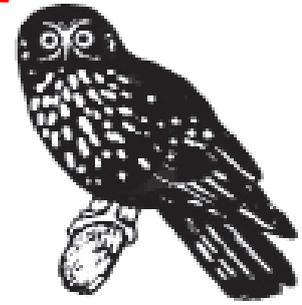


U3A DUNEDIN FORUM



Newsletter No. 54 January 2017

2016 was a good year

It seems so little time since I wrote the last copy for Forum and now you will be reading this after the Christmas holidays. We hope you have had a peaceful and interesting holiday.

The online subscription process for U3A Dunedin went ahead so smoothly last year, after the upheaval of 2015 when everything was 'for the first time'! We hope it has proved easy for you to use. A timely reminder that subscriptions were due by January 1 and that it will not be possible to register for a course unless you are a member!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome both new people (off the former Waiting List) and previous members of Otepoti U3A. Although we do not yet have the final figures, it is likely that our membership will easily top 800! The courses and venues have been designed so that it is possible that everyone who wants a place should be able to do so.

Details of the new (and old) Small

Now it's nine small groups

As most of you may know, U3A Otepoti has been merged with U3A Dunedin. This means that there are now nine small groups for members to choose from. There are two Current Affairs groups differentiated by days. So there is a Monday Current Affairs Group and a Tuesday Current Affairs Group. Also an Art History, Art, Poetry Appreciation and Museum Group. As well as these there is a Local History, Book and a Creative Writing Group. So the list of available groups grows along with the interest in these smaller more intimate and personal groups.

This year there will be a Music Group added and Ngaire would like to see a philosophy and a TED* Group commenced. If you are interested in joining any of the existing groups, facilitating a group or starting a group up on a different topic please contact Ngaire Bates phone 454 2170 or email her on mikni@ihug.co.nz. [*see page 3]



Jane Higham
Chair, U3A Dunedin Board

Group courses are in this issue {below} and also on the website. We also welcome Ngaire Bates. Previously she was working with Otepoti U3A and is now looking after all the Small Groups through the Programme Committee.

The Board has decided that this year its meetings will be held every two months rather than monthly, recognising that the subcommittee structure and internet operation will ease the bulk of the work previously done in the Board's time. In the intervening months,

a group convened by myself, will address any items of concern. If you wish to have any business brought to the Board, please don't hesitate to contact us through the Secretary (details in this issue).

Perhaps here is a good place to thank all members of the Board for their valuable hard work and commitment to U3A Dunedin. And thanks, too, to all who have made the 2016 courses so successful — members attending and course organisers and presenters. We've had a very good year.

Our website continues to grow. You can now find our Deed online, together with the timetable of Series 1 lectures for Term 1. For people who would like to help with research, some University Departments needing participants are listed.

We look forward to meeting again in March — after we've made a difficult choice of which course to attend! Best wishes.

Jane Higham

Otepoti U3A's cash gift

U3A Dunedin received the funds of \$380 from the small membership of the former Otepoti U3A, which has now chosen to "fold up its tents" as it wanted to be able to join up as members of our organisation. This money will be reserved for possible use of our Small Groups.

YOUR WEBSITE
u3adunedin.org.nz

Programme Convenor says 'Steady as she goes' in 2017

'Steady as she goes' — you will be relieved to hear that the relentless introduction of innovations in our programmes and their administration will cease this year. We will be offering a conventional set of three series, each of six courses.

That said, I remind you to read the brochures carefully. The course "*Aspects of Agriculture*" will begin much earlier than the other courses, and has a higher fee to enable us to fund three excellent speakers from outside Dunedin. This is not a common practice for us, but we are guided by the course developer, Jock Allison, who has assembled this impressive programme, and rates all speakers very highly.

impossible choices again - Series I for 2017

An innovation, "*Speaker's Corner*" was very strongly supported early last year, so we have another course for your enjoyment.

As mentioned above, Jock Allison has spent his life in the field of agriculture, and given its ongoing topicality, he has developed another course exploring further aspects of relevance such as water use and climate change. Geology suddenly is highly topical, and I understand that one of the sessions in this course will consider earthquakes. Health-related courses are always well supported, but one of the health professionals we have never featured is "The Nursing Profession". We put that to rights with a course provided by the Otago Polytechnic School of Nursing, and

nurse practitioners. Conflict and its religious motivation are constantly in the news. "*Religions and their Impact on the World Today*" will explore this subject. Our course on Modern music has been postponed, consequent upon the university's review of the department. Alan Jackson spent some time in Norway last year, and had an opportunity to explore the life and writing of Henrik Ibsen. He will present a course featuring star-studded BBC productions of four of Ibsen's plays. What a treat!

As always, we welcome your opinion on what is being suggested. Please let us know what you think of our offerings, and let us have suggestions about speakers, and expertise or interest you may have in any subject area. You can contact us with your thoughts at courses@u3a.org.nz, or by phone to the programme convenor. See the U3A phone directory elsewhere in this *Forum*. [page 4 - Ed.]

Seminar held for Course Convenors was successful

This seminar took place early in November. It was attended by a small but enthusiastic group of members supported by Programme Committee and Board members. Members presented excellent course outlines, and topics, that you will hear more of next year. The process of developing a course was thoroughly examined, and found to be straightforward.

The session was considered valuable and is likely to be repeated later this year. Do join us.



Doug Holborow

Programme Convenor

Small groups

On page 1 you will read a description of U3A Dunedin's augmented Small Groups programme. Our new small groups convenor, Ngaire Bates, is very keen to expand our existing programme, and is offering some very interesting options. I encourage you to read about these, and to contact Ngaire for any further information.

'ENCORE' returns

Here's your chance to hear those speakers your friends raved about, that you missed. But *ENCORE* is changing to avoid the clashes that occurred with our series programmes.

The format will be the same, with three sessions a fortnight apart, but they will be held between series one and two, in the latter part of April and through May.

There will be two speakers each day, speakers who gave much admired presentations from previous courses. Enrolment (online only) and payment (\$10 cash at the door) will not change. If need be, you can just turn up on the day — we won't turn you away.

Doug Holborow

Rise in membership

The membership of U3A Dunedin totalled 890 people when Jane Higham, our chairman, reported to the Board at its final meeting of last year. About 150 people on the waiting list had been offered the opportunity to join and 120 accepted. We no longer are keeping a waiting list for members. to join;

Grant to Art Gallery

The U3A Dunedin board has agreed to give a grant of \$1,000 to the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society for new acquisitions to the Art Gallery collection. U3A is a registered charitable society and the grant was in recognition of the course last year about the workings of the gallery.

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE CHARITABLE TRUST, DUNEDIN

Website: u3adunedin.org.nz

Address: **Secretary to the Board,**
U3A Dunedin, PO Box 6491,
North Dunedin, 9059.

Email: info@u3adunedin.org.nz

Phone: 453-4721

Chairman: Jane Higham, 476-1848

Registered Charitable Institution - #CC22345

Surnames can be surprises

Most grandparents usually have no say about the names given to their grandchildren. In the normal situation when a birth is registered in New Zealand it is not just the first or 'Christian' name that must be chosen — there is also a generous choice legally for the surname of the baby.

In the past a baby has usually been given the surname of its father, but sometimes the mother's surname is registered (particularly if the baby's father is unknown or confidential). It is also now becoming more common for a baby's surname to be a compound of both parents (like Smith-Jones).

Many readers may be surprised to learn that both the parents' family names can legally be jettisoned and a child registered with a completely different surname with no relevance to their parents or their families.

FAMILY HISTORY AFFECTED

This all makes it very difficult for tracing family histories later. At times it may become a genealogist's nightmare. Imagine the problem of researching a completely unrelated hyphenated name! (If New Zealand children turn out to be unhappy with their names, they may change them legally — but only after the age of 18.)

The office of the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages confirmed that it is entirely up to the person who registers a birth to write down any surname of choice. (These are only refused if they are offensive, risqué or highly unorthodox.)

The name '4Real' fell foul of authorities in New Zealand because names cannot start with a number. A judge here also made a young girl a ward of court so that she could change the name she hated: 'Talula Does The Hula From Hawaii.'

PRECEDENTS

There are precedents for our naming system. In England and Wales parents can give their children any surname they choose.

Recently a Constitutional Court in Italy determined that mothers can pass their surname to their children, despite legislation (dating from Roman times) that automatically gives children of married couples the father's surname.

In 2014 the legislation was found by the European Court of Human Rights to discriminate against women, in conflict with Italy's own constitution.

The court declared the unlawfulness of rules providing for the automatic attribution of the paternal surname to legitimate children, when the parents wish otherwise. The case involved an Italian-Brazilian couple who wanted to give their son both their surnames, as is traditional in many Latin countries.

It said that this law was incompatible with the principle of gender equality enshrined in Italy's modern constitution. Italy's lower house approved a bill aimed at changing the law, but it was blocked in the Senate for some years.

The UK and the US have much more liberal naming laws. American parents can pretty much name their child anything, says Michael Sherrod, co-author of *Bad Baby Names: The Worst True Names Parents Saddled Their Kids With*. In fact, he says, parents see it as an important expression of their freedom of speech, enshrined in the US Constitution.

RESTRICTIONS ELSEWHERE

Several countries, such as Germany, Sweden, China and Japan restrict names. In Iceland's case, it is about meeting certain rules of grammar and gender, and saving the child from possible embarrassment. Sometimes, officials also insist that it must be possible to write the name in Icelandic from approved lists.

TED talks are short

TED talks [see 'Small Groups' article, page 1] are videos created from some topic or presentation and limited to a short length of time.

They derived from TED (meaning technology, entertainment, and design) and are often used at conferences around the world. TED talks are limited to a maximum length of 18 minutes but may be on any topic.

The TED website's explanation of selection criteria: 'TED looks for engaging, charismatic speakers whose talks expose new ideas that are supported by concrete evidence and are relevant to a broad, international audience.'

Cock-a-doodle-do!



The Chinese New Year begins on January 28, 2017. The Chinese New Year's festivities end two weeks later on the 15th day of the first month, on what is called the Lantern Festival. This is the **Year of the Rooster** in the Chinese zodiac — something to crow about! In a Rooster Year, it is said that all of the Chinese animals can reap great rewards by tapping into Rooster traits. These include loyalty, commitment, hard work, family values, and top-notch appearances!

MAILBOX

Letter to the Editor

John Burton's letter in the last edition of *Forum* concerning gender balance in U3A Dunedin's Board was a timely plea for our female members to consider serving on the Board.

However, he paints a darker picture than the facts indicate. He is right that the Board has followed a tradition of alternating male and female Chairs of the Board. However, the Board has already broken that tradition by re-electing a Chairperson who is serving a further term. That person is, of course, Jane Higham. This suggests to me that the Board will not be driven by tradition alone and will endeavour to make decisions that serve the best interests of the organisation.

How delightful that it is a female Board member that breaks the tradition, and is the first person for many years to serve consecutive terms as Board Chair.

Doug Holborow

Pundemonium

Someone once did a theatrical performance on puns. Of course it was just a play on words.

Spelling rule that confuses many

Many people recite the mnemonic "I before E, except after C." They either don't remember or never learned the rest of an old rhyme. Here are some additional lines that reveal some exceptions to the spelling rule:

I before E, except after C

Or when sounded as A, as in neighbour and weigh.

And "weird" is just weird.

This reminder comes from a message from 'Grammarly' on the Internet's Facebook pages. It gave it the cute expanded and capitalised heading:

I BEFORE E
EXCEPT WHEN YOU RUN
A FEISTY HEIST ON
A WEIRD BEIGE FOREIGN
NEIGHBOUR

Footnote: And don't forget the common contraction 'i.e.' from the Latin 'id est' meaning 'that is (to say)' and not to be confused with 'e.g.' from the Latin 'exempli gratia' meaning 'for example.'

Einstein said . . .

Four quotes by Alfred Einstein:

'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.'

'The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is at all comprehensible.'

'Creativity is intelligence having fun.'

'There is a major difference between intelligence and stupidity; intelligence has its limits.'

U3A email directory

Sending email correspondence to U3A Dunedin? Using the addresses below will take your messages to the appropriate people and have quicker attention. (Should you contact the wrong person they will of course forward your mail to the correct address.)

General information: info@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re Administration: admin@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re courses: courses@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re Membership: members@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re 'Forum': newsletter@u3adunedin.org.nz

Growing wise with laughs

While "growing old" is a drag; to see it as "growing wise" is a gift. Humour is a pivotal means of "seeing anew." These comments were made in a *Positive Ageing* newsletter published by the Taos Institute in the USA a few years ago. They still seem true,

The importance of laughter in lives and relationships was underscored. And it has been found by research that laughter improves respiration, lowers blood pressure, relaxes muscles and reduces pain. Laughing reduces tensions and anxieties, dissipates tensions and improves our disposition. It may also strengthen the immune system.

W. H. Auden wrote: 'Among those I like or admire, I can find no common denominator, but among those I love, I can: all of them make me laugh.'

The article also saw laughter as

New use for robots

Air New Zealand began trialling earlier last year the use of robotic technology to maintain the quality of its fleet of aircraft. The airline teamed up with Invert Robotics, a Christchurch-based company that produces inspection robots. These can climb any stainless steel surface and use advanced sensors and high definition cameras to feed detailed inspection data instantly to an inspector for immediate analysis.

According to Invert, these inspections are notable for being efficient, safe, accurate and repeatable. The company's robotics technology has developed from being designed originally for the dairy industry, where farm managers used remote-controlled inspection equipment to detect damage inside milk tanks – they would send the robots into the tanks and scan the high resolution footage in real time.

playing a central role in relationships, laughing together being a sign of trust — and a humorous aside can be a way out of brewing disagreements.

Humour is an escape from the prison of realism, the newsletter observed, 'The difference between a stumbling block and a stepping-stone may be a ready quip.'

Some giggles

A classic Tommy Cooper gag: I said to the Gym instructor "Can you teach me to do the splits?" He said, "How flexible are you?" I said, "I can't make Tuesdays"

I went to a doctor the other day and I said 'Have you got anything for wind?' So he gave me a kite,

Bar stories: 1. Dyslexic man walks into a bra.

2. 'I'm on a whisky diet. I've lost three days already.'

3. A man walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: 'Pint please, and one for the road.'

'I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.'

Police arrested two kids yesterday. One was drinking battery acid, the other was eating fireworks. They charged one – and let the other one off.

A man entered a local newspaper's pun contest.. He sent in ten different puns, in the hope that at least one of the puns would win. Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.

U3A phone directory

To discuss problems with U3A Dunedin please phone the right person:

Chairman: Jane Higham

476-1848

Board matters: Marion Potter

453-4721

Membership: Lynda Jackson

473-6947

Programme or Courses:

Doug Holborow 477-4573



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