



June 2023, Newsletter One

This is the first U3A Newsletter for almost a year. Sorry about the delay, although this wouldn't be a problem for younger members. Why not? Because, unlike old farts like me, the first reaction of younger people who want to find the latest information is to go to the relevant website. In this case, our website is: <https://u3agoldenbaymohua.org.nz/>, and it has kept abreast of all the changes that have happened (Thank you, Jocelyn, for taking over website maintenance when Hazel Taylor left Golden Bay. Jocelyn would be pleased if someone stepped forward to take on this task next year.)

There have been eight visiting speakers since June 2022, and many more are planned for 2023. Summaries of their talks appear next in this newsletter. But U3A is far, far more than an organisation that arranges visiting speakers. There are well over 100 members in the Golden Bay branch, comprising about 15 interest groups, and most of the activity occurs in people's homes.

The trouble with some of these "study" or "interest" groups, is that they are mostly full. In other words, there often isn't enough space in members' living rooms to accept more members. But, even if a group is full, if a topic interests you contact the convener anyway. If and when someone drops out, you will be next on the list.

If you don't want to wait a long time (possibly) for a space to come available, you could start your own group! It's not hard, we'll show you how. You'll find that your own group (in your house, or in someone else's) will quickly fill up with members.

To repeat, for information that is updated more regularly than the annual 2 or 3 newsletters, go to the website. If you haven't yet figured out how to access the website, find a grandchild or borrow one from a friend.

U3A Public Speakers from July 2022 to June 2023

(Summaries assembled by Jocelyn – and thanks for that)

Tracey Osborne, Marine Biologist, 8th July 2022.

Farewell Spit Restoration

Tracey has lived in the Bay for 20 years and is a marine ecologist. She started her talk by giving the Big Picture: the ecological destruction caused by introduced pests in New Zealand, and the aspirational goal of becoming predator free across the whole country by 2050. She then focussed on Golden Bay's contribution to pest elimination in Farewell Spit. Possums and pigs would be removed quickly, but stoats and rats would take more effort. The fence would not inhibit human movement, and in any case would not be completely secure (particularly on the mud-flats on the Eastern end). The gaps would be protected by remote sensors, a "minefield" of traps, and by a larger "suppression zone" stretching right back to Westhaven Inlet. This will all happen in the next few years, which is quite exciting.

Hilary Mitchell: Nelson teacher and researcher, 12 August 2022

Local Treaty Issues

Hilary Mitchell gave a most informative talk on historical Maori claims and issues in the Nelson & Marlborough regions. Hilary and husband John formed Mitchell Research in 1985 and over the subsequent 35 years completed hundreds of studies and reports on wide ranging topics contributing to hearings of Maori Land Court, Environment Court, High Court and the Waitangi Tribunal. They published the four-volume series "Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka: A History of Maori of Nelson & Marlborough", which won a number of awards.

Consequently, Hilary's talk was full of factual information supported by a clear detailed power point presentation. She spoke of her husband John being a Golden Bay local, in fact his childhood was spent in the house next door to The Senior Citizens Hall. Her talk was followed by a range of interesting questions from the large audience. The meeting was closed appropriately by a Karakia sung by John's family.

Richard Bullen, Associate Professor of Art History and Theory at Canterbury University, October 14, 2022

Art Made by Japanese POWs While Held at Featherston

Richard's principal areas of research are Japanese art and aesthetics; recently he has been researching the art works made by Japanese prisoners of war who were held in the WWII Featherston Camp.

Richard provided an illustrated talk about life in the prison camp and the art works produced by many prisoners during their interment. Although prisoners were forced to work in various ways, including gardening and a furniture factory, there were many idle periods in their daily routines which many used to make art works. These included paintings and woodcarvings, many of which were made from found materials such as offcuts of wood and paint sets provided by the Red Cross. Many paintings depicted recognisable Japanese landscape features such as Mt Fuji, as well as

subjects from Japanese life, including geisha. Wood carvings included figurines of animals which were gifted to local children.

Richard also talked about daily life in the camps and explained that artworks were used by prisoners as currency, to purchase cigarettes and other commodities from guards and local people with whom they had contact. Most of the surviving art works which Richard has catalogued, are in family collections of former prison guards. These images are striking and personal and provide a moving record of the life and thoughts of the imprisoned men.

Julie Catchpole, Director of the Suter Art Gallery, 11 November 2022

The Suter Art Gallery Collections

Using a power point presentation of relevant artworks, Julie took us on a tour of the gallery's collection. The Gallery was opened in 1899, honouring the wishes of Andrew Suter, second Bishop of Nelson and his wife, Amelia. Today the Gallery has a diverse collection ranging from John Gully watercolours to prominent modern artists with strong Nelson connections, such as Toss Woollaston and Philip Clairmont. Julie's talk included many stories about the artists and their paintings, and the supporters of the Gallery.

Geoff Bertram, Senior Associate of the Institute for Governance and Policy at Victoria University of Wellington, 9th December 2022

Electricity and Climate Change: two intertwined policy problems

From his research Geoff showed how policy and practice in these areas underwent extensive change in the 1980's when both our major political parties adopted neoliberal ideology as the basis for government activities. In one of his recent publications Geoff writes that "between 1984 and 1995 New Zealand made an extreme transformation of its government...more extreme than the neoliberal programmes of Reagan in the USA and Thatcher in the UK". New Zealand became "remarkable for the purity of its new state managerial design and ideological certainty...". This meant that areas of state activity such as electricity supply and climate change were no longer operated as a public service for the social good. Rather, they were deemed to be commodities to be traded for profit in the marketplace. Geoff presented data that showed the economic and social failure of this approach and the ongoing problems that we face if we continue using such ideas and practices.

Craig Potton, Photographer, Environmentalist, and Publisher, 17th March 2023

Rewilding of Mind and Place: an illustrated talk examining an opening of our hearts and minds to the wild within and without

Craig is a well-known photographer and environmentalist who lives in Nelson and has many connections with Golden Bay. He has been an environmental activist since his teenage years and shared many stories as he took us on an illustrated journey through many of his experiences. His slides of landscapes, plants and birds were carefully selected to illustrate his ideas about relationships between the environment and all living creatures, all of which were presented with the passion that has inspired his activism and enlivened his art. Despite some unfortunate technical hitches, the photographs exemplified the picture-making talents that have established Craig's international reputation as a wildlife photographer. This was a lively and authoritative address that provided attendees with strong evidence of the environmental concerns that inspire Craig's life and work, and left us with much to think about.

Seminar: Planning for Change as we Age, April 21, 2023

Over 70 people, many non-members, participated in this seminar aimed at providing information for the transitions of retirement life from living the good life on a lifestyle property, to smaller housing in town, to residential care. Alexia Russell, retired Public Health Nurse, gave a beautifully illustrated talk on the support available while still living at home, and how to access that care. A small group session on how one makes the decision to downsize as one ages, and whether to stay in Golden Bay or move to Nelson, provoked much debate.

Dr Helen Kingston described the type of care provided by Abbeyfield. Rhoda MacDonald, Retired Nurse Manger of Jack Inglis Friendship Hospital talked about the pros and cons of retirement villages and explained the various types of residential care available including how it is funded. Many questions followed.

Alexander Maxwell, Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Victoria University of wellington, June 16th, 2023

Ukraine Issues

Dr Maxwell gave us a presentation on the background history of Russia and Ukraine from the Russian Revolution of 1917 till the present conflict. His talk was enlivened by excellent photos and maps, which made very clear his points about the differences between the two cultures which - despite Putin's assertions - were and are quite distinct. Stalin's attempts to stamp out Ukrainian culture meant that in WWII when the choice was between Stalin and Hitler, patriots in Ukraine led by Stepan Bandera opted to support Hitler, hoping thereby to become independent of the Soviet Union. This is the source of the claims of Nazism made by Putin to justify his invasion of Ukraine.

We had a very full audience for this presentation, even including a few Russian supporters!

(Jenny Maclaren)

The Interest (or Study) Groups

What are they? They are the essence of U3A. Now that you have retired, you need to exercise your mind as well as your body. Use it or lose it. While listening to others is good, it is still possible to vegetate with words and pictures just washing over you. There is nothing like presenting a subject to force you to think! When you join a group, you will normally be expected to volunteer as presenter for a session, perhaps once a year.

We are always seeking new ideas for interest groups. If you are prepared to start a group off, bravo! If you would like to start a group, but don't know how, consult the website and/or our president. If you have a good idea, but don't want to organise it yourself, tell us anyway.

Most of the 15 Interest Groups are full, meaning that the homes where the meetings are held cannot accommodate more people. (If you want to join a group that is full, see later).

How do you join a group?

You turn up for the AGM and write your name down on the list of groups. You will then be contacted by email. Alternatively, you can take the initiative yourself and phone or email a convenor directly.

You want to join a Group, but it's FULL?

First, contact the Group convenor (their email addresses and phone numbers are provided on the WEBSITE, see earlier, or under each group's report). The chances are, there really is a vacancy on a particular date because someone can't be there. In the longer term, there will be resignations from every Group for a variety of reasons, and – by declaring your interest – you will be the first on the waiting list to replace them.

Second, you can form your own Group. Daunting? Sure, it is. But it is achievable. Many have done it and the U3A committee will help you through the process. Note, for example, that there are two Book Discussion groups. That is because the first one was full but there was enough demand for another.

Existing Study Groups June 2023		
Subject	Convenor	Vacancies?
The Classics	Marian Vlaar 525 8167 marian.vlaar@gmail.com	Yes (2)
Films	John Pemberton. 525 9125 john.pemberton47@gmail.com	None?
New Democracy	Jan Morgan 525-9273 dejmorgan@farmside.co.nz	One?
Prehistoric mysteries	Piers Maclaren. 525 7440 piersmaclaren@gmail.com	None
Art history: Italian Renaissance Painting	Jocelyn Tracey 525 9125 jocelyn.tracey@outlook.com and Margaret Maloney 524 8699 m.maloney@xtra.co.nz	None
Art history: 19 th C Art Movements	Rosamund Arthur and Don Mead. 524 8130 don.mead@gmail.com	Yes, 2
Book Discussion Group 1	Liz Lee. 525 8110 leejl@xtra.co.nz	None
Book Discussion Group 2	Peter Riley. peterrobinriley@gmail.com	None
Saints and Sinners	Robin Riley. 525 7033 or 027-244 7731 peterrobinriley@gmail.com	None
Astronomy	John Pemberton 021751715 john.pemberton47@gmail.com	None
Early NZ History	Marian Vlaar. 525 8167 marian.vlaar@gmail.com	Yes, 2-3
What Does the Science Say?	Jocelyn Tracey 424 9125 jocelyn.tracey@outlook.com	Yes
Poetry Appreciation	Lewis Martin lews22@yahoo.co.uk 021 775 359	Yes
Architecture People and Cities	Diane Dacre 525 9422 dianedacre@yahoo.co.nz	No

Reports from the Study Groups

Unless otherwise stated, all groups meet in the private homes of one of the group members, often the group convenor. Groups that may have vacancies for new members are indicated. If interested in joining, check with the convenor, as these places are usually limited, and a waiting list may exist.

Any member is welcome to announce a new interest study group at any time, and seek support from prospective members, by announcement through the newsletter. Groups set their own basis for participation, which may be by active contribution of all members, or more directed learning from one person with knowledge and expertise in the group's topic. Any costs incurred are again by agreement within the group. Imagination is welcomed!

1. **The Classics** (Marian Vlaar. Vacancies)
This small group is presently reading and watching the Theban plays by Sophocles - Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus and Antigone. Our discussions range far and wide. There is room for 2 more people.
2. **Film Viewing** (John Pemberton. Possible Vacancies)
This group watches a film chosen by members each month, with a focus on arthouse and classic films that in some cases may not have made it into screenings in regular cinemas. Other choices are acclaimed earlier movies and foreign language films. We are regularly surprised, both positively and occasionally not so much, but this unexpectedness is part of the fun.
3. **Art History – 19th into Early 20th Centuries** (Rosamund Arthur)
Using both videos and direct teaching with handouts, Rosamund leads this group into learning and discussion of particular artists and movements of this period. It is directed learning from Rosamund drawing on her extensive knowledge. (Unless a new leader comes forward, this group may terminate soon as Don and Rosamund are planning to leave The Bay).
4. **Art History – Italian Renaissance** (Margaret Maloney and Jocelyn Tracey)
Using a varied mix of videos, personal presentations from group members and other activities such as recently a visit to an art conservator, this group has studied the painters of the low and high Italian Renaissance. Latterly the focus has been on the late Renaissance period. After 7 years of running this group, the convenors will be retiring at the end of the year.
5. **Poetry Appreciation** (Lewis Martin, Vacancies)
A small group where each member brings along 3-4 poems monthly of their own free ranging choice and appeal. Examples chosen have covered all styles from modern to classical poets, that members read aloud and open up for the group to discuss.
6. **Early Colonial NZ History** (Marian Vlaar, Vacancies)
Members research and present topics on people of interest in NZ early history up till 1900. Topics have included early governance; farming; shipbuilding; NZ wars as described in Vincent O'Malley's book; development of postal services; or people or

families who have impacted on and/or contributed to early NZ. The group can have up to 3 more people

7. **New Democracy** (Jan Morgan, possibly one vacancy)
With the run-up to the election, we will be closely examining each party's manifesto.
8. **What does the Science Say?** (Jocelyn Tracey. Vacancies)
Group members present published evidence on topics of current interest and debate to tease out fact from fiction – notably where there is scepticism or divergence of views, or simply popular practice that begs for a scientific basis or explanation. Presentations are by both PowerPoint and video clips.
9. **Saints and Sinners** (Pat Ballard and Robin Riley)
A small group that looks into the lives and biographies of notable people, chosen by the individual members in turn and presented to the rest of the group. A diversity of figures has been studied usually from published biographies, some of them truly great leaders and notable figures of history, as well as some less well-known individuals.
10. **Prehistoric Mysteries** (Piers Maclaren)
We continue to explore the amazing story of people in the thousands of years before there was any written history, using archaeological evidence or DNA studies. In the last 12 months we have looked at the Tassili Rock paintings, Papua New Guinea, the Cloud Warriors of Peru, the Mound Builders of North America, the ancient Danube Civilisation, the Sanxingdui Culture of Sichuan China, evidence for pre-Maori visits to New Zealand, Siberian Mammoth-Hunters and the Phoenicians.
11. **Book Group 1** (Peter Riley)
Part of the Christchurch WEA-based scheme where 10 books per year are sent to the group, based on preferences provided by members who each submit 3 choices. Members discuss the book of the month at meetings.
12. **Book Group 2** (Jan Morgan)
This group also operates under the same Christchurch based scheme on the same lines as group 1. Each month's choice provides stimulating group discussion among the members.
13. **Astronomy** (Don Mead and John Pemberton)
Investigation and learning by videos, and prepared presentations by members on a wide range of topics in astronomy and cosmology, and space exploration. On occasions when the sky is clear, we are also able to indulge in direct star-gazing through binoculars and telescopes at the wonders of the night sky, and our wider universe. We are fortunate to have the benefit of use of some loaned telescopes.
14. **Architecture, People and Cities** (Diane Dacre)
An exploration led by Diane looking at some of the world's major buildings and cities to determine what these tell us about the ways people lived in earlier times and other societies. The group is also considering the ideas inherent in the architectural styles used by subsequent builders. From ancient Greek and Roman designs, moving forward in time and considering the use of these classical styles in later periods.

15. **TED Talks** (currently in abeyance)

This open-to-all group meeting at the St John's rooms at Rec Park previously showed videos of TED talks on stimulating topics that invited discussion and debate. Previously well attended and appreciated, it is presently suspended until further interest and a convenor comes forward, willing to organize this.

That's all for this newsletter, folks. We'll keep you informed about visiting speakers as usual.

Piers Maclaren (on behalf of the U3A Committee)