

Report to the Annual General Meeting

February 2023

Linda Kinniburgh

Chairperson 2021, 2022.

Kia ora koutou, Nau mai, Haere mai, ka mihi mahana ki a koutou. Good morning, everyone, welcome to this AGM, warmest of greetings to you all. A special welcome to those who have just joined us and are new members. Welcome, welcome.

It gives me great pleasure to present my second annual report as Chairperson of this charitable organisation, U3A Dunedin.

We commence our meeting by remembering those members who have died in the past year. We have sent condolences to the families of Gillian Watson, Sam Sneyd, Bill Swale, Colin Gibson and Yvonne Shanks. These are those we know about; there may be others. We will have a moment's silence to acknowledge their contribution to our organisation.

What have we achieved in 2022?

Our objective is to foster and develop education for people who form the Third Age population in the Dunedin region. We have a lively, well organised, focussed team of people who govern U3A Dunedin, a Programme Committee who participates and delivers a range of topics as our lecture series, and a group of dedicated people who facilitate our Interest Groups in fulfilment of our objective.

Our membership is currently (December 2022) at 914, down from 939 in May 2022. We have 66 new members over this time, and 91 withdrew. Many withdrawals were around the time of postponed courses related to the pandemic, and I know a few shifted away from Dunedin.

COVID continued to effect the delivery of courses last year, and we postponed Series One Autumn. These courses have been able to be delivered later in the year and some coming up in 2023. All told twelve courses—Winter and Spring—were delivered, equivalent to 72 presentations. Enrolments were a little down on previous years, due to Covid, but overall held up well, averaging over 500 enrolments for Series 2 and 3. Thank you for your patience in a situation which eventuated and out of our control. Our goal was always your safety.

Our interest groups continue to thrive. Covering a wide variety of interests there are sixteen of these, usually meeting at least monthly, but sometimes weekly. Three have been in recess due to Covid, Singing and Film 1 and 2, but will be reviving. Total membership is in the region of 220.

We have purchased a new computer and a new projector for our lecture series. We have reviewed our casual attendance policy, available on our website. We are discussing a trial of flexible delivery of recorded lectures on topics of wide interest to be placed on our website for later viewing. Currently, we are applying for a grant to commence this project in pilot form. We will also be trialling a roving microphone in the first Series for the year in courses with larger numbers.

We congratulated Richard Higham, a longstanding member and our Secretary to the Board in 2021. He was awarded the Queens Service Medal in the New Year Honours List for his contribution to Sport and Education. Well done to you Richard.

This is also a time to say to many a big thank you. Thank you to our Board, who ably govern our activities. We acknowledge those who will not be continuing this coming year. To Barrie Peake, Rob Lawson, Trish Irvine, Richard Higham, and Geoff Adams, my grateful thanks for your collective wisdom, your willingness to contribute with ideas and support; you will be missed from our Board, but of course not from activities in U3A. A special thank you to Evan Taylor who has agreed to continue in the role of Treasurer meantime. We have a successor who is interested but not available until July this year, when there will be a handover. Later at this AGM we have nominations for the 2023 Board. We already have two new Board members who have offered to share their skills and expertise. Of course, we are always interested in potential Board members. Please do come, and have a chat with anyone of us.

Thank you to Bill Stanford for his editorship of *Forum*. He took over from Geoff Adams last year, and is continuing its high standard—always informative and very professional. We certainly appreciate Bill in this role. Four issues are published each year all. All contributions of possible interest will be considered.

Thank you to Gretchen Kivell for agreeing to be the Minute Secretary for the Board meetings last year. She is an excellent minute taker. Phyll Esplin has joined our team as the Board Secretary; thank you Phyll for organising this Annual General Meeting.

Thank you to our Programme Committee, in particular co-chair Stuart Strachan whose support is invaluable, and to all who tirelessly review course suggestions for courses, putting their names forward to organise them. We are pleased to say that we are away ahead of schedule with ideas and commitments for 2024 courses already. A great team effort. Finally, a very special thanks to Clare Robertson who for the last ten years has edited and produced our course brochures to the highest standard. Even allowing Covid there have been at least 180 of these.

Thank you to our Interest Group facilitators now very busy getting groups up and running for 2023. Many are full and there are wait lists. The Board is working on improving and how best to recruit more facilitators. Great kudos to Ann Wood and Paul Wheeler who manage the monthly newsletter which you will agree is both informative and good to the eye.

We appreciate the work of Cy Newton, our audio-visual technology support. Particular thanks are due to John Shanks and Alan Jackson, our Web Master and Web Editor respectively. They keep our vital systems up-to-date and running effectively. Without them we would be quite lost.

Postal numbers are now down to 35 members and continue to drop. Costs have risen for post, envelopes, printing, our Post Office box, at a time when our postal service is very unreliable. We know the system is difficult for those few relying on this service. It is also very time consuming to manage. Thank you to Gerard Kenny and Jeanette Leigh for keeping it going. Future new members will need to have an email address for communications.

Thank you all, for your support, encouragement, engagement, and contribution to our success.

COVID has not left us, it will continue to adapt and change, and we as seniors will always need to be careful. U3A will respond as needed to any changes in government policy, but we do advocate masks and we will continue with providing some ventilation at our venues.

Financially, we continue to be managing. Because we postponed one series of courses our income was less than expected. However, our exceptional treasurer Evan has shown great expertise in the prudent management of our funds .

We are delighted to announce that after a year of ongoing email correspondence with the University of Otago, led by Barrie Peake, a new Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed and signed by both parties, 1 February 2023. This is a five-year agreement and an annual lecture from senior academic staff in collaboration with U3A Board forms part of our agreement. Thank you, Barrie and Stuart, for your perseverance and careful consideration of this document. Barrie will outline some of the main points later this meeting.

I look forward to new challenges and working with new and existing teams for the future of U3A Dunedin. Your feedback and support is as always welcome

In closing, noho ora, kia ora, stay safe and well

Linda Kinniburgh

Chairperson Board U3A Dunedin

January 2023