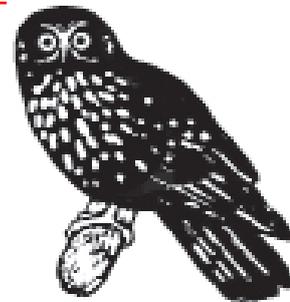


U3A DUNEDIN Forum



Newsletter No. 67 - March 2020

Five new Life Members

At the Annual General Meeting on 20 February, this year five new Life Members were appointed. The honours went to

Sue Cathro - U3A Board member for 9 years She served as Vice-Chair and then as Chair. She then took over the role of Programme Chair for 6 years working with a Committee of 5. She was a convenor of several courses. She was also involved in allocating members to courses according to their applications three times per year. Her role required close working communications with the Board Secretary and Rodgers Law.

Bill George – Treasurer for 11 years who managed the monthly financial performance and worked closely with Rodgers Law. It was as audio-visual advisor, purchaser, organiser, maintenance, and support person for which he was most appreciated especially the insecurity of technical difficulty during a course presentation. A professional firm was employed when he retired.

Judith Gray- She succeeded the original Board Secretary, Katherine Dolby, and remained in the position for 11 years. Judith organised and maintained the Board minutes, plus the Membership Rolls and was Programme Secretary involving their minutes, brochures, presenters letters, and course acceptance. Judith worked closely with Rodgers Law, which managed the finances and all the communication with

Einstein speaks

'We are slowed down sound and light waves, a walking bundle of frequencies tuned into the cosmos. We are souls dressed up in sacred biochemical garments and our bodies are the instruments through which our souls play their music.'

~ **Albert Einstein**

by mail in those days. When she retired three secretaries were appointed in her place.

Doug Holborow - who recently retired from the Board but remains with the Programme Committee. Doug was a Board member for 12 years and held all offices in the organisation: Vice-Chair, Chair, Programme Chair, policy writer, venue organiser, developer and convenor of too many successful courses to name. A calm, wise and valued colleague.

John Shanks – As it became obvious to the Board that changes were needed at U3A Dunedin to eliminate the ever increasing 'waiting list' and to simplify communications with members, it was decided that the organisation be converted to a digital system. We were so fortunate to have John Shanks living locally who was an expert.

He developed a system, a web page was designed etc etc. and in 2015 the new system was introduced to our members. Since then it has been refined and developed into being an excellent programme for both the U3A office-holders and for U3A members using it for information.

John is U3A Dunedin's Web-master who continues to refine/improve and introduce new elements, has accomplished this with minimum charge to us and continues to be a helpful knowledgeable colleague.

- Marion Potter

Quick quotes

A bicycle can't stand alone; it's just two tired.

Police were summoned to a daycare centre where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

He had a photographic memory but it was never fully developed.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair she thought she'd dye.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

On March 17 Alan Jackson, Chair of the U3A Dunedin Board notified members that the rest of Series 1 courses were cancelled. This was due to the first case of the pandemic virus found in Dunedin and mounting anxiety among our members, medical experts and the New Zealand Government.

The U3A Board has since then voted to cancel Series 2. No decision can be made about Series 3 at present.

At the time of writing this, there were 102 cases in New Zealand. Who can guess how fast this crisis will worsen - or be fixed? Members should watch the U3A website for latest news on decisions that your Board will have to make about courses. (It also has a document with links to the latest Ministry of Health and World Health guidelines.)

OUR WEBSITE
u3adunedin.org.nz

Who stood up?

One day a college professor of Psychology tried a new teaching method to prove a point. He stood up in front of the class and said, "Would everyone who thinks he or she is stupid please stand up?"

After a minute or so of silence, a young man stood up. "Well, good morning. So, you actually think you're a moron?" the professor asked.

The kid replied, "No sir, I just didn't want to see you standing there all by yourself."

Weathering COVID-19 virus storm

Quite possibly, recent events resulting from the COVID-19 virus have been the most disruptive in our short history. Certainly, they have taxed the Programme Committee.

They began with the abrupt curtailment of all Series 1 Autumn courses midway on March 17, followed by the Board's decision three days later to halt all Series 2 Winter courses due to start at the end of May. These were difficult but, because of our members' vulnerability, necessary decisions, since mandated by government; and doubly disappointing as all current courses were running well, thoroughly enjoyed by those attending.

In all there were 629 enrolments from 535 members, about average for this time of year. It may be possible

Fight against Alzheimers

Researchers at Arizona State University, USA, are exploring a safe and simple treatment for Alzheimer's disease. (AD). They are investigating the effects of choline, an important nutrient that may hold promise in the war against the memory-stealing disorder.

Ramon Velazquez and Salvatore Oddo, along with their colleagues in the ASU Neurodegenerative Disease Research Centre, focused their study on mice bred to display AD-like symptoms. When these mice are given high choline in their diet, their offspring show improvements in spatial memory, compared with those receiving a normal choline regimen in the womb.

The beneficial effects of choline supplementation appear to be transgenerational, not only protecting

to resurrect some of these at a later date. We shall explore.

Ready for Series 2 were: *Safety Matters*, *Exploring Hocken Collections*, *Nobel Prizes 2018–2019*, *20th Century Popular Music History*, *The Medieval World Through Literature*, and *My Hobby 2*. However, these too are on hold. It may be possible depending on the continued availability of presenters to transfer them as a whole or in part to Winter 2021.

So, to Series 3 Spring courses, which are still to go ahead as originally scheduled for August/September, though nothing is now certain. A particularly interesting offering is *The Cosmos*, which would be entirely held at the Otago Museum, utilising its planetarium.

mice getting choline supplementation during gestation and lactation, but also the subsequent offspring of these mice. While this second generation received no direct choline supplementation, they nevertheless reaped the benefits of treatment, likely due to inherited modifications in their genes. The findings appear in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*.

Alzheimer's disease is now believed to begin its path of destruction in the brain decades before the onset of clinical symptoms. Once diagnosed, the disease is invariably fatal, shutting down one vital system after another. Mental decline is relentless, with patients experiencing a range of symptoms that may include confusion, disorientation, delusions, forgetfulness, aggression, agitation, and progressive loss of motor control. - *World U3A*

Others that may take your interest are a set of lectures from Otago University 150th Distinguished Professors, Harry Love on *Homer and Euripides*, followed by the ever-green Ross Grimmer with *Misadventures in Art*. A sixth has still to be decided. Again, all depends on the course of the current virus outbreak and our response to it.

Meanwhile, your Programme Committee continues to beaver away with its eyes now firmly on 2021, when surely all will have settled down.

Linda Kinniburgh. Stuart Strachan
Co-chairs. Programme Committee

Auckland U3As

At present there are 24 U3As in the greater Auckland region with opportunities for new ones to be established. Auckland U3A Network has existed since the early 90's. It is an informal forum where representatives from the regional U3As meet three times a year. The purpose is to share information, bring ideas and problems for discussion and to set up new U3As.

One representative from each U3A makes up the Network which meets at a designated venue in Auckland. Network gathers information from individual U3As and makes it accessible to all. It will support learning oriented projects arranged by individuals and / or regional U3As.

From the start of the New Zealand U3A movement in 1989 there was rapid growth particularly in the Auckland region. To help with the formation of new U3As the Network prepared an information kit.

U3A Dunedin donations

Donations approved by the U3A Dunedin Board: to the Friends of the Dunedin Botanic Garden (\$1000), University of Otago Philosophy Department (\$1000), and the University Foundation Trust (\$500) in recognition of the excellent Nanotechnology Course in Series 3 last year.

Cheeky growls

His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork. ~ Mae West
"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."

– Oscar Wilde

He has Van Gogh's ear for music.
~ Billy Wilder

U3A DUNEDIN CHARITABLE TRUST

Website: u3adunedin.org.nz

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

Email: contact@u3adunedin.org.nz
Phone: 453-4721

Chair: Alan Jackson, 473-6947

Registered Charitable Institution - #CC22345

Celebration of Jane Higham's U3A work

The year 2020 started sadly for U3A with very sad news that Jane Higham had died on 15 December 2019, when returning from an overseas trip with her husband, Prof. Richard Higham.

A celebration of her life was held in the Macandrew Bay Community Hall on January 9, with a large number of our members in attendance and Alan Jackson, our Chair, giving a eulogy on behalf of U3A.

Jane became a board member at the 2010 AGM. She was a lively contributor from the start and in 2012, when long-term secretary Judith Gray retired, the Chair, Dame Norma Restieaux, asked Jane to also become Membership Secretary and take on the waiting list.

Membership was around 520 – the waiting list about 150. The November 2013 edition of our newsletter showed 267 people were waiting then. With husband Richard's help, Jane realised that (since statistics showed only 60 percent of the members attended courses at any one time) the waiting list could be reduced. By August 2013



Jane Higham

the decision was made to take another 100 members. (Later the waiting list was completely scrapped – and today we have about 950 members.)

This membership growth required that more places had to be found in the courses. So the Salmond and Knox Colleges venues were augmented first by the Leith Valley Bowling Club – that initially took 100 but later was reconfigured to take 148. Then we also moved to use the 150 spaces at the Otago Golf Club.

Jane followed Doug Holborow into

the Chair in 2015 and held the office for two years, seeing U3A Dunedin grow and expand with the formation of our Discussion Groups. Jane was keen to join one of the first groups, for art discussions, and remained a founding member of it.

She also led a sub-committee to sort and archive our records and deposit them at the Hocken Collections over the 2018-19 summer. Although deciding to retire at the AGM in 2019 she was persuaded to be minute secretary for the Board in 2019.

Jane also developed, convened and assisted with the running of many courses. In the last 2019 series she developed a course on gardens and landscaping that included a field trip to the Dunedin Botanic Garden. In typical fashion, she arranged an additional trip for members unable to be at the first event.

Music's power

Music can captivate us; when listeners engage with music, they follow its sounds closely, connecting to what they hear in an affective way. What is it that keeps the audience engaged? A study by researchers from the City College of New York and the University of Arkansas charts new ground in understanding the neural responses to music.

Despite the importance, it has been difficult to study engagement with music given limits of self-report. This led Jens Madsen and Lucas Parra, from CCNY, to measure synchronisation of brainwaves in an audience.

When listeners are engaged with music their neural responses are in sync with that of other listeners, thus inter-subject correlation of brainwaves is a measure of engagement.

According to their findings, published in the latest issue of *Scientific Reports*, a listener's engagement decreases with repetition of music, but only for familiar music pieces. However, unfamiliar musical styles can sustain an audience's interest, in particular for individuals with some musical training. 'What is so cool about this, is that by measuring people's brainwaves we can study how people feel about music and what makes it so special,' says Madsen..

Music for Dementia success

Music hath charms"... to soothe Dementia — that was a Forum headline last April reporting the Music for Dementia group. We asked Deirdre Tucker how the year finished for her local humanitarian band of helpers,

'Very successful' was the reply from Deirdre and husband Nigel. The steering group of around 10 volunteers (mostly from U3A members) and friends has just completed their 50th case, and the Music for Dementia Trust is working at times in eight care homes (five of them requesting its involvement.).

Treatments are working to find memories of favourite songs or music for clients. They (and the families) are interviewed to glean information. Results when the right music is found vary 'from quiet pleasure to exuberant singing out loud or conducting'. — then the Trust gives them their personal listening device with their chosen pieces.

Tunes that work are mostly hits of the 1950s and 1960s. like Beatles songs,

Others ranged from *Amazing Grace* to *The Laughing Policeman*. *Run Rabbit Run* delighted one person.

Results? Now one gent who previously just sat in a chair goes out on trips with his wife. Another elderly person who slept most of the time is active and able to walk without help. Fifty devices have been filled with music.

The Diversional Therapist in a rest home reported: 'A resident who was crying on a daily basis and expressing a wish to be dead, is no longer doing so. She is now coming out of her room for activities and going on outings without too much persuasion.'

'The response we have had from carers and health care professionals has convinced us that the treatment is neither too onerous nor expensive and that it brings real value and relief to people with dementia and their families,' said Deirdre,

More volunteers are needed, If you can help phone 482-2473 or email deirdre@musicfordementia.org.nz.

Grandparents' phone answer techniques

Hello ... At present we're not home, but please leave your message after the beep. -"Beeeeepp"

If you are one of our children, dial 1 and then select the option from 1 to 5 in order of birthdate so we know who it is.

If you need us to stay with the grandchildren, *press 2*

If you want to borrow the car, *press 3*

If you want us to wash your clothes and do ironing, *press 4*

If you want the grandchildren to sleep here tonight, *press 5*

If you want us to pick up the kids at school, *press 6*

If you want us to prepare a meal for Sunday or to have it delivered to your home, *press 7*

If you want to come to eat here, *press 8*

If you need money, *press 9*

*If you are going to invite us to dinner or take us to the theatre; start talking we are listening!

Two healthy diets

Eating foods included in two healthy diets -- the Mediterranean or the MIND diet -- is linked to a lower risk for memory difficulties in older adults, according to a study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

The Mediterranean diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, potatoes, nuts, olive oil and fish. Processed foods, fried and fast foods, snack foods, red meat, poultry and whole-fat dairy foods are infrequently eaten on the Mediterranean diet.

The MIND diet is a version of the Mediterranean diet that includes 15 types of foods. Ten are considered "brain-healthy:" green leafy vegetables, other vegetables, nuts, berries, beans, whole grains, seafood, poultry, olive oil, and wine. Five are considered unhealthy: red meat, butter and stick margarine, cheese, pastries, sweets and fried/fast foods.

I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want. ~ Andy Warhol

U3A email directory

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

General information: contact@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re courses: courses@u3adunedin.org.nz

Re Membership: members@u3adunedin.org.nz

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

Sign language tuition new discussion group

The Discussion Group Committee has some exciting groups in development. We had a kind offer by Bridget Brown to teach New Zealand Sign Language. Bridget has considerable experience as a NZ Sign facilitator, working in deaf communities both here and in the UK for over 30 years. The course aims to teach the basic elements and vocabulary of NZSL, as well as introduce some of the cultural and linguistic issues of deafness and its unique culture and language.

There's also a group focusing on the use of the internet. With the withdrawal of cheques by some banks, everyone becoming comfortable with the basic use of the internet is becoming essential. The object is to enable members of U3A Dunedin who have computers, but are unsure really how to use them, to get up and running. This will also cover how to pay for any U3A lecture series on line; which means using internet banking with confidence. The course will include the use of email facilities.

We are also taking names for a new Podcast group to begin in May. As well, a new Photography group has begun. **Ngairé Bates** (phone 454-2170)

Preventing Dementia

The Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre at the University of Tasmania's College of Health and Medicine is at the forefront of translational research and support for issues confronting people with dementia and their carers. Projects are being carried out in Tasmania, and nationally in Australia, across research fields such as neuroscience, medicine, etc It presents *Understanding Dementia* as a Massive Open Online Course, offering university-quality education about the latest in dementia research and care. For more information click <http://www.utas.edu.au/wicking/understanding-dementia>.

Preventing Dementia is a further course, free to all U3A members worldwide. Enrolments are welcomed. For

information click <http://www.utas.edu.au/wicking/preventing-dementia>.

- **World U3A**

U3A phone directory

To discuss any problem with U3A Dunedin please phone the right person:

Chairman: Alan Jackson
473-6947

Board matters: Marion Potter
453-4721

Membership: Lynda Jackson
473-6947

Programme: Stuart Strachan
482-2339

Linda Kinniburgh
473- 8443

Courses: Phyll Esplin 467-2594



Edited by Geoff Adams

Phone: 467-2278

Email: hgadams@slingshot.co.nz