



Letter from the Chair

U3A Dunedin

21st August 2018

It was decided at the last Board meeting that it would be a good idea to have a “letter from the Chair” to members who have internet. A lot goes on behind the scenes and it is important that members are well informed.

The Powerhouse of U3A is the Programmes Committee and it will not come as a surprise to know that planning for the Autumn courses 2019 is almost complete and the framework for the Winter series has been drafted. The feedback you give in the course feedback forms is very useful, especially if you suggest people who can help to organise the courses. i.e. names of actual people who can deliver lectures on suggested topics. We are also keen to recruit more members to act as Course Assistants for 2019 – training can be provided.

We are improving our health and safety rules for both sites and you will see a short slide presentation outlining them before the Spring lectures start. We are very conscious that age often brings slower movement to us and so we must prepare for best practice in the event of an emergency evacuation. We therefore ask that people with walking frames sit at the front of the venue (with their walkers) and, in an emergency, sit tight until the rooms are almost clear. The course assistants and convenor will help as required and will be the last to leave the building, having assisted all who need help.

We have arranged one new mini course on Apple Mac computers. This is an initiative from our Discussion Groups. There are two sessions on Monday afternoons. They filled up within 24 hours of being advertised. We look forward to feedback to see what other mini courses you would like. I wonder if anyone is interested in a mini course “how to get the best out of the U3A web site”?

Discussion Groups in Dunedin do not attract the same audiences as they do in places such as Tauranga – where there are almost 100 mini groups. A survey has recently been circulated to discover if there is more we can do with our Discussion Groups to meet the needs of our members – I hope that you might make time to complete it.

We shall try to arrange the three series in 2019 so as not to clash with school holidays as many members look after grandchildren at these times.

We have a group of former Board members looking at the use of our surplus funds. There were some suggestions made at the AGM and all of those ideas were passed on to the group for them to consider. (The composition of this committee is to avoid any suggestion of conflict of interest for current Board members.)

Our Treasurer and Web Master are working on a method to allow electronic payments to U3A directly from our web site – this will help with membership renewals, payment for courses etc. We hope to have it active for the membership renewals in November – if not then, then for course selection early next year.

Alan Jackson
Chair 2018-2019
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