

Membership

We removed the infamous waiting list at the end of last year - offering everyone on the list immediate membership. It's interesting to note that when we looked at the Deed we find that people who are "of later years and no longer in full time paid employment" may become members! We now have a membership of 847 enthusiastic members. Our thanks to Lynda Jackson for her courteous and hard work in keeping our Membership Roll.

Contact with members.

This is always at the forefront of discussion at the Board meetings and we are aware that improvements are always needed. To this end we are continually adding information to the website and encourage members to log in regularly to see what is happening.

Of our total membership, 10% of people choose not to receive communication by email. We, therefore, continue to send hard copy of Forum, request for subscriptions, enrolments, and meeting information.

To encourage members to be involved in the work of U3A Dunedin, the Feedback Form for course evaluation now has available space for people to comment on the organisation as a whole. The Board takes great interest in these comments and learns that it is not possible to please everyone all time! Comments for and against venues, food, parking, speakers, sound systems and topics are many and varied!! Positive and negative ideas are considered carefully and acted upon when and where possible.

Courses

Doug Holborow and his team have been astonishing in their commitment of time and energy in producing such excellent, varied courses during the year. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to them.

With the inclusion of both Leith Bowling Club and Otago Golf Club, we are able to provide spaces for all members. (We still do not have a crystal ball to know when a course will be overbooked and therefore subjected to a ballot!) The ballot is now done entirely electronically and continues to be entirely random. It is regrettable that some people will miss out on their first choice occasionally but there will be places available on other courses. We now have processes in place for people wishing to attend a course with another, named person, single-session enrolments for certain under-subscribed courses and with a Ride-Share facility being the latest innovation to help members. Generally only two thirds of our membership enrol in a course and a recent survey tells us that being away from town and having other commitments are the main reasons why this happens.

The technical support given by IAV is invaluable. We thank them for their patience and support.

Small Groups - Earlier this year Otepoti Dunedin U3A merged with us, thus giving access to more Small Groups - we now have eleven. There is a current discussion on the name of this part of our organisation and a decision will soon be made about which name best describes this part of our work. We thank Ngaire Bates for her work in this area and look forward to more members taking up this different way of being part of U3A Dunedin.

It is gratifying to realise that all the work that goes into providing the courses is done voluntarily by many people.

A \$1,000.00 donation was made to the Dunedin Public Art Gallery in recognition of their planning and deliverance of a course run in Series 3, 2106. This is in line with other donations we have made to organisations contributing to successful Courses over the years.

Forum

Grateful thanks go to Geoff Adams for his work with Forum, keeping it lively and informative. This goes out four times a year - previously a hard copy was sent to each member but that proved very costly so the webpage is utilised for people using computers.

Website

Without the patience and expertise of Alan Jackson, our Web Editor, and John Shanks, our Webmaster, we would be lost! Many thanks are due to them for their work on our behalf. Two years ago we were still using paper and postage for all our communication and that took time and money. Now, with a click, members can check that their personal details are correct, see what courses are being offered, read Forum, look at public documents (the U3A

Deed etc.) apply for membership, etc. etc. and all the time we are making sure that members are able to find what they want in a timely and easy manner.

The design of the web means that we are able to email to members en bloc or in discrete groups when the need arises (e.g. cancellation of courses). For those without web access we continue to use the phone or mail systems.

Finances

With the hard work of Evan Taylor, our finances are in a good position. Thank you Evan for your commitment and thorough oversight of all our monies. I leave details of his report to Evan.

Board

During the year we accepted, with regret, the resignation of Gil Barbezat. His sound advice and support will be missed. Alistair Wright was welcomed and Dr. Elaine Webster joined as the University of Otago representative in place of Barrie Peake. Barry now takes his place as an elected member. Marion Potter continues as the appointed Board Secretary and we are grateful for her sterling work and support. Thank you to Gretchen Kivell and Bill McKinlay who have helped us with excellent advice and support during the year. All Board members deserve special thanks for their work.

Board meetings have previously been held monthly but this year we tried meeting every other month with the possibility of meeting for specific business between times. At our last Board meeting we discussed this and it is likely that six-weekly meetings will be held in future.

Ngaire Bates will be attending Board meetings to put forward issues arising from her Small Group portfolio. It is appropriate that here I can reiterate that any member is welcome to attend the meetings - (with prior notice please to the Secretary!).

Every Board member works hard for members. We, as members, need to be aware of the load that is carried by a few for many. There are opportunities for people to help with the production of courses, the finances and general administrative roles. Please do let us know if you can help. The more people that can help, the easier it is for us all.

We would like to **change our Deed** so we can hold our Annual General Meeting earlier than July if we wish -our financial year ends 31 December. The proposed change clarifies timing of notices. Thank you to Stephen Baird for his guidance with this move. During the year we also tidied up the question of when a member who fails to pay their annual subscription is deemed to have resigned. This has been clarified and now reads that if a sub is not paid by 31 March, then that person is deemed to have resigned. Because of the wonders of the web, we now do not have members attending sessions who have not paid their dues!

Future

The way we deliver programmes, their shape and subjects are constantly being scrutinised. The number of courses, the number of sessions, the length, venue, way of presentation and topics can vary. We need to make sure that what we offer is what our members want and that they will be satisfied with taking part.

Two way dialogue between the Board and members is being discussed. Is it enough? Do we need to initiate new processes? What are those processes? Who will benefit? How will we know that we are on the right track? Are we clear in our communications or are we peddling alternate facts?! There are exciting times ahead and I believe U3A Dunedin will carry on from strength to strength.

My thanks again to all Board members for their support and encouragement during the year. We are looking forward to an exciting and innovative future for our U3A. It is a well respected and well supported part of a vibrant Dunedin.

Jane Higham
Chairman
June 2017