



Discussion Groups NEWSLETTER

January 2021

Convener's report

Welcome to a brand-new year of U3A Dunedin Discussion Groups.

Your committee really hopes that you have all had a lovely Christmas and New Year and are now ready to pick up your U3A interests.

This year we are hoping to expand what we have available to members by offering more in-depth groups.

We are looking for members who are willing to facilitate a group if they have a particular interest or expertise in any subject at all.

If you don't wish to host a group as well that is also able to be accommodated.

Topics like science, philosophy, embroidery, book binding etc. The field is wide open.

We would also like to request that our existing members of the Discussion groups bring along a friend who they think may be interested in joining a group.

This is just to see how they work and if it is for them. This would of course have to be worked out with the facilitator of your group as to the day that suits them so there is enough seating.

This option is also there for anyone wishing to join a group but wishes to try it out first, with or without a friend.

Art Collections

Facilitator: Moya Smith
Third Wednesday, 2 pm
E: moya.smith@xtra.co.nz

Book Group

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi
First Friday, 1.30
E: gardacortesi@gmail.com

Dining Group

Facilitator: Karen Wards
Third Friday, 7 pm
E: karendwards@gmail.com

Expanding

Musical Horizon (full)

Facilitator: Paul Wheeler
Second Monday, 10 am
E: wheeler@outlook.co.nz

Film Group 1 (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford
Third Wednesday, 1.30
E: billstanford9@gmail.com

Film Group 2 (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford
Second Wednesday, 1.30
E: billstanford9@gmail.com

Gallery Group (full)

Facilitator: Tash Hurst
Second Wednesday, 10.30
E: tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz

German Language

Facilitator: Rob Lawson
Third Monday, 2 pm
E: roblawson75@gmail.com

Poetry Group

If you are looking to try a fresh interest in 2021, why not try joining the new U3A poetry group. This group meets monthly at each other's homes with an aim of enjoying and exploring poetry.



They have a simple format. Each member looks out two poems which s/he shares with the group and we discuss. It is not an 'academic' group and a previous knowledge of poetry is not required.

Generally the focus is on contemporary poetry. Why not join them for a morning and see if it is for you!?

Contact Carole Bezett for further information.
Ph 4543493.

Singing Group

The singing group has not yet run but it has someone happy to play the piano, and someone to run it initially to get it up and running. If this group sounds like you please contact Ngaire either by phone or email to get the details. There is no set day of the month as yet. That would have to be arranged at the first meeting of the group with all members present.



Local History

Facilitator: Stuart Strachan
Fourth Wednesday, 10.30
E: sistrachanz@gmail.com

Luncheon Group

Facilitator: Patricia Irvine
Second Friday, 12.30
E: trishjockloch@gmail.com

Mahjong Group

Facilitator: Hilary Allison
Second Thursday, 10 am
E: hilary.allison@xtra.co.nz

Monday Current Affairs (full)

Facilitator: Joy Hayward
Third Monday, 1.30
E: joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz

Opera Group

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi
Fourth Wednesday, 1.30
E: gardacortesi@gmail.com

Photography Group

Facilitator: Ngaire Bates
First Wednesday, 1.30
E: ngairemichael@gmail.com

Podcast Group

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi
Second Thursday, 1.30
E: gardacortesi@gmail.com

Thursday Current Affairs

Facilitator: Clare Hamel
Fourth Thursday, 1.30
hamelndownunder@yahoo.com.au

Tuesday Current Affairs (full)

Facilitator: Gretchen Kivell
Third Tuesday, 10 am
E: gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz

Walking Group

Facilitator: John Hogue
Every Thursday, 10.30
E: hoguetimaru@xtra.co.nz

Podcast Group

The aim of this group is to listen to a podcast/U tube/... presentation and then be able to join in a discussion about what you have heard with the rest of the members of the group. (It is not about setting up a podcast.)



We were about to get underway with the group when Covid-19 hit and since then I think members have been very wary, understandably, about joining a group in case they contracted it.

But if now you feel able to join a group such as this please let Ngaire know and she will point you in the right direction.

NZSL group :

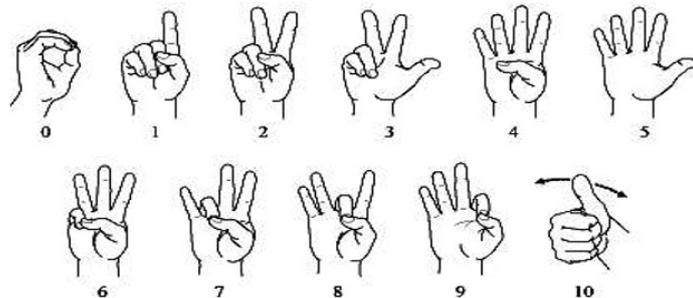
INTRODUCTION TO NEW ZEALAND SIGN LANGUAGE (NZSL)

We have been offered once again the chance to have a New Zealand Sign Language group, which is wonderful.

NZ Sign is *our third official language*, and there is increasing interest in it.

We are so fortunate to have been approached by a qualified and very experienced teacher of the language, Bridget Brown.

The course aims to teach basic elements and vocabulary of NZSL, as well as introducing some of the cultural and linguistic issues about Deafness and its unique culture and language.



The approach taken requires everyone to participate and may suggest a bit of 'homework' or preparation and practice outside of course time.

The course is interactive, and Bridget is a qualified Sign Language Interpreter who has been working in Deaf communities, both here and in the UK, for over 30 years. (The maximum number of course participants is 10 members.)

So if you have a deaf partner, grandchild **or** would like the challenge of learning this very useful language, please contact Ngaire Bates

Photography Group

This group is up and running but owing to the weather just prior to Christmas we only managed to get two walkabouts in.

However the four of us in the group all enjoyed the first; while the second was broken up because of hail.



We meet once a month and when the weather is kind to us -- we have decided to do walk abouts and take photos.

*

So as you can see we have plenty on offer with a lot more to come over this year.

If you would like to join any of the groups on offer, either listed here in the Newsletter or to be found on the Discussion Groups page on the U3A Dunedin website, please contact Ngaire Bates in the first instance and she will direct you where to go from there.

Here is hoping we have a better year than last year in 2021...

Ngaire

454 2170
ngairemichael@gmail.com



Facilitators' Reports



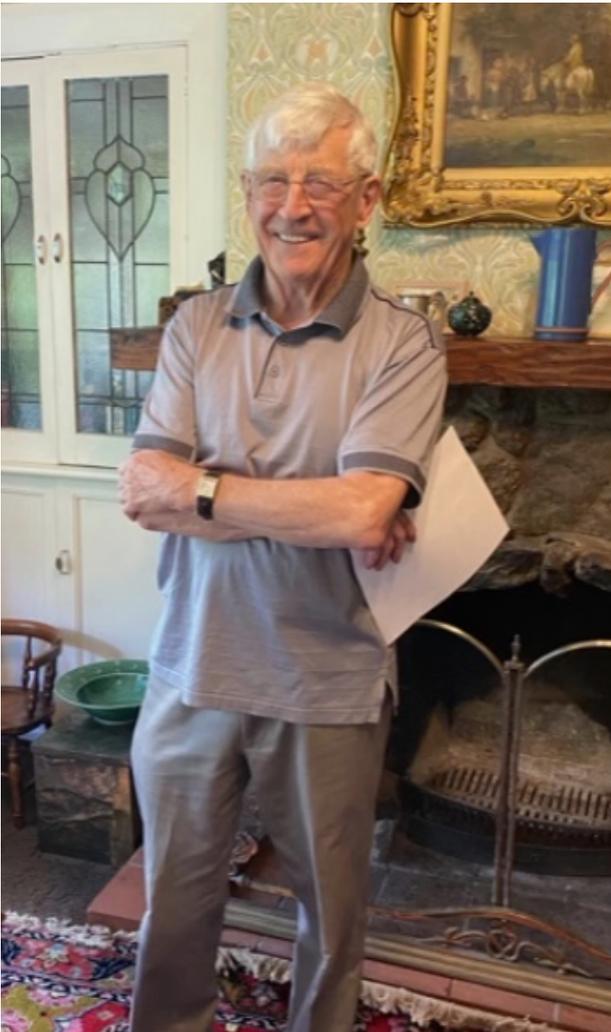
Gallery Group

A great visit yesterday to Ross's stunning, astonishing art collection at his house where the walls are lined from floor to ceiling with art of every description, from near and far, from expensive to frivolous, from genuine to fake.

Ross has an amazing memory for all his collection, from the name of the artist, the probable date and a story

of the painter. The description of the art was accompanied by an amusing anecdote of how he and his late wife Anne acquired the pieces and the subsequent research into each item on display.

Behind the scenes there is a store room where paintings have accumulated since the wall space ran out. A most enjoyable experience that we wouldn't have missed for the world!



Ross, relaxing at home

After leaving Ross's we adjourned to Leighton Close where we had a spread fit for royalty, contributed by all members of the group.

A brainstorming session followed for ideas for 2020 where 16 different possibilities were raised including several out of town visits.

A walk round the garden under clear blue skies concluding a successful day.

We all agreed 2020 had been a great year for our group despite a short break due to Lockdown, and we are all raring to go in 2021.

Tash

Opera Group

Our first meeting this year was dedicated to *Tosca*, by Giacomo Puccini, conducted by Bruno Bartoletti, directed by Gianfranco de Bosio, with the Ambrosian Singers and the New Philharmonia Orchestra.

Filmed in the authentic Roman locations specified in the score, this *Tosca* absolutely pulsates with tension and excitement.

The first act was shot in the splendid Baroque church of Sant' Andrea della Valle in Rome. The movie was made in 1976 and all the singers

were in their prime, a young, handsome Domingo and suitably menacing Milnes both in love with the lovely Kabaivanska.

Napoleon was advancing and this contributes to the tension.

The performers were:

Tosca: Raina Kabaivanska
Cavaradossi: Placido Domingo
Scarpia: Sherrill Milnes

During the discussions around the 'performance' various interesting points were raised (mainly by Bill) regarding Sardou writing *La Tosca* specifically for **Sarah Bernhardt**.

Bernhardt was in her mid-40s by then and France's leading actress.



Bernhardt as Tosca

The original, brightest star of the French dramatic arts, Bernhardt regularly leapt from the parapet in the final scene of *Tosca*; but one night injured her right knee. The leg never healed, gangrene slowly set in and by 1915 there was little option but to amputate. Many other fascinating tidbits regarding *Tosca* and the performers came up, too many to mention here, but worth perusing.

Unfortunately, two of the members could not attend because of a possible brush with COVID on the North Island. We are looking forward to the next meeting in February and some more lively conversation.

Garda

Notice Board

Hi Facilitators! February group reports scheduled are: Current Affairs Tuesday, Luncheon, Art, Music, German Language. Thanks!

And everyone, don't forget -- this is your spot. If you have a pup to give away, a tip re a coffee shop, a flat to let -- this board is a way to reach the U3A membership!

Groups Committee

Discussion Groups Convener
Discussion Groups Committee
Discussion Groups Newsletter

Ngairé Bates
Garda Cortesi
Bill Stanford

ngairemichael@gmail.com
gardacortesi@gmail.com
billstanford9@gmail.com

Photography Group Gallery

As noted, the Photography group hit hail before their final excursion for 2020, but one of us did get to the destination on the day, Larnach Castle; and another took a guest up there two days later...

Chris:





Bill

