



By the time you read April's edition of the Newsletter we will have celebrated Easter. It is such a lovely, optimistic and promising time of year. Young children will have enjoyed all the fun of Easter Egg hunts and it is a time for families to celebrate together. Perhaps some of us will enjoy some quiet reflection, thinking of others who are not so fortunate. We will have put our clocks forward and be enjoying longer days. Those with gardens are keen to be planting, weeding and generally tidying up and enjoying their green spaces. Even if you only have the opportunity to fill a few pots or window boxes you will be rewarded with a splash of colour. At the very least we may enjoy the city's so many green spaces. The signs of new growth and new life are everywhere; birds nesting, young lambs frolicking in the fields and new born Highland cattle captivating visitors at Pollok Park. In March we were delighted to welcome back Clem Clements to talk about The Bell Rock Lighthouse and Arbroath at our monthly meeting. Clem's talk was extremely interesting and covered the period from before the iconic lighthouse was built and the controversy as to whether it was built by Robert Stevenson or John



Rennie. One thing not in dispute is the number of lives that have been saved since the erection of the lighthouse. The talk was enhanced in that one member of the audience,

Irene Stewart, had a grandfather and great grandfather, both of whom had been lighthouse keepers, one on the Rock and one on Fair Isle.

"Reading about the lecture on the Bell Rock led me to look out the information I had on my family links with this lighthouse. In the photograph the man on the right is my great grandfather who was the Principal keeper on this rock for almost

8 years from 1900 - one month on the rock and one month with his family in Arbroath. This was the situation for all families associated with ROCK lighthouses and it was a much more difficult way of life than for those at a land lighthouse who all lived together near the lighthouse. One of those was the man on the left, my grandfather, who was stationed on Fair Isle for 5 years from 1908. During this time these 3 children were born—my mother, aunt and uncle. All keepers spent 5 to 9 years at a specific lighthouse before moving to another."



## April Botanics speaker

What could be nicer, as spring reassures us that there is still much beauty in the world, than a talk about the creation and maintenance of our beautiful Glasgow Botanic Gardens? The speaker at our monthly meeting on 16th April is Robert Jamieson who chairs the Friends of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, a small charity with about 300 members which supports the work of the Gardens, improves public participation and education.

A retired GP, Robert has lived in the West End for many years and for the last 10 years he has been a garden guide in the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. Three years ago, he was invited to help Friends of Glasgow Botanic

Gardens and staff at the gardens train garden guides and set up tours for the public and groups. During 2025 over 1000 individuals joined a tour. Tours take place throughout the year and times vary with the season and are advertised at [glasgowbotanicgardens.com](http://glasgowbotanicgardens.com).

Friends do not charge for the tours but appreciate a donation at the "Tap and Donate" machine in the Kibble Palace. The monies raised are used to support the Gardens. Robert will give an illustrated presentation including the history of the Gardens and its present collections.



## Music Appreciation - Pop Nostalgia

The next Pop Nostalgia meeting is on Monday 13th at noon in 1051 GWR mezzanine. You can contact us via [this link](#).



## Local History Group

Our March outing was a visit to Dundee, to the Verdant Works Museum, set in a lovely, restored mill building. We were met in the historic cobbled courtyard by volunteer Richard, suitably attired as in the Mill Manager. Richard introduced us to the industrial and social heritage of the Dundee area, or 'Jutesopolis', highlighting the developing role played by the Verdant Works. Richard explained the links with India in the system of collecting and processing the jute. Other volunteers demonstrated the machines at work.

Along with the upstairs social history section, the museum houses interesting artefacts and models which helped weave together the social, industrial and political history that is integral to Dundee's past. It is no wonder then that Dundee claims the original meaning of the word 'heckle'! The cafe is situated in the former boiler room where our group enjoyed a lovely lunch.

Apparently, Dundee is also the sunniest city in Scotland. The city certainly lived up to its name during our recent visit with bright sunshine all day.

Find out more about the group [here](#).



## A Date for Your Diary

**8th - 10th May: Dumfries House, Ayrshire**

The Boswell Book Festival has been running for 15 years. Named after James Boswell, Dr. Johnson's famous fellow traveller and biographer, it is the only book festival in the world dedicated to Biography and Memoirs. For those of you who have never been it would be a great opportunity to choose to listen to some of the wide-ranging events. Choose your events before deciding which day to come - it is only an hour from Glasgow – or make a weekend of it.

<https://dumfries-house.org.uk/>

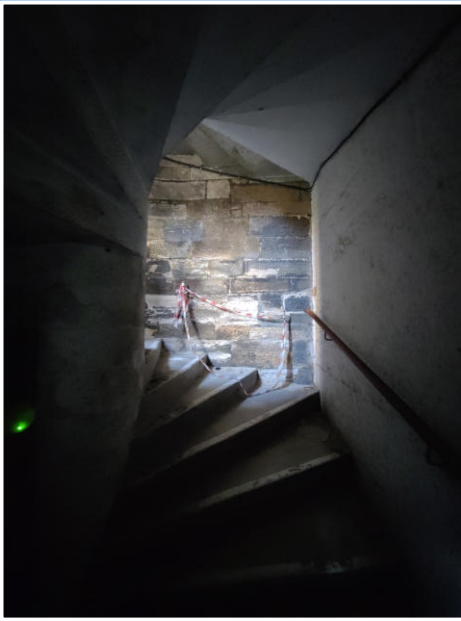
## MOTO

The social group for members on their own continues to meet in Cottiers once a month for a catch up. We also share social ideas in our WhatsApp Group and have a separate Curry Club. Join us if you'd like to be more socially active in 2026! Learn more [here](#).



## Forthcoming Concert

For those of you who love choral singing, [here is information](#) about a forthcoming Concert at St John's Renfield Church on the 9th May.



David Rush



Alan Watt



Gordon Saunders

## Photography

The project for our April Zoom meeting was to photograph Glasgow University (or other centres of learning if more convenient). A group

of us met at the University to experience some sunshine and a lot of cold wind! We soldiered on, as you can see from the sample of shots shown here, snapped by David Rush (cellar stairs), Alan Watt (University

tower), and Gordon Saunders (sculpture). Next we tackle Looking Up and /or Looking Down. You'll see some of the results here next month. For more information please get in touch [here](#).

## Art Appreciation 2

This month's outing was an enjoyable visit to Edinburgh to see 'The Biba Story: 1964-1975' at the Dovecot Studios. The Biba Story explores how the phenomenon that was Biba became known as one of the world's first lifestyle labels, changing how people shopped and how the Biba name earned its spot as the brand that epitomises 1960s and 1970s fashion.

The exhibition looks at the history from the first simple checked dresses to the glamorous sequinned wraps, leopard print coats, floppy hats and feather boas, to home furnishings and make up. Under its founder, Barbara Hulanicki, the era lasted just over 10 years and remains influential. The venue shows a short film highlighting the background and partnerships involved in the story. The displays are set up well, alongside historical story boards, linking to world events. Needless to say, this resonated well with our group members, who had lots of very interesting stories of their own to add.

Some members also spent time around the other exhibits in the Dovecot Studios. Some of us stayed for a nice lunch in the cafe. Luckily, our weather stayed sunny throughout the day.

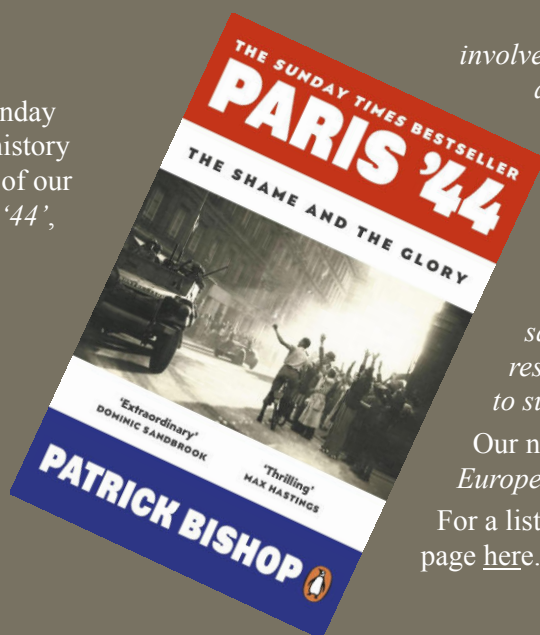
For information on Art Appreciation 2 please click [here](#)



## History Book 1

The group meets monthly on Monday mornings to discuss non-fiction history books. Below is a review by one of our members of our last read, 'Paris '44', by Paul Bishop.

*"Paris '44 is well-written, informative and very interesting. Bishop captures the mood and context of both occupation and liberation, the personalities and motivation of a varied cast list of supporters of Nazism, collaborators,*



*involved and passive and resisters, quiet and active, the involvement of a wide range of characters ranging from international figures like Eisenhower and De Gaulle to ordinary Parisians. It left us with an unsettling question - what would our decision have been faced with the same options - supporter, collaborator, resister or just keep quiet in order to survive?"*

Our next read is 'Baltic, the Future of Europe', by Oliver Moody.

For a list of future reads, please visit our web page [here](#).

## IT Help



The IT Help Group next meets on Monday 13th April (moved back a week because of Easter). Our May date is Monday 4th May. We will have volunteer members with some experience on hand to help with any issues you are having - IT issues, smart phone problems, social media etc.

Please note the volunteers are not IT professionals but will use their experience to help solve problems. If we don't know how to fix something we will try and find out! This is a drop-in group at Cottiers bar /restaurant, 93-95 Hyndland Street between 2 and 3pm. No need to book a slot - just pop in!

Contact us on [this link](#).

## Science and Technology

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 15th April when Dwight Tse and Tess Davis will talk about "Older adults' preparedness for extreme temperatures".

Meetings take place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from September to June (omitting December) at 3pm at Partickhill Bowling Club, 46 Partickhill Road, Glasgow G11 5BY. The group also has a WhatsApp Group which is run by Alan Watt on which we share items such as links to articles and broadcasts about science that may be of interest. If members of the group want to join the WhatsApp Group they can ask me to put them in touch with Alan so he can add them to it.

### 2025-26 Programme

You can see details of the programme for this session on the group's web page.

Find out more information about the group, and how to join, [here](#).

Val (Group Leader)





## Games For Fun

Games for fun continue twice each month - on the first Monday and third Tuesday from 2-4pm in Cottiers bar/restaurant, 93-95 Hyndland Street.

Our next meetings are on Tuesday 21st April and Monday 4th May from 2- 4 pm.

We are playing a variety of games and have added new games to our list. We are always open to new ideas and you are welcome to bring your favourite games. Join us if you can for an afternoon of fun!

If you plan to come but are not yet a member of the group, please contact us via our web page at [this link](#).



## Mah Jong

West End Mah Jong is a lively and friendly group of members who enjoy the game, are even passionate about it, and love the challenge of new and special hands. It's not really about winning as much as challenging our brains. Although winning makes it even more fun if luck is on your side!

If you are interested in playing, or learning how to play, [click on this link](#) to contact us.

## MCR Pathways

We have been contacted by MCR Pathways who work with young people and who are looking for Mentors, MCR Pathways is an award-winning mentor charity, driven by the belief that no young person should be held back by their circumstances. We ask volunteer mentors to dedicate just 1 hour a week during term time to support a young person at school who is either care experienced or experiencing some sort of instability in their life. Their mentor is there to just be a trusted adult they can speak to about anything they wish - so no special skills needed, just the ability to listen! Through encouragement, empathy and belief,

mentors help young people to find the confidence to pursue their passions, believe in themselves and overcome challenges. We also believe that this transformation can work both ways - with many mentors gaining a renewed sense of purpose, and learning lots of things they didn't know before. You can learn more and register to volunteer by clicking the link below.

If this is of interest, please feel free to contact them directly - they are already working in schools in and around the West End.

<https://mcrpathways.org/become-a-mentor/>



## Tuesday Morning Coffee

Our Tuesday morning coffee group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at Annies on the Corner at Anniesland Cross. The next catch up is on Tuesday 14th April at 10.30am.

Please let us know if you plan to come as it is a very busy coffee shop and they keep tables for us! Find out more on [our web page](#).

## Ventures with a Bus Pass

We had a last-minute change of plan for our March outing (as a result of Central Station being closed and our proposed bus being busier than normal). We took the opportunity to revisit Dunfermline. Unfortunately, we were there on one of the worst days of the year - with torrential rain and sleet being the order of the day! Nonetheless many of us made it to the Abbey. We dried off with a lovely lunch so all in all it was still a very enjoyable day.

Our April outing will be on Friday 10th April and will be to Moffat.

If you would like to know more about us, or want to join Ventures with a Bus Pass on future visits, please [contact us via the website](#), and click on the Co-ordinator link.

## u3a in Scotland

The u3a in Scotland (with Gail Donaldson as Chair) organised a wonderful day for Scottish u3as in Pitlochry Festival Theatre. The booked accommodation held 100 and was a sellout in 48 hours. A waiting list was created. Some of us from GWEu3a were able to get on the list.



After a sunny drive to the Theatre we were entertained to a talk by David Cunningham (Helensburgh u3a) on lighting in theatre. This was followed by a question and answer session with Colin McCredie. Gail Donaldson took the role of Graham Norton and was truly brilliant. A relaxing, informative session with Colin for the next 45 minutes kept us entertained.



A sandwich lunch was served efficiently, allowing us all to be fed and ready for the next session by Ray Leakey (Oban u3a) on the RRS Sir David

Attenborough. A really informative session. We finished with a session on costume design ably taken by three young women employed by the Theatre.

Twenty lucky people signed up for the tour at the very end of the day. George Cleland was able to put most of it on zoom. A great day! <https://scotland.u3asite.uk/>

## The u3a House of Lords Visit

The u3a movement took a step in raising its profile in Westminster last week, as u3a members from across the UK attended a special invitation visit to the House of Lords. The event formed part of the Third Age Trust's ongoing work to ensure that u3a expertise, particularly around positive ageing, is heard by policymakers in both Houses. Each region and nation of the UK was allocated two places for the visit so that a wide spread of u3as were represented. Liz Ervine, Council Representative u3a Scotland, represented Scotland.

We began the day with a guided tour of the Palace of Westminster, a truly magnificent part of our architectural heritage that represents the four nations of the UK. After the tour (and some notable weak tea), we gathered in the Attlee Room for a Q&A session with four members of the House of Lords. Representing a mix of



political parties, the members all had an interest in lifelong learning, education and housing. One continues to work part-time in a London state school. They wanted everyone to be encouraged to develop their full potential no matter their age. During this session, we gained a deeper understanding of the role of the House of Lords and its 400 active members. We learnt that the second chamber is needed to give proposed parliamentary bills proper scrutiny. Many peers play substantial roles on committees and their expenses are used to support research teams. It was really interesting to hear how political change comes about through individuals coming

together to act.

Over a sandwich lunch, we had more opportunities to talk to Lords, Baronesses, and the HoL Comms Team. Peers showed strong awareness of lifelong learning and enthusiasm for the work of u3a. The Comms team were also keen to build a relationship with u3a. We then had the chance to watch part of Lords question time, a very civilised affair covering a wide range of interesting topics.

### Next steps

During the day, a number of next steps were discussed. One proposal was the possibility of a House member becoming an ambassador for u3a in Westminster. This would

allow u3a to contribute to focus groups on positive ageing, non formal learning, social isolation and other related policy areas. It was a very positive, productive day, but shouldn't be seen as a standalone event. Instead, it's the beginning of a deeper relationship between u3a and Parliament. Strengthening this connection could help ensure the voices and experiences of older adults are better represented in national policy discussions.

The event certainly raised the profile of the u3a. Thanks to Harriet Radermacher and the u3a Policy Team for their work in supporting the event, and to the HoL Comms Team for their welcome and organisation. For all of us who attended, the day was a classic example of learning and living and well worth the early start! For me, it was a great privilege to share with others what the u3a movement is about and what it means to me and to others.