

u3a

Paisley and District Newsletter
April/May 2026

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Chair's Update

Hello Paisley and District u3a members,
Hope you have been enjoying some of the recent spring like weather.
Let's hope it continues!



Jane Fraser and I represented Paisley and District u3a at the u3a in Scotland Spring Meeting on 23 March in Pitlochry. The event was based at the prestigious Pitlochry Festival Theatre. There were over 100 delegates and 50 u3as represented. This was a really interesting event. Highlights included an input from David Cunningham who talked about his international career in lighting across opera and musicals.

We enjoyed a Q and A session with Colin McCredie a Scottish actor whose credits included a long run in *Taggart* and *River City*. There was a fabulous exhibition of costumes from previous theatre productions, an input from their wardrobe dept as well as a tour of the Theatre.



I am looking forward to our monthly meeting on **2 April** when our speakers are talking about the work of The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice.

Our 8th Paisley and District u3a AGM ,which was scheduled for our April meeting, has now been been rescheduled for **4 June**. It will be held in the Salvation Army Hall in Paisley where we hold our monthly meetings. We are currently looking to recruit some members to help on the committee as well as with other regular tasks. Members of the committee are happy to chat to you informally about how you can get involved or please get in touch via the website Contacts page. We welcome you assisting your u3a. We hope you will be able to come along to our AGM and enjoy being part of our vibrant u3a!

We plan to offer you a spring day trip event to Kirkcudbright, the Artist town. Details to follow.

Best Wishes
Kathy O'Donnell
Chair of Paisley and District u3a

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Information about all of our interest groups and how to join is available on our website, using the following link ... <https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/groups/>. You will be contacted as soon as possible by the relevant group leader. Alternatively, you can send enquiries to our Membership Secretary, Andy Fairley at: <https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/contacts/>.

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Architecture

Duncan Macintosh (Usually monthly on Thursdays at 10:30am)

In February, the Architecture Group was guided around Paisley Abbey by Abbey guides.

In March, we did a walk around Renfrew Town Centre, with a brief look inside the small but excellent local history museum, a frankly modern 2012 extension to the “gingerbread” 1870s Town Hall. The visit ended in the extraordinary interior of Renfrew Trinity Church, transformed in 1903-4 by WD McLennan. We followed this with lunch in the church cafe.

In April, a return visit to the most outstanding of WD McLennan's four churches, Re-Hope church in Gordon St, Paisley (pictured). Is planned. For more details please visit our website.



Art Appreciation

Interim Group Leaders: Liz Cuthbertson & Anne Findlay (Monthly, Tuesdays)



On 22 March, 8 members attended the *Constable/Turner* screening documentary at Eastwood Theatre. All agreed it was very worthwhile .

Then on 24 March, 10 members visited the Lillie Gallery in Milngavie. We enjoyed a display of black and white photographs by David Peat. These included "A street perspective" of 1968 Glasgow, mainly the back streets of the Gorbals area and "World Perspective" street scenes taken over a 40 year period. All very evocative. We also saw "Iona with love" by Barbara Sellars. Beautiful prints mainly of beach and rock scenes. Lastly, "She who figures", a small display of items from the Gallery collection by women artists. The curator also gave us a

short talk on the history, objectives and future plans for the Gallery.

If you are interested in art and have not joined our group before, why not give us a try?

We aim to visit either an exhibition or an art gallery at the end of each month. Members can also enjoy meeting up for a coffee or lunch together after each visit. Our spring program is currently being finalised by Anne and Liz, our interim group leaders. If you want to go on the mailing list, or to find out details about future visits please log onto: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/art-appreciation/.

Art and Painting

Chris Dykes (Monthly, 3rd Tuesday, St. George's Halls, Causeyside St, 1:00pm-3:00pm)

We have just completed our third block of sessions. There is no tuition but it gives our members a chance for two hours peace and quiet to pursue our own individual projects. We get a chance to support each other and learn from each other over a cup of tea and biscuits. Below are some of our finished projects.

If we have enough interest, we hope to offer another block on [Tuesday 21 April, 19 May, and 16 June](#). There is a small cost of around £12 per block to cover hall rental and refreshments.



Board Games

Interim Group Leader: Gwyneth Richmond

(Kilbarchan Library, 1st Tuesday monthly 2:00pm-4:00pm)



On the first Tuesday of the month you can find a lively group of people playing board games, old and new, in the upstairs lounge of the Old Library in Kilbarchan. We pay £3.00 per person, per meeting, which includes a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit normally taken about half way through. We meet at 2:00pm and finish at 4:00pm.

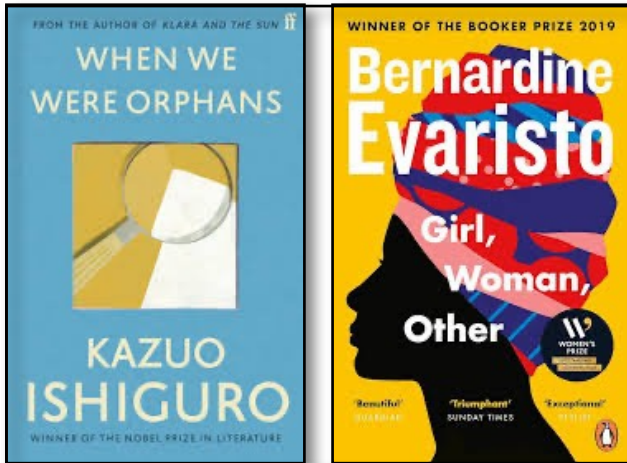
We are always pleased to welcome new members. We have plenty of games, thanks to our participants. However, if you have a favourite one, please feel free to bring it along with you. Our next Games afternoon is [Tuesday 7th April](#). Look forward to seeing you then.

Book Group

Dee Barnfield (Paisley Library, 11:00am-12:00pm, 1st Thursday of each month)

It was great to catch up in February to discuss Andrew O'Hagan's *Caledonian Road* – a complex and fascinating novel, that definitely benefited from two months to read! Back to a normal-sized novel for March – Damon Galgut's *The Promise* had a shorter character list, but was also ambitious in its sweep of history approach to decades of great change in South Africa, seen primarily through the lens of one family and the people around them.

TRIVIA QUESTION
Who is the new Archbishop of Canterbury?



We're going to be discussing *When We Were Orphans* by Kazuo Ishiguro in April and Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* in May. These are two excellent writers.

Talking of May, the Paisley Book Festival Programme has just been announced for the weekend of **May 15-17**, with events happening mostly at The Town Hall. As ever, it's a smorgasbord of familiar and less well-known names, encompassing a range of genres and topics, under the strapline "*Everyday Heroes Everlasting Icons*". Here's a link to the Programme: <https://paisleybookfestival.com/programme-full/>

For any queries about the Book Group or if you'd like to come and join us, please email me, Dee, at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/book-club/.

Bridge Buddies

Chris Dykes (Member's home, Paisley. Every Wednesday, 1:30pm-3:30pm)

We are a small group of enthusiastic players who would welcome new members along, whatever your level of ability. We meet on Wednesday afternoons, in a fellow bridge-player's home. After the session we have a break for refreshments and a quick catch-up.

Each week we try to improve our bidding and playing skills by chatting about how we could have played a better hand. Luckily we manage to do this in a friendly way! If you are interested in learning how to play bridge or want more details on the group, please contact me, Chris at:

https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/bridge-buddies/.



Chair Yoga

Candy Millard (Wednesdays 2:30pm-3:15pm. St George's Church Halls)

Our chair yoga group continues to stretch us. Margaret, our tutor, always has something new for us to try, whether it be yoga bands, new warrior poses or yin yoga.

The Wednesday sessions are full but after Easter we will offer a set of taster sessions on a Monday lunchtime in St George's Church Halls. Hopefully, we can get a second group running. It will cost £10 for four taster *Introduction to Chair Yoga* sessions. This is great value and a great opportunity to see if chair yoga is for you. If you are interested in coming along to this activity or want to ask any questions, please contact Candy at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/chair-yoga/.



**To save on washing up
PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR OWN CUP
to our monthly meetings. Free refills!**

Cinema and Theatre

Carole Delaney & May McFadden (Variable)

On Sunday 8 March, 13 members attended the Showcase for a screening of The Royal Ballet performing the timeless, romantic ballet, *Giselle*, first danced in Paris in 1841. In tradition with classical ballet, the principal dancers get to demonstrate their skills alongside the precision and grace of the female dancers, the athleticism of the males, the immaculate footwork and synchronisation of the Corps de Ballet. Enhanced by the wonderful musical score by Adolphe Adam, the general response was positive.



We are returning to the Citizens Theatre on **9 April**, when 11 members will be going to a matinee performance of *I, Daniel Blake*. This is an adaptation of Ken Loach's powerful film about how people come together in the face of adversity. Later that month, members are to be offered another visit to the Showcase for a performance by the National Theatre of *All my Sons*, a 3- act play written in 1946 by Arthur Miller.

If you are interested in joining the group or would like to know more, please contact May or Carole at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/cinema-theatre/. We will look forward to your company at future events.

Conversational Spanish

May Diver (Mondays 2:00pm-3:30pm: Kilbarchan Old Library)

There is a *deja-vu* feeling in our group as we re-learn some staples in the Spanish language. We have gone back to basics by practicing the Spanish alphabet (eg to spell our names to hotel receptionists) and stating numbers as if to barter in a market. It certainly helps parts of our brain to focus and it's all done in a fun way.



Currently we are translating and reading aloud parts of the novel *Como agua para chocolate* by Laura Esquivel which is set in Mexico. Cooking, food, family and thwarted love are important themes in this book, which was also made into a film. Our group is also learning how to use commands in Spanish. Recently, we had to direct our group leader, May, to make a pretend cake. We were given her favourite recipe to translate. So we had to explain the ingredients needed and give May exact instructions for each part of the process. It made *Bake-off* seem effortless!

New members are always welcome. We tend to have a quick chat first (in English) and enjoy a tea/coffee before we speak in Spanish. (It costs just £3 per person for the venue hire and refreshments.)

If you have some basic Spanish and want to practice speaking this language with others, then please do come along and join us. For more information, please contact May at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/conversational-spanish/.

Crochet

Wilma McPherson (Tuesdays 11:00am, weekly)

The Crochet group is very popular and there is a waiting list to start a second group. If you want to put your name on the list, or perhaps you could start another Crochet group, please get in touch with me, Chris at: <https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/groups/>.



Garden Gang

Valerie Reilly (Generally 2nd Wednesday of each month)

The last indoor meeting of the Garden Gang's winter session, in February, was on the subject of indigo, when members learned there was so much more to this fascinating plant than the dyeing of denim jeans!



As promised, in March we had our first outdoor meeting, and once more the weather gods were smiling on us! On a beautiful warm sunny morning we up at the National Trust for Scotland's Geilston Garden near Cardross. We followed a published trail around the garden, noting where fruit and vegetables will soon be flourishing.

We were treated to 'a host of golden daffodils' as we ambled towards the burn, and in the walled garden we were impressed by the size of the giant redwood. Afterwards we repaired to a nearby garden centre where we enjoyed an excellent and convivial lunch!

Our next expedition will visit community gardens in West Kilbride on **8 April**, followed on **14 May** by a trip to the gardens of Inverary Castle. Please get in touch if you fancy joining us! You can contact me, Valerie at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/the-garden-gang/.

Lunch Group

Alex Smith (Dates vary each month)

The next outing for the Lunch group is a visit to the Mill and Brae hotel in Glenburn Road, Paisley. Members are meeting on **Tuesday 14 April at 12.30pm** to enjoy a meal in amiable company. People in the group choose the venues we go to each month, most of which are in Paisley and Glasgow. Lunch lasts a few hours and includes the cost of your chosen dish(es), plus a tip for restaurant staff. If you'd like to go out for lunch sometime and try a range of good food then please get in touch with me, Alex for more details at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/lunch-club/.



Music Appreciation

Don Page (Monthly on the last Friday, 2:00pm in Paisley Library)



This is a friendly group which meets to discuss different aspects of music. We select two albums to listen to at home then we meet up to discuss them track by track. It is a great way to get to know new pieces of music.

In February we listened to *The Very Best of Lindisfarne* and *Captain Marvel* by Stan Getz. For March we heard *Tubular Bells III* and *Even in the Quietest Moments* by Supertramp.

We usually agree at the end of each meeting which two albums we wish to hear next and discuss the following month. You can find our chosen albums for April and May on the website. Meantime, if you would like to come along to the group, please do contact me, Don at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/music-appreciation/.

Music Makers

Ellen Bailie (Monthly, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, day varies)

We are an enthusiastic group of musicians who enjoy getting together to play a variety of music. The group comprises of flute, guitars, ukelele, vocals, harmonica and keyboard players. The emphasis is on learning, having fun and making music together. The group has now started on a new set of folk music with *Scarborough Fair*, *MacPherson's Rant*, *Jambalaya* and *The Green Glens of Antrim*, finishing with *The Lewis Bridal Song*.

In addition to group playing, members also bring their own contributions for the group to listen to. Recently we had *Stand by Me* on ukulele, *The Boys of Blue Hill* on flute, *Irish Washerwoman* on harmonica and flute and a rendition of *In My Liverpool Home*.



Courtesy freepik.com

Although the group is currently full, if you are interested, please get in touch with the Group Leader, Ellen at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/music-makers/.

Opera Appreciation

Kathy O'Donnell & Jane Fraser (Variable, depending on performance schedules)

Our group have a couple of outings planned over the next few months. We would be delighted if you wanted to join us. On **21 April, at 6:45pm**, we are planning a trip to Silverburn cinema to see *The Magic Flute live from Covent Gardens*. This is a popular Mozart favourite directed by David McVicar.

Then on **30 April, at 7:00pm** the Glasgow University Opera Society is performing *The Fairy Queen at Cottiers* in the Glasgow West End. Inspired by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* is an opera that weaves mischief and whimsy together through its delightful baroque score. Tickets are £11 concession rate.



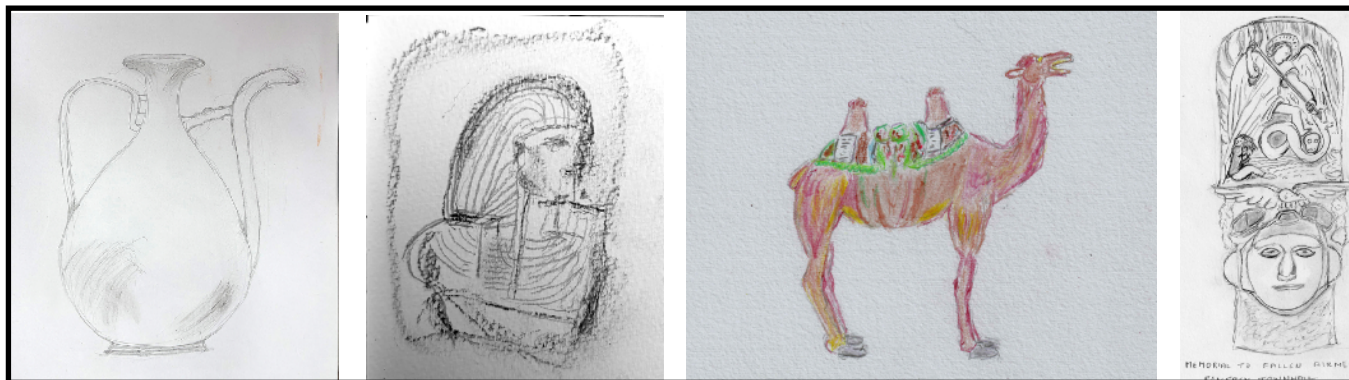
In May, come and support your fellow u3a members performing in *Carmen*. This production is set in the sixties and has been translated into a Paisley dialect. It will be performed in the Tannahill Centre, Ferguslie Park on **16 May, 19 May and 21 May** (all evening performances.) The matinee show is **Sunday, 24 May**. Tickets cost £20.

If you wish to come and join us, or you would like more details, please get in touch with us, Kathy and Jane at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/opera-appreciation/.

Outdoor Sketching Kate Colyer (Tuesdays Monthly)

In February we went to sketch some items at The Burrell Collection in Glasgow. Last month we went to Renfrew and visited the Town Hall.

We usually meet on the second Tuesday of the month, so **14 April** is our next outing. The choice of location is weather dependent and all the details will be made available on the website. If you are interested in this group or would like to receive information via our mailing list then please do get in touch with me, Kate at: <https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a-groups/outdoor-sketching/>



Pickleball Irene Keith (Monday 1:00pm-2:00pm, ON-X Linwood)

Pickleball has become so popular that the Monday group is now full. Below are photos from our last mini competition. Congratulations to all participants and especially the winning pair, Darren Smith and Alice Lawrie. However, we cannot create another group just yet because of proposed court changes. OneRen which runs various sports facilities for the local council has decided to close four courts at the On-X in Linwood. These will be replaced with the installation of an indoor artificial football pitch.



At the Lagoon in Paisley, the proposal is to remove the six playing courts and introduce a soft play area for children when the new grammar school opens.

While these changes are expected to generate more income for the local authority, they will, and have, reduced our access to available courts for pickleball. We regret that for now we are unable to give any newcomers an opportunity to try this game. We are investigating other options going forward and updates will go on the website.

If you'd like your name to go on a waiting list for future pickleball sessions, please contact me, Irene, at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/pickleball/.

Science and Technology

Don Page (2:00pm, 4th Thursday of the month, Café Bianco E Nero)

This is a friendly group where we watch science videos at home, then discuss them in a café over coffee and cakes. Some of the concepts are difficult but there is enough expertise in the group to help us understand.



In March 2026 we watched on iPlayer - *The Human* series, part 3 - *Last humans standing* with new insights into the demise of the Neanderthals. We are also following *AI Confidential* Part 1 featuring Professor Hannah Fry. She takes a deep dive into the most extraordinary human stories emerging from the world of AI.

In **April**, we will watch *Human* part 4 - *Discovering the Americas* at home and then continue discussing themes which arise from this and from *AI Confidential* Part 2.

In **May**, we will continue with *Human* part 5 - *A Great Gamble*. It features people moving from nomadic life to permanent settlements. Plus we can review *AI Confidential* Part 3 - *Death by Driverless Car*.

Please come and join us in our conversations, or see the latest group details at:

https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/science-and-technology/.

Silver Screen NEW

Jane Fraser (Monthly, 2:00pm on a Thursday)



This new group enjoyed its first movie screening on 26 February when *All About Eve* starring Bette Davis was shown. This 1950s film centred around a pivotal relationship between a highly regarded but aging movie star and an ambitious young fan. It went on to receive a record 14

nominations at the 23rd Academy Awards in 1951.

In March, some members watched *Old Acquaintance*, again featuring Bette Davis. Members commented on the quality of both scripts and stories in older films. On the bill for April and May are movies where Cary Grant has a leading role. If you would like to go on the mailing list, or check future film screenings, please get in touch with Jane at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/silver-screen/

Singing Group

Alex Smith (Weekly/Thursdays, 11:00am, St. George's Church, Paisley)

Last month was atypical in that the group did not meet every Thursday. Our voice leader and educator, Stephanie Strachan went to America to attend an audition. Then the fire which closed down Central Station caused havoc with her travel plans. However, the group is now back on track and enjoying a range of songs on Thursday mornings. (Members pay a monthly fee for hiring the hall and the singing coach). So if you like to sing, why not come and join us? It's enormous fun. Please contact me, Alex if you would like any more information at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/singing/.



Table Tennis

Irene Keith, (2nd and 4th Sunday monthly, noon – 1:00pm, Renfrew Leisure Centre)

Our u3a table tennis group is already full and it only started a few months ago! Members are enjoying the chance to bat a ball around, or at speed, in Renfrew Leisure Centre. Unfortunately, the demand for courts to play on is outstripping local availability and we cannot start another table tennis group just yet. If you are interested in putting your name on the waiting list, please contact me, Irene at: https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/table-tennis/.



***ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION
Dame Sarah Mullally DBE***

CONFUSED?

WHAT CAN I DO AND WHEN?

No more missed events. Go to our u3a website for our *What's On* calendar at <https://paisleydistrict.u3asite.uk/whatson/>



WHAT'S ON APRIL/MAY

Sat 4-Sun 5 April
10:00am-4:00pm

Riverside Museum Spring Market

*More than 60 stalls selling crafts and
handmade items
Riverside Museum*

Free

8-10 May

May Fèis Weekend

*Celebration of traditional Gaelic music and
song
Paisley Arts Centre*

22 May-25 May
10:00am-5:00pm

Ideal Home Scotland

Inspiration for your home and garden

Paisley and District u3a **AGM**

Thursday 4 June

Salvation Army Hall

(Doors open 13:30pm)

To be Followed by our speaker

Tricia McKinnon

Talking about

***J&P Coats, their
embroidery and the Paisley
Mills***



Monthly Meeting Programme

Thursday, 5 April: Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice

A presentation on the varied work of this hospice

Thursday 7 May : Bill Hicks & Jill Scott

Stories from the Sunday Post

Doors open at 1:30pm for a cup of tea and catch up. Meeting starts at 2:00pm