

Report to the Annual General Meeting

February 2024

Linda Kinniburgh

Chairperson 2021- 2024

Kia ora koutou, Nau mai, Haere mai, ka mihi mahana ki a koutou.

Good morning to you all, thank you for attending this Annual General Meeting of U3A Dunedin. Welcome, welcome, warmest greetings to you all.

A special welcome to new members of U3A Dunedin, I hope you find us friendly and welcoming as we continue to provide interesting, provocative, and educationally sound courses and Interest Groups to involve you in our organisation.

It gives me great pleasure to present my third annual report as Chairperson, of our Charitable organisation, run by a great group of enthusiastic volunteers.

We commence our meeting by remembering those members and supporters who have died in the past year. I have some names of those we know about, and of course there are others who were with us last year but sadly are not this year. We particularly remember Ron Palenski, Margaret Maguire, Bill McKinlay and Dorothy Walsh. Let us have a moment of silence to acknowledge all their contributions to U3A Dunedin.

What are our achievements in 2023?

We are grateful that Covid was not so disruptive to our courses in 2023, but this virus is still evident in our area, and we do need to continue to take care to protect ourselves.

Our objectives are to foster and develop education for those who form the Third Age population in our area. We have three teams of volunteers who are part of the formal structure, and we also have some members who have roles to play behind the scenes.

Thank you, firstly to the Board U3A Dunedin. This group are dedicated to the overall management, leadership, and financial management of our organisation. Evan Taylor, our Treasurer continues in the vital role of ably managing our finances. The succession plan we put forward last year did not eventuate and we are very grateful Evan has continued in this role and has stated he “will not let us down”. However, we are looking for a successor so if anyone here today has someone who might be interested, please let one of our Board know this.

One resignation from the Board for 2024, is Andre Smith. His contribution to the Board has been immense particularly with him taking on the Coordinator role with Interest Groups. Andre is thoughtful, conscientious and has been a hard-working colleague for us all in U3A. He has also convened a number of courses, and has another course commencing in two weeks, Series 1. We will miss his good humour, hard work, and wisdom.

The Board has also had the expertise of Gretchen Kivell taking Board minutes in 2023. Gretchen is a valued colleague with her knowledge of our organisation as she has held many of the roles previously. Again, Gretchen will be missed by our Board.

Later in this meeting we will approve the nominations received for the 2024 Board.

Our Programme Committee, of 15 persons, all with differing interests and connections, make up a lively and dedicated team. I wish to thank my Co Chair for the Programme Committee, Stuart Strachan, who has been superb to work alongside. These roles will change in 2024, but I say a shared role is a huge asset to any organisation and I have very much enjoyed Stuart's support, his wisdom and his sense of humour. Most of this committee have additional roles to organising courses such as brochure production, thank you letters, mail coordinator, enrolment secretary, minute secretary, data base management of courses, and all are willing and dedicated to ensuring our processes run smoothly. This is evidenced by your feedback which we appreciate very much. Your suggestions of courses for the future are captured and we do try to ensure we meet your needs and interests. Over this year we had resignations from Dorothy Kerin, Annette Riley and Doug Holborow.

We miss their contributions as all have been members of U3A, long before I joined, and all have had many roles including convening a range of courses. All of this group remain members of U3A Dunedin and will continue to contribute and support us in many other ways.

Enrolments for each Series in 2023, were 570, 554 and 469 respectively. The feedback has been positive and the range of courses innovative and interesting. We have only 29% of our members who did not enrol in a course in 2023, however we have larger numbers who attend Interest Groups, therefore we meet most members needs over a range of activities.

In 2023, the Board decided to support Interest Groups differently and appoint a coordinator. Andre Smith agreed to take on this role and the groups have representation at Board level. All facilitators of groups have been renamed 'convenors' and Andre has done an excellent job, liaising and visiting the groups, listening to their feedback and challenges. The newsletter from Interest Groups published monthly give us all a fantastic overview of their activities and keeps us up to date with membership numbers. Currently 16 groups have over 250 members active in groups.

Our membership in December was 951, in comparison to February 2023 of 914. There are fluctuations throughout the year. We are very grateful to have so many members who enjoy belonging to U3A Dunedin and when I talk of these numbers in our community many are surprised.

Behind the scenes is Lynda Jackson, who coordinates, communicates and manages our membership, both lists and people. She welcomes newcomers and does a fantastic job in this role.

Also behind the scenes is our marvellous Webmaster, John Shanks. John manages a huge workload, trials new systems, tracks payments and accurately assesses all online aspects of our business. For myself as Chairperson, he is easily contacted and is great at problem solving. He is supported by Alan Jackson, a Board member who has the role of Web Editor.

Alan is responsible for uploading all those PowerPoints', educational interest articles, forums, seminars and so on. Thank you to you both for your commitment and capability.

We will have our Financial Report soon, from our esteemed Treasurer but I do want to comment on U3A's experiences of cost increases, just as we all are in everyday life. This has meant our membership fee has increased by \$10 from \$30 per year to \$40. Lanyards costs have increased so we now will charge you \$7 for a replacement lanyard, a reminder we have book binding tape at both our venues for you to mend existing lanyards, to save some plastic going to landfill. Our casual attendees will now be charged \$15. Cost increases are spread across our venue hire, refreshment costs and we continually explore other options, but we are valued by our venues, and we do appreciate their flexibility and support. We have also made a decision to cancel our Post Office Box, because of escalating costs. We will utilise the address of our secretary meantime for postal applications. Our members who still use post are now around 20, this number significantly reduces annually.

We appreciate the work behind the scenes of Cy Newton, our technician. We are working closely with Cy as technology changes may increase our ability to capture voice recordings as well as PowerPoints' and with minimal additional costs. We were allocated half of what we requested in our community grant, and we are yet to decide how best to utilise this resource for you all to have flexible delivery or voice over. This is an ongoing project.

Lastly, our Editor of our Forum, our quarterly magazine needs a big thank you. Bill Stanford works conscientiously to produce an interesting and up to date information and resources for us all. He loves this work and we appreciate this commitment.

Lastly, this is my last meeting as Chairperson of U3A Dunedin. Our Board meets next week, and we have a very capable, talented and committed woman in Elizabeth Wilson who has agreed to be Chairperson. I must say to you all, I have enjoyed the work, the people, the academic challenges, new learning and all our members who come along, who are kind and supportive and show a willingness to learn new things.

Thank you to you all.

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

Linda Kinniburgh

Chairperson Board U3A Dunedin

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