



Letter from the Chair

U3A Dunedin

12th February 2024

Greetings to you all

U3A Dunedin had its first Board meeting of the year this week and following is a summary of the main decisions made and topics discussed.

Appointment of Officers for 2024

Linda Kinniburgh who has chaired the Board so very capably for the past three years which included the challenges presented by Covid has stepped down from the position, but will remain on the Board. Linda's energy, friendliness, approachability and inclusiveness were notable hallmarks of her leadership of the Board.

Jane Malthus was elected Deputy Chairperson, Evan Taylor was re-elected Treasurer, Phyll Esplin was re-elected Secretary and will also take on the role of Minutes Secretary following Gretchen Kivell's resignation from the position. I was elected Chairperson for 2024 and regard it as a privilege to contribute at Board level to an organisation I hold in high regard.

Andre Smith will attend one more Board meeting before he and his wife return to South Africa. Jane Malthus will take up the role of Interest Groups convenor and will continue with the great work Andre has done in establishing this position.

The Board discussed the waiting lists that exist for some of the Interest Groups and agreed that the number and length of the waiting lists needs to be explored with a view to possibly developing new Interest Groups where there is a demand. Another matter relating to Interest Groups was discussed and reinforced, namely only paid-up members of U3A are eligible to be members of an Interest Group.

The AGM held on the 8 February went well with 42 people signing in on the attendance list. Julia Watkin, the first recipient of a U3A Dunedin 150th Postgraduate Award, gave an interesting overview of the topic for her PhD. The Board plans to invite Julia to write an article for an issue of Forum to update us all on her progress.

We had a good discussion about the U3A Dunedin 150th Postgraduate Award, mindful that there were a couple of questions at the AGM about it.

The sum of \$50,000 was gifted by U3A Dunedin to the University of Otago. Criteria for the award were established, and the administration of the award, including the selection process, was entrusted to the University. There was consensus among the Board that we can have confidence in the

University's experience of administering scholarships and that we should let the original terms of the Award established in 2019 stand.

Details of the Award, including the criteria, are available on the U3A website (Public Documents > General).

Following feedback that members have sometimes found it difficult to hear the questions being asked of presenters, Jeanette Leigh who is doing excellent work as our Venues Co-ordinator is looking into having two roving microphones available at the larger courses.

There have also been some enquiries about 2025 course dates so Linda and I will meet soon to set these dates, submit them to the Programme Committee for consideration and then take them to the Board's March meeting for discussion and approval.

The latest figures provided by Lynda Jackson, our Membership Secretary, show that membership is healthy at 948 with 22 recent new members. One still hears from time to time that membership of U3A Dunedin is closed. Not true! Please encourage interested friends and acquaintances to join and benefit from all that U3A offers.

You will notice more Ride Share requests for the upcoming Series. We ask all members who can to respond.

Enjoy the Series 1 courses and your participation in U3A activities this year.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth Wilson
Chairperson 2024-2025