



Need to learn from memories of last year's two devastating events

In New Zealand, 2010 will be remembered for two devastating events: the September 4 earthquake in Christchurch, and the November 19 Pike River coal mine explosion. The miracle in Christchurch was that no-one was killed; the tragedy on the West Coast was that 29 men, just doing their job, lost their lives.

The outpouring of sympathy and support from around the country, indeed, from around the world, has been remarkable. Being a small country, shocks like this affect every thinking person.

The destruction of homes and businesses has affected many, many people and, like the families and friends of the Pike River miners, will change their lives forever. To mitigate the effects of such events, it is necessary to learn from them – to discover ways to prevent another mining tragedy, and to find ways to build again so that homes and buildings withstand such 'quakes.



Innovation and education is the key. The learning, experience and finding of solutions by qualified people need to be encouraged and harnessed for the future.

At U3A we too recognise the importance of



By Sue Cathro

Chairman

U3A Dunedin Board



teaching and learning. We all appreciate our course presenters' experience and ideas, which they share so generously. Indeed, all of us at U3A have a role to play in passing on to our friends and families — children and grandchildren — something new that we have learned at the courses that we attend. Who knows, we might just inspire them to follow career paths that have benefits for us all.

Wot no newsletter?

'Kilroy was here' — and
meet Mr Chad again...

see page 4

★ administration

By Judith Gray

Secretary to the
Board



Welcome to 2011 (or at least it will be 2011 by the time this newsletter is printed and circulated). With the newsletter come the brochures for the Series 1 courses and the form for your application. The Board hopes that you will find something of interest among the six courses on offer.

Remember that you may apply for up to three options, but unless you actually wish to attend more than one course you do not need to send payment for more than one. Please ensure that your choices and preferences are clearly indicated, and that your cheque, made out to Rodgers Law, accompanies your application. The closing date for applications is noon on Wednesday, 9 February. Because of the high number of members, late applications cannot be considered.

I am sometimes asked about the delay with the banking of course application cheques. They are not normally banked by Rodgers Law until the ballot is completed, the results checked, and the responses sent out to members. This allows Rodgers Law staff to arrange the correct refunds, usually directly to bank accounts and saves having to deal with unnecessary refunds and requests for further money.

Usually it is our practice to suggest that any questions after the ballot should be addressed to me, but for this one series only (as I shall be away) we are asking that between 18 February and 8 March any questions concerning the course responses should be directed to Sue Keith at Rodgers Law (477 0847).

May I remind you of some housekeeping and procedural matters when courses are running:-

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. Please be considerate when parking near Salmond or Knox Colleges — access for service vehicles and emergency services must not be compromised.
2. Remember to sign the course roll when you first attend any course, and tick the list thereafter — our funding from the University is dependent on clear and accurate records of attendance;
3. If you are obliged to withdraw from a course before it begins because of illness or other reason, you will be entitled to a refund of all or part of the fee, provided that you advise me or Rodgers Law before the course starts.
4. Members over the age of 90 have automatic entry to one course in each series prior to the ballot taking place. Application should, however, be made in the usual way. This does **not** mean admission without payment of the fee. I ensure that Rodgers Law are aware of the names of members in this category before the ballot takes place.

★ looking ahead

By John Burton

Chairman of the
Programme Committee



The Board is always pleased to see the evaluation forms. Approximately two-thirds of those attending each course complete a form. Sometimes it's only an expression of pleasure and thanks and the only words on the form are something along the lines of 'great course!'. At other times members really do go to some lengths to give their opinions under the headings provided.

The comments written on each form are summarised and included in the reports to the Board which are routine for each course. They are also kept in greater detail on file for future reference and I can assure members that the Programme Committee keeps its eye on the suggestions that have been made.

However, it is not possible to accede to all requests, nor will it ever be. There are just too many of them and in any case, the topic, itself, is only the beginning. We have to make sure that the programme is balanced. Even when a topic has been chosen, there can be great difficulty in finding presenters who are willing and able to make themselves available within the time-frame set by U3A.

One respondent in the most recent evaluations wrote concerning the venues. He or she pointed to the fact that many people appeared to have missed out on the very popular course on the Nervous System and asked why it couldn't have been held in the Leith Bowling Club so that more people could have attended. He or she wrote: *"My suggestion is that when the initial notices go out, do not indicate where courses will be held. Then allocate the Bowling Club to the course with the most people. People can be informed of the venue when their acceptance into a course is notified."*

This seems to be an eminently sensible suggestion. However, our venues are not available at all times and, quite frequently, presenters specify specific times and venues for very good reasons. We have, in the past, occasionally switched venues when we have found that one course is more popular than another, but this is often not an option.

Meanwhile, I can report, as I did last newsletter that plans for 2011 are well under way and members can look forward to a course on the Angkor Civilisation by Professor Charles Higham, along with several requested courses, at the beginning of 2011,

PowerPoint notes available for class

Dr Peter Leach, who presented 'Paint It Black' in "The World in the 1960s" course last year, has kindly provided a CD of his PowerPoint slide show; copies are available for any members of that class. If interested, please contact Bill George (phone 467-2090).

Presenter surprises his class:

Message dramatised with a bright clown costume

One of the highlights of 'Traders and Raiders' in the final series of courses last year was the reappearance of the presenter Richard Higham after the tea break — a surprise because he was transformed by changing into a vivid clown suit, rainbow-hued wig and face mask (seen in his right hand in our photograph alongside.)

The face was a picture of Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950), an Austrian economist and political scientist who popularised his theory of 'creative destruction' as a path of radical innovation in the 1930s. At the time many thought he was mad — later they discovered he wasn't such a clown after all.

Members in this U3A course are unlikely to forget the name of Schumpeter because of this brilliant showmanship. Nothing like some clowning around, coupled with a computer's slide show! Well done, Richard.

Ding dong bell!

Some members of the U3A Dunedin Board believe tea breaks in our courses are often taking too long. A new bell is to be bought so that we can have one available in all venues for course organisers or assistants to use to call people back to their seats.

The breaks are well appreciated for the food and drinks, as often mentioned in course assessments (a member attending 'The Nervous System' course wrote: 'Room hot and airless but the baking was excellent.') They also offer a great chance to socialise with other members. But when you hear a bell it means very valuable time in the second half is being lost. Please hurry back then to your places,

Marsden Medal to board member

University of Otago senior scientist Emeritus Professor Brian Robinson, a board member of U3A Dunedin, has been awarded a Marsden Medal by the New Zealand Association of Scientists. It recognises a lifetime of "outstanding service to the cause or profession of science".

Prof Robinson, a former head of the Otago Chemistry Department, had been "a significant figure in New Zealand science" for more than 40 years, the citation noted. He had also been involved in a wide range of science-related activities at national and international level.

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE CHARITABLE TRUST, DUNEDIN

Address: C/o The Secretary,
PO Box 117, Dunedin 9054
Email: graysinn@clear.net.nz

Chairman: Graham Batts ph 477-4880
Secretary: Judith Gray ph 471-9913

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Hear! Hear!

It is appreciated by most members when our speakers do use the microphone to amplify their voices to the back of the rooms. Occasionally some presenters prefer not to use the technology and this does create difficulties if their voices drop as the session goes on.

'Can everyone hear me?' some may ask at the start. Of course if people don't hear that question they can hardly answer! It's only those with good hearing that can possibly say 'Yes.' We suggest those with poorer hearing (or sight) sit near the front, not at the back, and we do make efforts to encourage the speakers to use the technology available. If at any stage a person becomes inaudible, do not be shy, just call out 'Speak up!' or let the course organiser know of the problem.

Fred's eye on Sci-fi gifted to Uni Library

Keen U3A member Emeritus Professor Fred Fastier, who will be 91 in March, has donated his collection of about 1,000 science fiction books to the University of Otago Library. It had been about 30 years since he had taken much interest in the genre and decided it was a good place to pass on his books.

There are magazines like *Amazing Stories* and many other publications from the 'golden era' from the 1930s and 1940s, when man began to get into space, through to the '60s. Special Collections librarian Donald Kerr told the *Otago Daily Times* that the donation was 'fantastic.'

Theories on Kilroy (or Mr Chad) fad

'Kilroy was here' is an American popular expression that used to proliferate in graffiti. Its origins are debated, but the phrase and the distinctive accompanying doodle—a bald-headed man (possibly with a few hairs) with a prominent nose peeking over a wall with the fingers of each hand clutching the wall—was widely known among people who lived during World War 2.

In the US the mischievous face and phrase 'Kilroy was here' became a national joke. The humour of its appearances were not what is said, but the unlikely places where it turned up. The major graffiti fad ended in the 1950s, but even today people all over the world still sometimes scribble the sign in odd or public areas.

In Britain, as in New Zealand, the doodle became later known as 'Mr. Chad.' The character may have derived from a British cartoonist in 1938, possibly pre-dating 'Kilroy was here.' He often appeared with a single curling hair that resembled a question mark and with crosses in his eyes. George Edward Chatterton was the cartoonist, nicknamed 'Chat', which may then have become Chad.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* says simply that Kilroy was 'The name of a mythical person.' One theory identifies James J. Kilroy (1902–1962), an American shipyard inspector, as the man behind the signature. The *New York Times* indicated him in 1946, based on the results of a contest to establish the origin of the phenomenon. Its article noted that Kilroy had marked the ships themselves as they were being built, so, at a later date, the phrase would be found chalked in places that no graffiti-artist could have reached (inside sealed hull spaces, etc), which then fed the mythical significance of the phrase. If Kilroy could leave his mark there, who knew where else he could go?

Some time during the war, Chad and Kilroy apparently met, and in the spirit of Allied unity merged, with the simple drawing appearing over the American phrase, and then Chad became better known for leaving 'Wot no' messages under the scribble. In wartime there was 'Wot no sugar,' 'Wot no pudding' etc and soon any sort of complaint bemoaning shortages and rationing.

The phrase itself may have originated through US servicemen, who would draw the doodle and the text "Kilroy Was Here" on the walls and other places they were stationed, encamped, or visited. Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable notes that it was particularly associated with the Air Transport Command, at least when observed in the United Kingdom. At some point, the graffiti (Chad) and slogan (Kilroy was here) must have merged.

An early example of the phrase being used may date from 1937. A US History Channel video broadcast in 2007, *Fort Knox: Secrets Revealed*, included a shot of a chalked 'Kilroy was here' dated 13 May 1937: Fort Knox's vault was loaded in 1937 and inaccessible until the 1970s, when an audit was carried out and the footage was shot. Other sources claim origins as early as 1939.

One report is that German intelligence found the phrase on captured American equipment. This began leading Hitler to believe that Kilroy could be the name or codename of a high-level Allied spy! At the time of the Potsdam Conference in 1945, it was rumoured that Stalin found 'Kilroy was here'

written in the VIP's bathroom, prompting him to ask his aides who Kilroy was.

A theory suggested by a spokesman for the Royal Air Force Museum, London, in 1977 was that Chad was probably an adaptation of the Greek letter Omega, used as the symbol for electrical resistance; his creator was probably an electrician in a ground crew.

Life magazine noted that a symbol for alternating current, a sine wave through a straight line, resembles Chad, that the plus and minus signs in his eyes represent polarity, and that his fingers are symbols of electrical resistance. The *Guardian* noted in 2000 that several readers had told them that Mr Chad was based on a diagram representing an electrical circuit.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported in 1946 that Chad was 'the No. 1 dobble', noting his appearance on a wall in the Houses of Parliament after the 1945 Labour election victory, with 'Wot, no Tories?' Trains in Austria in 1946 featured Mr. Chad along with the phrase 'Wot—no Fuehrer?'

Muse on man-eaters

Stanley Holloway, of *Albert and the Lion* fame, wrote a parody of his masterpiece once to entertain fellow passengers on an Atlantic liner bound to the USA. Its theme was the romance between Edward VIII and Mrs Wallis Simpson, and included these sample lines:

'Now you'll remember 'twere a lion called Wallace
Who ate up our Albert at the zoo
But it were Wallie who chewed up our Edward
For she were a man-eater too.'



The "third age" sign above was photographed by member Ruth Houghton when she visited the village of Axat, inland from Perpignan, France, last year. It seemed to be outside a meeting room, doubtless for seniors — perhaps a U3A? [U3A began in France in 1973.]

Edited by Geoff Adams

Ph:467 2278 Email: hgadams@slingshot.co.nz

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