

Spring
2024

Newsletter



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Newsletter feedback....



From the editor

As you can see, we have a brand new look to your Newsletter which I hope you will enjoy reading. This should make it easier to navigate to the entries you're most interested in. Have a look at the Contents List and then (unlike in the previous incarnation) click on that link to go to that particular section. There are also a number of live links in the Newsletter articles. These will take you to informative documents, some of which you can download as a PDF file or give you a url to a relevant webpage.

I have also included a *very* short online questionnaire to get some feedback from you, the readers, as to what you think of the new format. Please take the time to complete it as it will help greatly in future Newsletter design and content. It can be found at the end of the Newsletter or you can click on the link in the Contents List to access it. If you have any problems, please contact me. My email address is at the end of this Editorial.

We have the usual features of Reports from the Committee Members and information on the u3a Trust activities (including this year's Scottish Summer School) and online facilities and actions to get involved in. There is also, of course, Tony Reeves's Quiz for you to try.

Additionally, we have news of activities coming up soon – the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the next Open Lecture and the current Diary of forthcoming lectures, and the Coffee Morning in May. Please have a look to see if you can attend any of those events.

I'd like to remind you of two important dates:

- The questionnaire to be completed by the end of May, please.
- The next Newsletter will be the Summer edition with a deadline for contributions of July 1st.

Finally, I'd like to thank all contributors, Sandra Goodswen for the Spring photograph of tulips and Allan Rodgers for his excellent work on the new design and layout.

Dianne Murray,
Newsletter Editor
news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

From the chair



Spring has finally arrived, but we have all struggled with this very wet weather, which has resulted in some group activities having to be cancelled or postponed. However, progress has continued in other ways. You may have noticed that we have a refreshed website and this Newsletter is also in a new format, both of which are very welcome developments and thanks to the hard work of Ed and Dianne.

Our numbers continue to gently grow, and a further opportunity to introduce people to our activities will be the Coffee Morning on the 25th of May in the Trinity Centre, Haddington. I do encourage you to attend, and anyone willing to help with either baking for the event or helping serve tea and coffee etc should contact me direct.

Our AGM is on the 5th of June, in Holy Trinity Church, Haddington. Please do attend and also please consider whether you would be prepared to give a little time as a committee member. I am delighted to say that we have a volunteer, Sarah Brookes, who is willing to take on the role of Membership Secretary from Sandra Goodswen but we would welcome new members to the Committee.

The AGM will be followed by an Open Lecture. I encourage you all to attend and bring any potential new members with you.

In the meantime I hope you are all able to enjoy the burgeoning spring flowers and I look forward to seeing many of you at our different events.

Zoe van Zwanenberg, Chair
chair@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

The deadline for the Summer issue in 2024 is 1st JULY. Please contact the editor if you have any queries.



From the groups coordinator

Over the last few months our Webmaster, Ed Dee, and I have been busy updating our website. Members of the general public, not just u3a members are now able to access all our group pages and there are links allowing easy contact with group leaders. Ahead of advice from the national u3a, all personal email addresses and telephone numbers have been removed from group pages. Instead, every group leader now has a generic email address, e.g. geology@eastlothianu3a.org.uk. Emails to these addresses are automatically forwarded to group leaders' personal email addresses without revealing those personal email addresses.

There is also a new timetable on the website, showing when and where individual groups meet, the intention being that potential new members can easily see which groups might fit in with their existing commitments.

Ed Dee is still planning to offer tutorials on how to edit group pages – you will have to be patient. He is a busy man!

We will soon have a new presentation clicker to replace the old one which lost its dongle. As before, the device will have a laser pointer and will be able to advance PowerPoint slides. It is for use in conjunction with the u3a laptop which is lodged securely with library staff at the John Gray Centre. If you use our laptop please be careful to stow the small dongle securely inside the dedicated slot within the handheld clicker.

Best wishes to you all,

Helen Horn,

East Lothian u3a Groups Co-ordinator

groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



From the membership secretary

A message to all members

It's now time to renew your membership subscription, if you haven't already done so. It becomes due at the beginning of May and remains at £20.

You will have received your reminder email from me, which will include details of how to pay, our bank details, and your membership number.

Please remember to let me know if you change your usual email address (or any other personal contact details).

If you are not planning to renew, either because of ill health, moving away or for any other reason, please let me know, so that you won't be bothered by reminder emails. If you pay by Standing Order, please don't forget to cancel it.

- If you have a Standing Order, please check the date when it's due to be paid, it should be 1st May. And make sure that the reference is your membership number (in your reminder email).
- Also please check whether you have a Standing Order before paying your subscription by bank transfer which is now our preferred method of payment (bank details in the reminder email), and again, you must use your membership number as the reference, as this is the only way we have of correctly identifying the payment.
- if you're paying for two people, two membership numbers must be referenced otherwise I cannot know who the other half of the payment is for.

Thank you for your help in making my job easier at this busy time of year.

Sandra Goodswen

membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Open Lecture Programme 2024

**Monday 19th February 2024. Liam Cantwell, Viridor
"Dunbar Waste to Energy Facility"**

Members & Friends. I hope those of you who attended, enjoyed Liam's talk, certainly there was plenty of discussion during the refreshments and I imagine further points were aired in your various Group activities the following week. For those that missed the talk here is a brief resume.

Liam is the Community Benefits Officer at Viridor and explained the workings of their 'Waste to Energy Facility' at Dunbar.

Firstly, he gave us an insight to Viridor. The current organisation name comes from the Latin 'to become green' and originated in 1956 as a waste company. During the 2000's, as government demands and society thinking changed, their business model followed suit, buying smaller waste and recycling companies to focus from 2020 on "waste to energy". The company has 3 focused mission statements that provide a win-win.

Here they are:

- Diverting waste from landfill
- Bringing resources to life
- Creating circular waste economy.

Secondly, Liam explained to us the background to the plant at Dunbar, now that two of the main parts to this circular process have been introduced.

The plant went on-line in 2019 and processes vast amounts of Scotland's waste to derive a product that can generate electricity. It has the potential to remove fossil fuels, divert some 325,000 tonnes of waste to landfill and power 40,000 homes. In all it captures waste as a resource for processing from some 8 or so Scottish Council areas. Just as an aside, it was interesting to note East Lothian's waste is not processed at this plant but at a similar facility at Millerhill.

The third player in this process then came in to play; that is us disposing of our rubbish. Several graphics and a couple of videos were used to explain how recycling works on an industrial scale. Liam stepped us through the process:

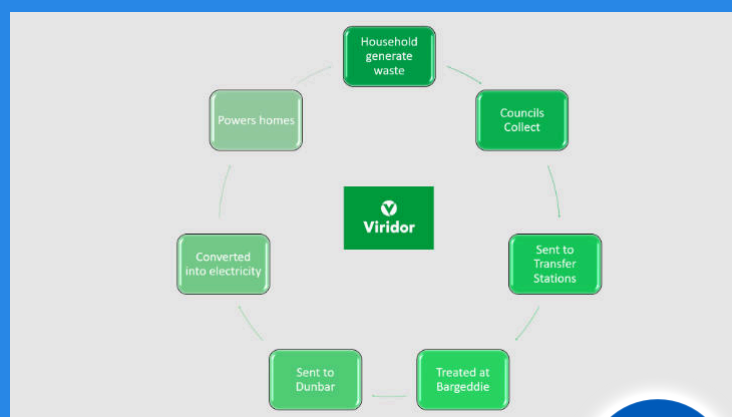
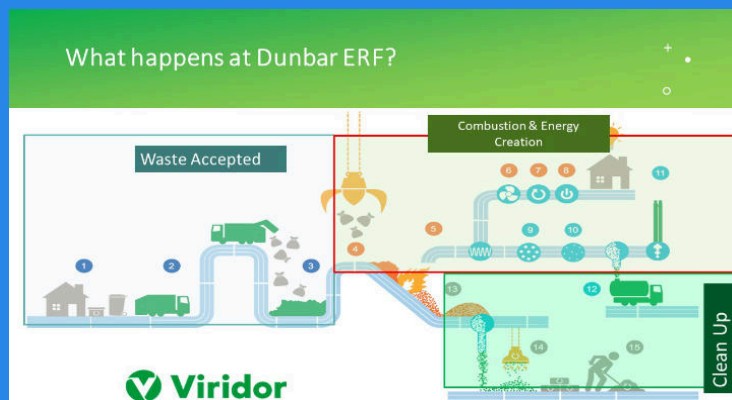
1. Rubbish is disposed of by us in 'general waste' green bin.
2. Waste thereafter is collected by the Council and sent to Collection/Transfer Stations.
3. Bulk lorries carry to Process Centres where

further sorting & recycling takes place.

4. Remaining unrecyclable waste is sent to Dunbar where it is transformed into electricity and transported to the Grid.

This all appeared very straightforward, the clever bit starting once the unrecyclable waste reaches Dunbar. However, Liam did tell us the waste industry unfortunately is currently recorded as the 2nd most dangerous industry in the UK, so adherence to H&S protocols is critical.

The waste to energy process is illustrated on several Viridor videoclips. Links are given below and reference can also be made to their website. PowerPoint graphics illustrate the processes, but to save you pressing more buttons, in simple terms here we go...



The waste is loaded

Click to see slides

Click here

by overhead grab into a combustion chamber where it is heated to 850-4000 degrees centigrade. By means of a boiler and pipe network, high pressure steam is generated which interacts with a turbine to generate electricity. Any toxic fumes

continued on next page >>>

>>> from previous page

are filtered, ash recovered after the process is sieved for precious metals with the waste being used as an aggregate within the construction industry! ...that's it!

Click below to see YouTube Videos relevant to Liam's presentation:

Explore Viridor's
Dunbar FRE plant

Click
here

Explore Viridor's
Bargeddie materials
recycling facility

Click
here

A couple of things before I go

I hope you enjoyed the April lecture when Bruce Keith talked about his new project "Are We Nearly There Yet?" Not whines from the back seat but the story of Scottish milestones – not just distance markers, but early means of measurement and mapping. You may remember Bruce from 2022, he was the "Bridgescapes" man. If you didn't make the talk, a short write-up will be in the next newsletter.

The June Open Lecture is again at Holy Trinity Church Haddington on Wednesday 5th June at 2.30pm, following a short AGM at 2.00pm. Please note a speaker change from previously published material. Stewart Houston, Retired Procurator Fiscal will deliver his talk "Tales From The Courts" A light-hearted canter through some 37 years of court life with stories true and apocryphal. Stewart graduated from Edinburgh University and will entertain us with a selection of cases from his time served in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Sit back and enjoy these real-life dramas laced with some light humour. Fancy a blether? Join your friends afterwards, light refreshments are being served. Finally, after my call for equipment, I would like to thank Margaret Russell for donating to us a screen, sound system and projector, all to improve our offering. It was very kind.

David Taylor, Lectures Co-ordinator
lectures@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

East
Lothian
u3a

Annual General Meeting & Open Lecture

"Tales from the Courts"

By Stewart Houston, Retired Procurator Fiscal.

A light-hearted canter through some 37 years of court life with stories true and apocryphal.

2.00 pm Wednesday 5th June 2024

Refreshments provided

**Holy Trinity Church, Church St
Haddington, EH41 3EX.**

Diary Dates 2024

Wednesday 5th June 2024

AGM & Open Lecture

Stewart Houston, Retired Procurator Fiscal.

"Tales From The Courts"

A light-hearted canter through some 37 years of court life with stories true and apocryphal.

2.00, Holy Trinity Church,
Church St. Haddington EH41 3EX.

Tuesday 17th September 2024

Open Lecture

John Sadler, Author & Historian

"Cromwell's Convicts"

The death march from Dunbar 1650.
2.30, St. Anne's, Westgate, Dunbar, EH42 1JL

TBC

Wednesday 6th or 20th November 2024

Open Lecture

PC Gavin Ross, NWCU.

"Scottish Wildlife Crime"

The work of Police Scotland and the National Wildlife Crime Unit preventing and detecting wildlife crime.

2.30, Holy Trinity Church,
Church St. Haddington EH41 3EX.



Enjoying Classical music

The Group meets monthly on the 3rd Friday of each month in the Star Room, situated in the John Grey Centre, Haddington. As the Group's name suggests the emphasis is on enjoyment.

The format is simple: a theme for the session is chosen and a brief discussion is interspersed with a performance or performances of the music relevant to the topic.

To suggest the idea of participation, live performances of the relevant pieces are chosen from You Tube using what might be considered the best not only musically but also in sound quality and production values.

2024 is a year of composer anniversaries which provides the opportunity to listen to a wide variety of pieces familiar and unfamiliar from composers for whom this year is an important birthday to celebrate their life and work. Financial constraints unfortunately will not stretch to cake and candles!

No technical knowledge is required, or expected, only the wish to enjoy what is said or heard.

Anyone wishing to enquire about joining, please contact:

David Symington, Group Leader.

enjoying.classical.music@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Lunch group

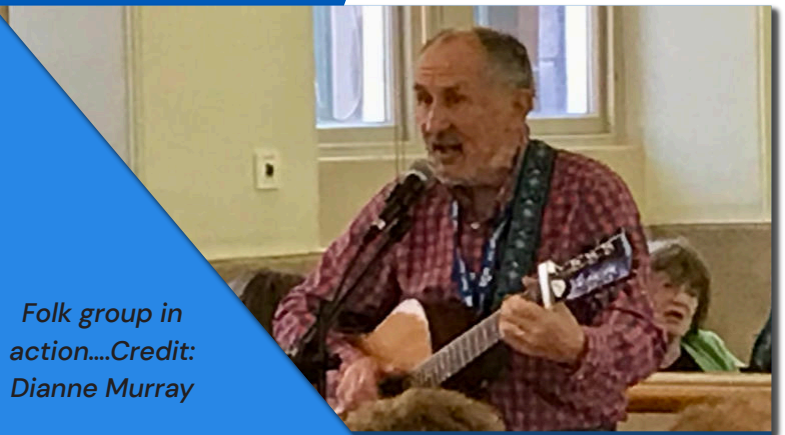
The Lunch Group meets every month on different days of the week and at various venues in East Lothian.

We are happy to welcome new members to join us for an enjoyable meal and good company.

If you would like to join, please get in touch.

Elsie Oliver, Group Leader

lunch.club@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Folk group in action....Credit: Dianne Murray

Folk Music Singing and Playing

Folk Music Singing and Playing has continued to meet in the Star Room, John Gray Centre, on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Due to altered library opening times we start at 2.15pm and continue until 4.15pm, with our usual social tea-break halfway through.

We have a wide repertoire of over 100 songs to choose from and have included some new ones this year. After June there will be a summer break, and we re-start on the 12th September.

Robert Russell, Group Leader, Folk Group
folkgroup@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Wednesday Walkers

In spite of the recent bad weather we have continued our programme of walks with only one cancellation. Our walks have taken us to the Borders, Midlothian and the Pentland Hills and locally in East Lothian. New members are always welcome to join us. Here is one member's experience of joining the group.

I joined the East Lothian u3a Wednesday Walkers group around a year ago, after moving up to Dunbar from England. I saw it as a way to get some regular exercise, to get to know the area and particularly some of its wilder places better, and to meet some new people. All of these expectations have been fulfilled. The group is a very welcoming and interesting bunch of folk, from a variety of backgrounds, and the walks I've done with them have been invariably fun and stimulating. An added bonus was a 6 day late-Summer trip to Speyside with some of the group, which was excellent in every respect.

Walks are conducted every week. They are well organised, with routes, distance and terrain advised in advance by walk leaders (anyone can devise and lead a walk, but none are obliged to do so). Routes are tailored to the capabilities and inclinations of the group, with weather conditions taken into account, so unexpected major challenges are minimised. Even then, no-one is ever left behind on a walk, with group pace adjusted accordingly to suit.

As well as discovering more of the area, and getting to know my companions better, I'm also improving both my walking fitness and self-awareness of my limitations. Even though other commitments can prevent me going every week (and few of us do), I always look forward to my sociable Wednesdays tramping about East Lothian, and beyond.

If weekly walking in a mixed and friendly group appeals to you, I recommend you join us! If you harbour doubts about your ability to cope with our Wednesday endeavours, try one of the Friday groups first to gauge your level. There's a walking group to suit everyone.

Lorna Moussa, Group Leader

wedswalks@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



River Tweed near Peebles – a view from a forthcoming walking route. Credit: Allan Rodgers



Wednesday Walkers out in force

Credit: Wednesday Walkers



Kathie and snowdrops! Credit: Tony Reeves

Simply Strolling

Snowdrop Time!

A photograph of a recent 'Snowdrop Walk' around Smeaton Lake in East Linton. The snowdrops were out in abundance and were quite stunning. Many thanks to Kathie Fairweather for organising it.

Tony Reeves

For information on the Group, contact:
simplystrolling@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Walking groups

learn, laugh, live



Members of the Gardening Group

Gardening Group

The Gardening Group is very lucky as Ros, one of our members, is a volunteer gardener at Amisfield Walled Garden in Haddington. Ros agreed to demonstrate to us how to make a wigwam out of willows, of which there is a plentiful supply to purchase at Amisfield.

After the demonstration, we worked in groups of 2/3 to reproduce our own wigwams. The willows proved to be strong and flexible and very easy to mould into shape. Many of us bought bundles of willows to construct wigwams in our own gardens for training plants such as sweet peas and runner beans.

Thanks to Ros for a very enjoyable morning which also included a tour of the greenhouses at Amisfield Walled Garden.

Diane Dangerfield, Group Leader
gardengroup@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



*Wigwam builders at work.
Credit Gardening Group*



During the cold months we have made good use of our meetings in the John Gray Centre, learning about the history of geology in Scotland and East Lothian as well as about some of the historical individuals who, by their painstaking work, unravelled many of the mysteries of Scotland's geology.

The David McAdam lecture (in memory of our group's previous and longstanding leader), was an illuminating and fascinating talk about Mary Anning and her contribution to our

knowledge of fossils. Subjects still to be discussed this term include volcanics in Edinburgh and East Lothian, local quarries and the stone they produce, the carboniferous succession in East Lothian, a historical debate about the precambrian era and, finally, coal in East Lothian.

Talks are given as Power Point presentations by volunteers from the group. There is no obligation to present. Some of our members are retired professional geologists from a variety of backgrounds but most members are simply curious individuals with no previous geological knowledge.

Our field trip programme for the summer is almost finalised and will appear on our group page shortly. We plan to visit some of the many local sites of geological interest. There are so many to choose from in East Lothian

New members are always welcome. We meet in Haddington on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month. No previous geological knowledge is necessary. To find out more, look at our group page under the Groups tab on the East Lothian u3a website.

Helen Horn, Group Leader

geology@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



Philosophy for all

Philosophy is the process of trying to understand ourselves and the world we live in purely on the basis of the efforts of our rational minds. We don't have to go out and investigate but rather reflect on the way that we think about things. At our forthcoming meeting of the 'Exploring Philosophy' group on Monday 6th May we will be thinking about human freedom.

We intuitively think that we are free, for example, when we select our breakfast cereal on the supermarket shelves. Perhaps more importantly we think that people are free to act well or badly and, if

the latter is the case, we attribute blame to them. But how do we know that our actions, from the innocuous selection of cereal to the more important ones of behaving well, are not the result of a long process of conditioning by our experiences and genetic determinants in our DNA? Maybe we simply could not have acted otherwise. We may feel free but how do we know?

The evidence against human freedom mounts up when we consider the material world of which we are a part. This world is subject to determining laws of physics and chemistry. Nothing happens in this world without a cause and the notion of the natural world as acting freely seems absurd. And yet, here we are, part and parcel of that natural world, so on what basis do we think that we are different?

We have another philosophy group in the East Lothian u3a that, rather than starting from philosophical themes, starts with the philosophers themselves. This group is currently studying Bertrand Russell's brilliant book 'The Problems of Philosophy'. No previous experience is required. We seek to make Russell's ideas open and accessible to us and Russell is well worth knowing.

Discussions in both groups are friendly, lively and engaging. If you think that the topics sound interesting, please let me know via the Groups Co-ordinator, Helen Horn (groups@eastlothianu3a.org.uk) and I'll send more details.

Mike Radford, Group Leader

exploring.philosophy@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

Art in the Drawing Room

A few images of artwork done by members of the group.

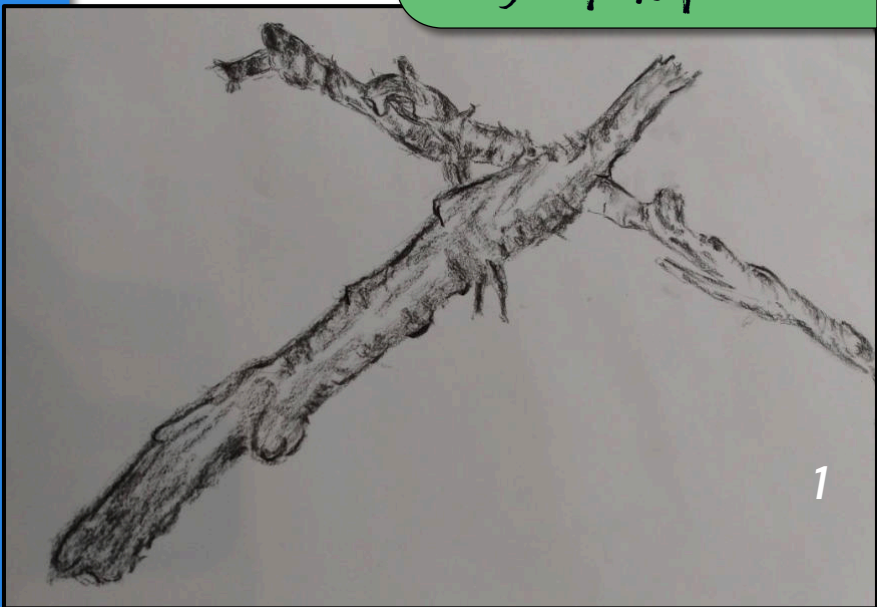
- Image 1 – Crossed Branches by Myra Sergeant
- Image 2 – Ivy Branch by Catriona Hardman
- Image 3 – Burst of Spring colour by Liz Cunningham
- Image 4 – Flowering Plant by Maggie Stevenson.

Our group continues to meet each month, learning from each other and trying different techniques. We enjoy using pencils, charcoal, pastels, pens and sometimes paints.

The group has continued for over seven years and we have space for new members. Enquiries welcome.

Liz Cunningham, Group Leader

art.and.drawing@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



"Out and About" Picture Quiz No. 13



1. Name this West Coast harbour town building. Who is at the window?



3. A lovely spot beside the Tyne in East Lothian, name the three nearest pubs.



2. Where is this? What is the carving about?



4. Name the castle. Who was the most famous person to have stayed there?

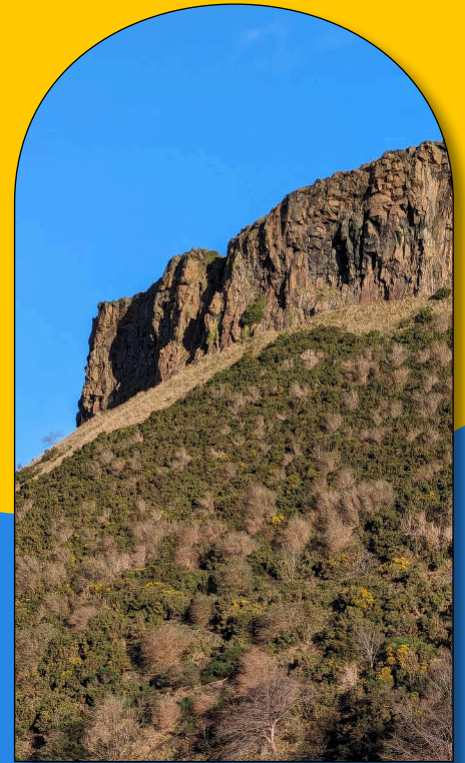
5. This is the 'overflow' outlet for the most famous dam in England. Name it and state why it is famous.





6. Name this castle and the nearest East Lothian village.

7. Name this huge rock face atop the hill and name the road (a track really) that runs along its base.



8. Where is this church building? Name the most famous person from the town.



10. Where is this massive piece of exposed sandstone? How old do you think it is?

9. What is this new structure?



Click here

Click here for the answers to the Quiz



University of Stirling. Credit: Google

2024 Scottish Summer School

The u3a Scottish Summer School will take place at the University of Stirling during August 20th-22nd, 2024.

For further information on this interesting and friendly event please click on the links below. You will find a full description of what's available, details of each course which is running, and comprehensive booking details, together with an online booking form.

For information on topics and booking

Click here



Online Learning with the u3a

All u3a members can join a wide range of [online talks, workshops and courses](#), some for free with their membership. Many of these opportunities are presented by members themselves; sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. Click the above link to see the range of what's available. You can sign up for [notifications](#).



Human Brain: Blood - Brain Barrier
An electronic talk by Barry Linton for Bay u3a.
4 April at 2pm
via Zoom

Crisis - and Solutions
Cotgrave and IGO, returns to our regular talk on the climate crisis.
April at 10am
via Zoom

Aviation History
A laughter to your Yoga - an aerobic playful exercises in deep yogic thinking.
April at 10am
via Zoom

with Merrie (Jan-Apr)
with Judith (Jun)

Discovery, Science, and Future
The discovery of penicillin began before the 20th century.
May at 2pm
via Zoom

Renaissance
London u3a, for a Renaissance movement.
Wednesday 8 May at 10am
via Zoom

Podcast
Beyond: the triumph of Beethoven
A series of talks on the creative arts for our wellbeing by Rick of Orrell Park u3a.
May at 2pm
via Zoom

Online - A u3a session with Q&A
April at 10am Free - via Zoom

These are just some examples of the online learning available - click the link above for full details

u3a Friends Newsletter



u3a Friends is an exciting new initiative to bring together stories and interests from across the u3a movement; to use our collective voice to change lives and to share exclusive member offers with our exclusive Friends Extra benefits program. All of these come together under the banner of u3a Friends. Signing up to the newsletter means you are up to date and in touch with all that's happening across the movement as it happens. For more information, click this link:

For more information
click this link:

Click
here



u3a in Scotland & Online Across Scotland

These websites provide information on the many local u3a groups in Scotland, and their activities. There is a website, which is regularly updated, at [u3a in Scotland](https://u3asites.org.uk/). Social media is on Facebook and Twitter (now known as X). You can visit both via the links on the [Online Across Scotland](https://u3asites.org.uk/onlineacrossscotland) website. The most recent newsletter can be accessed via this [link](#). The most recent Newsletter for 2024 is still in the process of publication. This is a link to the last one published in 2023. Already given here.

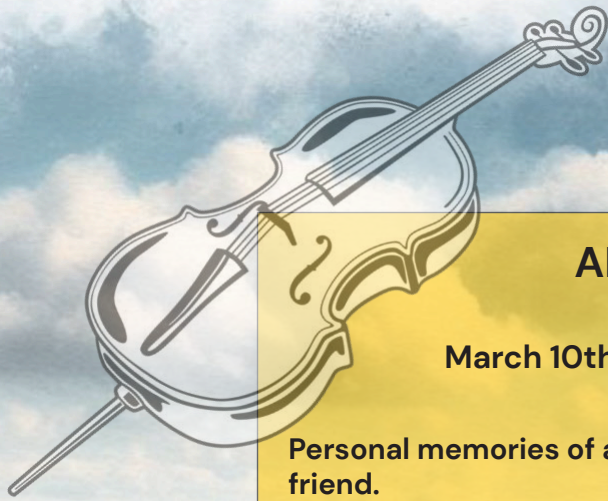
u3a Online Across Scotland Talks

- OAS is a group aimed at those u3a members who are unable or unwilling to attend u3a groups and meetings in person because they have no u3a locally, or their u3a does not run groups for a subject they wish to study, and for those members who have a disability, illness or caring responsibilities.
- OAS has a programme of talks to which all u3a members in Scotland are invited. These are held on the first Thursday of each month at 4pm.
<https://u3asites.org.uk/onlineacrossscotland/events>
- Take a look also at all the [groups](#) on offer through OAS. These are being constantly added to as further interesting groups and short courses come on line.

Unsubscribe from Third Age Matters Magazine

If you wish to stop receiving the printed copy of the u3a Trust magazine, TAM, please request to be unsubscribed by contacting:

Sandra Goodswen,
membership@eastlothianu3a.org.uk



ALAN GORDON

March 10th, 1938 – January 5th, 2024

Personal memories of a good and happy family man, and friend.

Alan will be remembered by members of the u3a for his participation in the Folk and Jazz music groups. His favourite forms of music.

I had known Alan for over fifty years and a very early memory rose from mention of a wok I had received at Christmas 1982. This spurred the suggestion by Alan that we hold regular dinner parties of four couples, based on a theme, the first being China and at which the men would do all the cooking.

One of many highlights was the consumption of a bottle of champagne in 1984. Alan had saved this specially for a Scotland grand slam win in the five nations rugby championship. These dinners lasted until 2014.

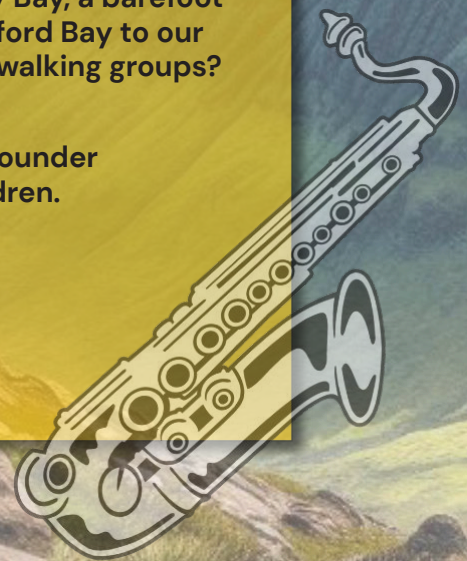
We walked together a lot covering a few Monroes and many local walks. The most memorable was a walk from Gullane to Port Seton in a straight line. No deviations.

Freak conditions, maybe, but we passed the submarines and timber shipwrecks on the tide line in Aberlady Bay, a barefoot crossing of the Peffer Burn and on across Gosford Bay to our destination. Maybe a future challenge for our walking groups?

Alan leaves his wife Margaret, one of our u3a founder members, his four children and ten grandchildren.

We miss you, Alan.

Glen Gibb





u3a learn,
laugh,
live

**Coffee Morning with free
coffee, tea and cakes!**

Open to all

Saturday 25th May

10.00 am to 12 noon

**Trinity Centre, 5 Church Street,
Haddington**

- Meet us there! Bring your friends. Discover your local u3a.
- View some of our activities with Group Leaders – and find a group that interests you.
- Join us to make new friends and have fun learning something different.
- Visit our website for more information.

<https://eastlothianu3a.org.uk>



Newsletter feedback...

We hope you've enjoyed reading the new format newsletter.
If you have a moment, we'd love to get some feedback!

Please complete our short questionnaire as soon as possible
and before the end of May. Thank you.

Give us your feedback
on the Newsletter >>>>

Click
here

Newsletter published by

u3a East Lothian

Editor: Dianne Murray

Contact the Editor at news@eastlothianu3a.org.uk

The next issue of the Newsletter will be the Summer Issue.

The closing date for contributions is July 1st, 2024

- Please send any articles, notices and photographs to the Editor.
- Please ensure that those in the photos have given permission for these to be used, and inform the Editor. Please, where possible, give your photo a title and give the name of the photographer.
- Please submit a plain text file, with photographs as separate JPEG files.

New notices and diary dates are shown on the Notices and Events pages of www.eastlothianu3a.org.uk

learn, laugh, live