



# Letter from the Chair

U3A Dunedin

11<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Kia ora koutou to all U3A members**, this is certainly a busy time of year and for those who love Christmas it is both exciting and exhausting as we prepare to welcome family, friends, and guests and all who make our end of year celebrations meaningful.

Your Board met last week for the final time this year. This will keep you informed of our progress.

The year has generally gone well. We have some increases in costs related to our courses and the decision to increase fees by \$10 per member for next year will cover many of the increases. We will still need to be prudent and to explore ways in which we can make savings. We grew up in the era of ‘saving our pennies’ and we can do this without compromising your experiences of meeting new people and socialising.

The Programme Committee has worked very hard this year and courses are planned for almost all of 2024. The Board has approved another eclectic range of courses, commencing the week of February 19, 2024. The brochures are on the web site now.

Course evaluations this year were very positive; the variety and the expertise of our speakers continues to stimulate our thinking. We are fortunate to access this range of educational opportunities. We are never too old to learn, and I have learned something new at every presentation I have attended.

Interest Groups thrive, with committed convenors. The newsletter outlining the range of activities and gorgeous photos of our members enjoying themselves is a pleasure to read. Thank you to Ann and Paul, our Editor and proofreader.

Forum, published by the wonderful Bill Stanford, will appear in early January 2024. It is full of articles and stories of interest to us all. Bill welcomes all member contributions, and opinion pieces.

We have commenced the process of nominations for Board members for 2024. If you are interested in becoming a member of our Board, we welcome your contact with myself or a Board member for information. We continue to seek a Treasurer for our organisation. Evan Taylor would welcome your interest and contact.

Our AGM is scheduled for Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at the Otago Golf Club. You are all welcome to attend this event. You will receive an invitation in mid-January. A RSVP will be required for catering purposes. The agenda will be posted on the website.

We are planning to have our inaugural recipient of the *U3A Dunedin 150<sup>th</sup> Postgraduate Scholarship*, Julia Watkins, speaking at this AGM. Julia is undertaking a PhD in Anthropology. She is completing “a grounded theory project investigating how mental health is being learned and defined by young people, oft overlooked as an influential factor in how mental health is experienced”.

Julia will speak on her PhD research as she will have completed her first draft in January 2024.

Have a joyful festive season, and I look forward to seeing many of you in the New Year, until then, tiaki i a koutou, look after yourselves.

**Ka mihi and Meri Kirihimete me o te tau hou**, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Linda Kinniburgh**

*Chairperson U3A Dunedin 2021-2024*