

# U3A MANAWATŪ NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF U3A MANAWATŪ

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

*As at the time of printing we have the following new members:*

*Anne Brewer, Jim Sutton*



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## Another successful seminar series!

### RESPONDING TO HAZARDS

**Chris Phillips**

The U3A Manawatū 2023 autumn seminar series, co-ordinated by Stuart Birks, took place at Crossroads Church on four Wednesdays in May/June. The series title was 'Responding to Hazards'.

To open the series, two members of the PNCC Emergency Management Team - Sharon Douglas and Jason McDowell - outlined the responsibilities of the Council in planning for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies. The top five hazards for the City and the Manawatū region were earthquake, flooding, tsunami, pandemic and landslides. Palmerston North has a volunteer rescue team, and members of the Council have been seconded to other areas of the country to assist with emergencies, to gain first hand experience in response and recovery. It was also important that the general public was prepared for rapid evacuation in the event of an emergency.

In the second seminar, Professor Bruce Glavovic of Massey University focussed on sea level rise, and the need to build resilience in coastal communities. World-wide, people and development are concentrated at the coast. For almost 40 years, the United Nations IPCC has drawn attention to the consequences of climate change and the need to mitigate emissions. The evidence is now unequivocal and the next

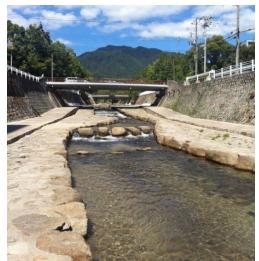
decade is critical. Much of the damage being caused is irreversible. In New Zealand, 72,000 people and 50,000 buildings are exposed to coastal flooding, and unless resilience is built we face uncertainty and conflict. More radical action is needed to unlock productive potential.

Professor Ian Fuller, of Massey University, then put the spotlight on New Zealand rivers, and how we should manage them in the years ahead. Currently rivers are managed using the 20<sup>th</sup> century approach of command and control, where they are contained within over-narrowed corridors between stop banks. With the greatly increased probability of extreme flood events as a result of climate change we need to understand what is predicated for each river catchment, and we need to make room for rivers to expand naturally (let rivers be rivers!). We can also learn from indigenous perspectives. Given the magnitude and cost of the task ahead it becomes an issue for central government.



**Absorption of disturbance**

**LET RIVERS BE RIVERS!**



**Resistance to disturbance**

*Continued on Page 4...*



## FROM THE CHAIR

Graham Slater

Greetings! I hope that winter has not had a negative impact on you. There is a lot of flu around and we have

not seen the end of COVID by any means.

Data from the COVID info site shows on 11<sup>th</sup> July 5,417 cases reported in the week. There are also 2,547 reinfections reported in the same time. New Zealand has registered 3,159 deaths to date. This is not over and we need to continue to be sensible and cautious.

On a brighter note, our numbers of enrolled and paid up members is rising again after a bit of a dip. We are back up to 265 paid-up members.

I note with some sadness the loss of the Science, Technology and Environment group. The group has been run tirelessly and proficiently by Brian Tapper for many years. The group has gone into recession due to not being able to find a co-ordinator to continue the fine work carried out by Brian.

I am hoping we can reconvene the group and get it up and running again. If you feel you would like to be part of that rejuvenation please contact me. I am trying to set up a meeting to see what we can do to avoid losing such a valuable group.

We had another very successful free public seminar series in Autumn where numbers seemed to be getting back to pre-covid levels. The next series promises to be unmissable. The theme will be **Approaching End of Life**. The series is scheduled for four Wednesday afternoons, starting on 25<sup>th</sup> October. The four speakers are professionals in their field and will each cover various aspects of end of life from their perspectives.

The 2023 AGM will be held in the Quaker Hall in College St on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September. I look forward to seeing a good turnout this year.

This will be my final 'From the Chair' column as my time as the chair of U3A comes to an end in September. I have relished chairing such an organisation as this. It is driven on a totally voluntary basis by a dedicated group of committee members and Group Co-ordinators

who do a wonderful job of keeping it alive.

I am indebted to them for making my job easier and therefore more enjoyable.

## SPRING SEMINAR SERIES

### Approaching end of life

Crossroads Church

220 Church Street

Wednesdays 2.15 - 4 pm

25<sup>th</sup> Oct to 15<sup>th</sup> Nov

**What should people be thinking about in advance to make their end of life as positive an experience as possible for all concerned?**

This promises to be an interesting series! Full details will be made available several weeks prior.

## ~AGM~

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 2 pm on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September.

Venue: Quaker Meeting House,  
227 College Street

Please contact the Chair, Graham Slater, at [gandg@inspire.net.nz](mailto:gandg@inspire.net.nz), if you wish to be nominated for the Committee.

## SPRING POEM

### Prothalamium

by Aaron Kramer



Come, all you who are not satisfied  
as ruler in a lone, wallpapered room  
full of mute birds, and flowers that falsely bloom,  
and closets choked with dreams that long ago died!

Come, let us sweep the old streets - like a bride:  
sweep out the dead leaves with a relentless broom;  
prepare for Spring, as though he were our groom  
for whose light footstep eagerly we bide.

We'll sweep out shadows, where the rats long fed;  
sweep out our shame - and in its place we'll make  
a bower for love, a splendid marriage-bed  
fragrant with flowers aquiver for the Spring.  
And when he comes, our murdered dreams shall wake;  
and when he comes, all the mute birds shall sing.

Please contribute to our newsletter!  
Contact the Editor: Rosemary at  
[rkrsinich@gmail.com](mailto:rkrsinich@gmail.com)

# GROUPS...

Have you thought of setting up a new group?  
We can provide you with help.

Interest, meanwhile, has been expressed in a Writing Poetry group and a Social/Coffee group.  
These groups need a coordinator!

Please contact Graham Slater at [gandg@inspire.net.nz](mailto:gandg@inspire.net.nz) if you think you might be interested in coordinating either of these groups.

## SPACES IN GROUPS

As at mid-July there look to be spaces in the following groups. Contact the Group Coordinator if you are interested. More details can be found in the [Learning Programme](#).

BBC Radio Comedy  
Biography  
Book Discussion Group 2 (on-line enabled)  
Book Group 1  
Classic Ballet  
Comedy  
Conversation Pieces (on-line enabled)  
Cryptic Crosswords Beginnings  
Cryptic Crosswords 1 (Feilding)  
Cryptic Crosswords 2  
Current Affairs  
Hidden Memories: Writing our Memories 3  
Music Appreciation  
New Zealand History  
Oral History  
Philosophy  
Photography  
Poetry for Pleasure  
Pre-Industrial Transport  
Railway Travel  
Silver Screen Selections  
Sketching  
TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design)  
10-Pin Bowling  
Travel  
TV Drama Series (Comedy)  
Understanding Te Reo Māori  
Write Your Memoirs  
Write Our Memoirs Too (Feilding)

## GROUP COORDINATORS' MEETING

The GC's mid-year meeting was held on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

Various matters were discussed including (i) encouraging wider contact between groups, (ii) overcoming Eurocentricity, (iii) getting the Science, Technology and Environment group up and running again, (iv) AV help required by some groups, and (v) getting 'new blood' on the committee.

## FREE ONLINE SHORT COURSES

### Gloria Slater

By definition, we in U3A are already invested in lifelong learning through our participation in learning interest groups. However, there are other avenues available to us to 'stretch' our brains, which I thought I could share with you. These are free, short, online courses run through universities and other reputable organisations. There are many sites available, but the two I have found most useful for retirees are: Future Learn <https://www.futurelearn.com> and Open Learn <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>.

**Future Learn** provides courses from all over the world, each having a finite time to complete within a specified number of weeks. I usually finish a week in only a few days so the workload is not onerous. **Open Learn** (the Open University) has a much more extensive list of courses, which are open ended in terms of finishing, range from only a few hours to more than 20 and are at three levels. There are courses that complement our offerings such as Art (I enjoyed the Pop Art course), History, (though not NZ History), Science (some great Geology and Astronomy ones), Philosophy and Literature (e.g. how to read a poem/book/film/art form). Conversely, there are many courses that supplement what we can offer such as Plate Tectonics, Design, Psychology or Physics to name only a few. However, I think I'll give, 'Ageing and the Brain: the Impact of Neurodegenerative Diseases' a miss - it might provide more information than I'm ready for!

## OUR SEMINAR SERIES DON'T JUST HAPPEN!

### Chris Phillips

The autumn 2023 seminar series 'Responding to Hazards' was the seventh to be co-ordinated by Stuart Birks, and the 32<sup>nd</sup> since the inaugural series in 2007 - quite an achievement!

The 2007 series, co-ordinated by John Garner, was on 'The Manawatu'. Over the next five years coordinators included Brian Ibell, Ruben Leberman, Chris Phillips, and Larry and Dianne Haist. Margaret Hazelton then co-ordinated the next 15 series until Stuart Birks entered the scene. A diverse range of topics has been presented, in arts, sciences, social sciences, geopolitics, justice, education and ethics. Many of the speakers have been drawn from Massey University and we are lucky in being able to call on such a rich local source. Venues have included Te Manawa, All Saints Church and Crossroads Church.

These series do not organise themselves! A big effort is required from the co-ordinator over several months prior to a series taking place. A topic has to be found, speakers have to be approached, dates have to be determined, bookings have to be made, and flyers and other promotional materials have to be created and distributed. For many years, Jill Gibson set up a promotional display board in the

library. On the day, most committee members have a role to play in ensuring the smooth running of the seminar, from introducing the speaker, occupying the front desk, overseeing the technology, setting out the chairs, and delivering the refreshments.

Attendances at seminars over recent years have been in the 75-100plus range which suggests we are doing something right.

*Responding to Hazards. Continued from Page 1...*

In the final seminar, Dr Suzanne Phibbs of Massey University looked at the social patterning of adverse outcomes following disasters. Vulnerable and marginalised groups are more likely to encounter disparities in service provision during the disaster response and recovery phases. The sinking of the Titanic was used to illustrate the social patterning of disaster outcomes, as was the impact of the Canterbury earthquake sequence on disabled community members. In particular, Dr Phibbs considered how the Māori recovery network worked to support those affected by the earthquakes. Her research has informed government strategies in the area of disasters.

**Remember to make  
use of our WEBSITE -  
source of the latest  
information  
and an easy way to  
subscribe:**

[https://  
www.u3amanawatu.org.nz](https://www.u3amanawatu.org.nz)

### U3A Manawatu



*Life-long learning in retirement*

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