



Letter from the Chair

U3A Dunedin

19th September 2018

In my last letter, I wrote that our Treasurer and Web Master are working on a method to allow electronic payments to U3A directly from our web site – this process has progressed well and we shall use the POLi system (Pay On Line debit system) – the same as that used by the New Zealand Transport Agency for renewing motor vehicle registrations. We will not use it for membership renewals in November but for course enrolments starting next February.

We have listened to some members who have found difficulty at lectures with the laser pointer being wriggled a little too vigorously causing some discomfort, and we have noted that some of our presenters, who may have larger hands, have found difficulty with the forward/backward buttons on the slide changer. So... we consulted out tech experts at Impressions Audio-Visual (aka Cy Newton) and he has come up with a new gadget with fewer buttons and a larger pointer. In fact the pointer can be turned into a magnifying glass and other shapes as well. Thanks to Cy for sourcing this for us – we hope you will find the difference an advantage.

We have also listened to some members who struggle with the pins on the name badges and others who don't like making holes in their clothes. Some people have been to conferences where lanyards are used with a name card suspended across the chest. If you have one of these at home, and you want to retire the U3A one – please do so. We have decided to get some U3A lanyards (blue cloth with gold printing) and these will be available at the start of next year. It is anticipated that they will be available for \$3, but they are *only an option* – you can use your own or the old badge holder PROVIDED THAT you DO wear a badge please.

The mini-Mac computer courses run by Bill Stanford on Monday afternoons are proving popular. We planned just the one, but have had to extend to four. Monday afternoons and Wednesday afternoons are potential times for more of these mini-courses.

A survey run by Ngaire Bates (Discussion Groups) to find out what new groups might be of interest and who might be keen to run a course has proved profitable and we should see a few more Groups established at the start of next year. Keep in touch with Ngaire (address on the Discussion Groups part of the web site) if you are keen on joining or running a group.

University of Otago staff provide the majority of our lecturers and whilst we don't make any payments for those, we do appreciate their work enormously and have made grants of \$6500 to various University Departments and the University of Otago Foundation.

The lecturers are most generous and mostly allow their slide presentations to go on our web site for later study. They are not available to the general public, only U3A members, who know how to log in to the site.

In the ways described above, and in many other small ways, your Board is striving to improve the organisation. We (like Toyota and Sony) work on the assumption that there is nothing so good as can't be improved – but we do admit that we can't satisfy every member in every way.

Alan Jackson
Chair 2018-2019