Golden Bay Mohua Annual General Meeting, 18 February, 2022

Chairperson's Report

Following on from 2020's challenges adjusting to lock-downs and zoom meetings, our U3A experienced a more stable COVID environment in 2021. For the most part, small groups met again in person, though now with masks and social distancing, and we returned to a regular programme of public talks, though now with the added precautions of masks, sign-ins and restricting attendance to vaccinated members only.

Membership in our U3A remained relatively stable this past year, dropping slightly to 116 members. As usual, a few members left due to moving away, but we did not see the growth in new members that we experienced in the previous few years. I attribute this largely to the COVID environment that we now find ourselves and look forward to the day that we return to mask-less meetings.

Eighteen study/interest groups met in 2021, and I would like to thank group convenors for continuing to lead these groups with the added challenges brought on by COVID. We offered seven public talks in 2021, slightly more than usual, to make up for only being able to offer three talks the previous year. These included:

- Nikki Turner, New Zealand's COVID Immunisation Programme, 23 April
- Gill Wratt, The Antarctic Science Platform, 28 May
- Euan Mason, Constellations, 18 June
- Bevan Grant, Active Living, 23 July
- Chris Bennett, The Golden Bay Affordable Housing Project, 8 October
- Julian Maclaren, Artificial Intelligence, 12 November
- Paul Sangster, Golden Bay History, 10 December

All of our talks were well-attended, attracting audiences of well over 50 and stimulating good discussion. Dr. Nikki Turner's talk on New Zealand's COVID vaccination programme was particularly timely and memorable, attracting our largest audience yet, and a lively question-and-answer period.

Thanks to the team of volunteers working from the kitchen at the back of the Senior Citizens Hall, we have enjoyed coffee and tea and a chance to catch up with friends before each public talk.

Financially, our U3A remains on a stable footing, as indicated in the Treasurer's Report. We had applied again this past year for a Tasman District Council Community grant and were pleased to see that we were awarded a larger grant of $1,400 this year, which we used to help cover the costs of bringing speakers in from outside of Golden Bay. The U3A Committee continues to explore additional funding opportunities so that we can bring more nationally recognised speakers to Golden Bay without increasing our $20 per year subscription for members.

Finally, I would like to thank the U3A Committee for all their hard work this past year. Arranging and advertising speakers, writing grant proposals, organising public speaking equipment, maintaining the website, and publishing newsletters all takes time, and the Committee continues to work efficiently to make sure it all gets done.

Paul Taylor, Chairperson, U3A Golden Bay Mohua