Chairperson's Annual Report – U3A Golden Bay Mohua – February, 2020

Looking back over the past year, our U3A chapter has experienced considerable growth, now having over 120 members. Our new members are a welcome addition, as they revitalise the organisation with new ideas, interests and energy. But a growing membership also brings the challenge of ensuring that there is enough room in study groups to accommodate new members. Thirteen study groups were active in 2019, but due to space limitations of the living rooms in which most of these groups meet, most groups have been closed to new members, and so the Committee has been, and will continue, facilitating the development of new study groups. We'll be seeking additional ideas for study groups at the AGM.

We had four public speakers at general meetings in 2019, offering a broad range of topics. These included:

Charlie Haskell, on Life of a Freelance Director in the NZ Film Industry

Max Rashbrooke, on Deepening Democracy: How to Fix Government and Restore Trust

Dr. Alastair MacDonald, on the Ethics of Aged Care

Peter Stupples, on Malevich and New Zealand Art

Emeritus Professor Peter Herbison, on How to Evaluate Medical Treatments

Marian Vlaar also offered a members-only talk on euthanasia.

Monthly TED Talk Discussions continued to be well-attended, with lively discussion, and covering a wide range of topics. Thanks to Richard English for keeping these sessions going and for helping members navigate, download and show TED talks from the internet.

This past year saw a few new developments for U3A Golden Bay Mohua, including a website (www.u3agoldenbaymohua.org.nz/), the use of nametags for general meetings, and the introduction of a new learning format, in the way of a taught course on gardening which was offered by Bill Brett of the Nelson U3A.

This past year, the Committee also reviewed the equipment we use regularly for general meetings. With advice from member Kevin Durkan, we decided to purchase our own, more modern sound system, which, in addition to supporting a couple of wireless microphones, enables our public speakers to show video clips with sound.

Our Committee has operated this past year with nine members, two of whom will be stepping down at this time: Geoff Aitken, who has been taking care of member communication; and Tim Harrington, who has been our secretary. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank both Geoff and Tim for the work that they performed for U3A. Finally, and on behalf of our entire U3A chapter, I would like to thank all our Committee members for their work this past year in facilitating a rich and enjoyable learning environment for us all.

Paul Taylor, Chairperson

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