



March 2024, Newsletter One

The last U3A Newsletter was in June 2023 and was also – optimistically - titled Newsletter One. There weren't any more. Ah well, the thought was there. But U3A members needn't have missed out on any news, because – thanks to Jocelyn Tracey – the website was kept up to date. Our website address is <https://u3agoldenbaymohua.org.nz/>, so please use it.

There have been five visiting speakers since June 2023, and many more are planned for 2024. Summaries of those five appear in this newsletter next. 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 12-13 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, please 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.

One observation: the various interest groups have become something more than just a collective exploration of a certain topic. They have become a *mini community*, and people enjoy attending them just for the social interaction among friendly, interesting people. For example, there have been groups that have switched their focus to a totally different branch of enquiry, but has this resulted in a loss – or even a change – of members? Often not. And there is nothing wrong with that. We all need to keep physically fit, mentally fit, and to surround ourselves with friends.

U3A Public Speakers from June 2023 to March 2024

Barbara Brookes, 18 August 2023

Generations of Change: A History of NZ Women

18 August Barbara Brookes, Professor Emerita, Dept of History, University of Otago, gave a fascinating talk spanning the history of both Māori and Pakeha women in NZ over the last 200 years. She covered areas such as the law, land ownership, voting rights, education, rurality, finances, work, menstruation taboos and parental leave. Her summary of the change in the timeline for women from birth to death was illuminating. And along the way there were many interesting stories such as an early Māori women's parliament, family benefit being paid to mothers, men being paid in cash in the pub, the difficulties of the first woman fire fighter to be employed, leading all the way to an unmarried, pregnant prime minister. [Jocelyn]

Nigel Costley, 22 September 2023

The Edwin Fox

Nigel Costley gave a fascinating illustrated talk on the extraordinarily varied history of the East Indiaman barque 'Edwin Fox' that is now in its final resting place in dry dock on the foreshore of Picton. Here it is undergoing preservation work by a dedicated society of enthusiasts to allow visitors to admire the construction and imagine life aboard this vessel. From its teak construction in the Bengali shipyard on the banks of the Hooghly River in Calcutta, this remarkable ship has sailed the seven seas as a general cargo ship, last surviving ship transporting convicts to Australia, last Crimean War troop carrier, a pioneering refrigeration ship, the oldest wooden vessel that brought British immigrants to Nelson, and the oldest surviving merchant ship in the world. Truly a remarkable piece of maritime history whose survival here in our region is as a result of a chain of unlikely events that came close to seeing the vessel lost to decay, but for the intervention and dedication of one or two determined individuals. An enclosed museum now protects the ship for all to visit and see for hopefully years ahead. [Gordon]

Kevin Heasman, October 13 2023*Aquaculture Research at Cawthron*

Dr Kevin Heasman from the Cawthron Institute in Nelson gave us an interesting insight into aquaculture research there. Two examples: “What is required to develop new cultivation structures for exposed ocean farming of shellfish and seaweed?” This was a fascinating combination of biology, engineering, oceanography and computer modelling. “How do you work with an animal that comes from over 200m depth in the ocean?” The purpose of this was to see if scampi has aquaculture potential. How amazing to be present at a time in history and place on the planet where, after a period of ten thousand years since agriculture first started, radical new species and techniques are being developed! [Jenny]

Robin Slow, 24 November 2023

“Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua”

(I walk back towards the future with my eyes fixed on my past)

Our last speaker for the year was Robin Slow. Robin is a well-respected local artist, who taught art at Golden Bay High School for 31 years until he retired to become a full-time artist. Much of his art has deep local connections, and has been exhibited throughout New Zealand in almost a hundred galleries, shows and other events. He took us on an illustrated trip through many of his paintings and explained a lot of their meanings and symbols. His talk was followed by an end-of-year afternoon tea. [Lewis]

Inge Bolt, 8 March 2024*Kiwi conservation*

In March 2024 Dr Inge Bolt, a very experienced local conservationist, gave a lively and detailed presentation of her work as DOC Senior Ranger in Biodiversity in Haast. The aim was to help the rarest kiwi, the Tokoeka sub-species, to thrive and multiply in its natural habitat. Not an easy task, given the rough and steep nature of that habitat! Inge included several short videos, including an amazing one featuring the hatching of a kiwi egg, hour by hour! Inge has now been living in Golden Bay for several years, working as a vet and continuing her conservation work with kiwi in the Kahurangi and Whakamarama areas. [Jenny]

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 12-13 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 <https://u3agoldenbaymohua.org.nz/> 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 March 2024		
Subject	Convenor	Vacancies?
The Classics	Marian Vlaar 525 8167 marian.vlaar@gmail.com	Yes (2)
Films	Lewis Martin 525 9125 or 021 775 359 lews22@yahoo.co.uk	Yes (2)
New Democracy	Jan Morgan 525 9273 dejmorgan@farmside.co.nz	Yes (2)
Art history 1: 20 th Century Favourites	Diane Dacre 525 9422 dianedacre@yahoo.co.nz	None
Art history 2: Italian Renaissance paintings	Marian Vlaar 525 8167 marian.vlaar@gmail.com	None
Book Discussion Group 1	Jan Morgan 525 9273 dejmorgan@farmside.co.nz	None
Book Discussion Group 2	Peter Riley and Robin Riley 027 3337983 and 027 244 7731 peterrobinriley@gmail.com	None
Saints and Sinners	Pat Ballard 524 8220 kdpballard@xtra.co.nz	Yes (2)
Astronomy	Helen Bracefield and Warwick Briggs 5259257 helenandwarick@xtra.co.nz	None
Early NZ History	Marian Vlaar. 525 8167 marian.vlaar@gmail.com	Yes, see comments
What Does the Science Say?	Mike Delceg 525 9530 m.delceg@xtra.co.nz	Yes (1-2)
Poetry Appreciation	Lewis Martin 525 9125 or 021 775 359 lews22@yahoo.co.uk	None
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!

Current Golden Bay U3A Study Groups

(Thanks to Gordon for this)

1. The Classics. Group readings and study of the Greek comedies. Convenor Marian Vlaar, 525 8167. A couple of places available.
2. Film Viewing. A focus on arthouse and old classic movies, but open to any suggestion from members. Convenor Lewis Martin 525 9125 Up to 2 places available.
3. Art history 1. An educational tour of 20th century favourites led by Diane Dacre (convenor, 525 9422) through videos and teaching. Group full.
4. Art History 2. Italian Renaissance paintings. Video and teaching/discussion led by Marian Vlaar 525 8167 (convenor). Group full.
5. New Democracy. Focus this year on the NZ political scene. Convenor Jan Morgan 525 9273 Up to 2 vacancies.
6. Poetry Appreciation. Free-ranging presentation and discussion of poetry chosen by the group members. Convenor Lewis Martin 021 775 359. Group full.
7. What does the Science Say? An examination of current topics of interest and / or controversy from the point of view of their backing by science, presented by members of the group. Convenor Mike Delceg 525 9530. Space for 1-2 more.
8. Saints and Sinners. Exploration of the lives of notable historical figures and their legacy. Convenor Pat Ballard 524 8220. Up to 2 vacancies.
9. Astronomy. Videos, discussion and sky-watching in our exploration of the cosmos and its wonders. Helen Bracefield and Warwick Briggs -convenors. 525 9727. Group full.
10. Architecture, People and Cities. An exploration led by Diane Dacre (convenor 525 9422) of the impact of our built environment on our lives as individuals and societies. Group full.

11. Book Group 1. Joint discussion of books chosen by members and supplied through the Christchurch-based scheme. Convenor Jan Morgan 525 9273. Group full.

12. Book Group 2. Joint discussion of books chosen by members and supplied through the Christchurch-based scheme. Convenors Peter and Robin Riley 027 3337983 and 027 244 7731 - convenors. Group full.

Additionally, the following group that functioned last year is awaiting new participants before resuming:

13. Early NZ History. Focus this year to be on 20th century events, people and places. If interested in joining, convenor Marian Vlaar 525 8167 would like to hear from you.

If interested in joining any of the groups listed as full, leaving your name and contact details with the convenor will enable prompt filling of any vacancies that arise.

Confirmed speakers for 2024:

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| 4 April | Dr James Crampton, Geology in Golden Bay (Note Thursday at 7.30 pm) |
| 17 May | Speaker cancelled. A replacement? |
| 12 July | Alison Balance, Our Changing World. |
| 23 August | Jane Malthus, The Eden Hore Collection. |
| 18 October | Phil Lester, Bees: playful, diverse, and smarter than you think. |

Current Golden Bay U3A Committee:

Lewis Martin (Chair)

Diane Dacre (Secretary)

Jocelyn Tracey (Treasurer)

Jenny Maclaren (Advertising)

Piers Maclaren (Emails and Newsletter)

Gordon Mather (Coordinator of the Study Groups)

Marian Vlaar (Organiser of Visiting Speakers)

Liz Thomas (Dogsbody)

That's all for this newsletter, folks. We'll keep you informed about visiting speakers as usual. You'll normally get an email about 10 days before the speech, and a reminder the day before.

Piers Maclaren (on behalf of the U3A Committee)