chalmers shop. Enter street level, middle door.)

Walking Group

As a new convenor takes over this group, what sort of walking would you like to do and how often? Come along to our Open Morning and let us know.