

U3A MANAWATŪ NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF U3A MANAWATŪ

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Anne Hall, Fred Hirst, Steph Hirst, Alison Jefferies, Tricia Keiller, Alywynne Macdonald, Rosemary McKinley, Kay Phillips, Alison Rowland, Al Rowland.



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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT to AGM (20th September 2023)

I am pleased to present the Chairperson's Report for U3A Manawatu for the year ending September 2023.

This has been a good year as far as U3A activities are concerned. Post COVID we are recovering our numbers well and the organization is thriving again. I am not convinced that Covid is yet a thing of the past and urge ongoing caution.

We certainly had some issues to deal with during the lockdown period and it was pleasing to see the creative solutions groups came up with to enable some level of contact to be maintained.

As this will be my final report as the Chair of U3A I would like to take the opportunity to thank the hard-working, dedicated group who comprise the committee of the organisation. We are fortunate to have the people who hold office for us and keep the entity running so well. I leave the committee in good heart and am pleased to see some new blood putting themselves forward to continue the good work.

Also, the Group Coordinators who lead the 40 Learning Groups. I am indebted to the ongoing work they put into the maintenance and upkeep of the groups they lead. The model we run relies heavily on coordinators to ensure the organisation continues to provide the opportunities for the membership to have a diversity of experiences in the groups they attend. As always we welcome ideas for more such groups and activities.

It has been rewarding to lead this organisation for the past 5 years. I am not lost to U3A as I will be maintaining the Learning Groups I coordinate. I also hope to create some time and space to indulge again in the tranquil activity of fly fishing.

The upcoming Spring seminar series entitled "Approaching End of Life" looks like it will be one of

the most important series we have run to date. It will run from Wednesday 25th October to Wednesday 15th November at the Crossroads church at 2.15pm. The array of speakers we have lined up covers legal aspects: EPOA, wills and estates, health related issues as we age, the funeral process and the issue of assisted dying.

The group of people who organise and run these events create something special. Also they give our membership the opportunity to mingle with other people, an essential element as we age and tend to slow down. Since the model of U3A we run here is based on an array of Learning Groups, the wider membership does not get many opportunities to interact with members from other groups. These seminars also provide the opportunity for that interaction. We are especially indebted to the work put in by Stuart Birks for the fine job he does in wrangling speakers to contribute to the interesting array of topics he manages to secure.

We are currently in the process of trying to re-establish the Science etc group after it foundered when the long-term coordinator Brian Tapper decided he could no longer continue to run the group. Stuart Schwartz is driving the project to see if we can rescue something out of one of the largest groups in our U3A. We are trying to set up meetings with interested parties to see if we can get something going again. **Cont. Page 4**





FROM THE CHAIR

Chris van der Krogt

At its recent AGM, the U3A elected a “new” committee. In fact, there were only two retirements and two new members. The first committee meeting after the AGM reaffirmed most roles, including those of

Secretary (Rosemary Krsinich) and Treasurer (Ron Paddock), while I was elected Chairperson – one of whose duties is to write this column. We are all grateful to Graham Slater for his generous and expert service as Chair for the past five years and to our other retiring committee member, Merle Smillie.

I entered the “Third Age” in 2020 after teaching religious studies and history at Massey University, Palmerston North. My wife Cindy and I have two sons in Wellington and three grandchildren. We have lived in Palmerston North since 1988. My particular interests are in the history and religions of Europe, the Middle East and New Zealand. Since retiring, I have enjoyed participating in a number of discussion groups, and was recently encouraged to join the committee and even to serve as chairperson.

At this time of the year, the U3A begins planning for next year. Some 2023 groups have only a couple of meetings left and one or two have already wound up, having completed their schedule of activities. Most groups are long-established and will reconvene in 2024, but it would be great to hear from volunteers interested in starting up new groups. If you have an interest you would like to share with other members of the U3A by setting up a group, I would love to hear from you.

I look forward to serving as Chair over the coming year. Feel free to contact me if you want to raise any issues.

Chris van der Krogt
delftnz@gmail.com

A copy of our new **Constitution** can be found on the Committee page of our website, [click here](#).

If you elected to receive this newsletter by mail, it will be in black and white. A colour copy can be downloaded from our website at www.u3amanawatu.org.nz

Your Committee Members for 2023-2024

CHAIR: Chris van der Krogt

TREASURER: Ron Paddock

SECRETARY: Rosemary Krsinich

Claire Barrett, Stuart Birks, Janet Black,
Stu Schwartz, Anne Spring, Sue Stirling



Back row L to R: Stuart Birks, Chris van der Krogt, Rosemary Krsinich, Janet Black

Front row L to R: Anne Spring, Ron Paddock

Absent: Claire Barrett, Sue Stirling

SPRING SEMINAR SERIES

‘Approaching End of Life’

Four Wednesdays 2.15 - 4 pm,

Crossroads Church, 220 Church Street, PN

25th October : Your bucket list—what should be on it!

1st November: Advance care planning

8th November: Funeral process

15th November: Assisted dying services New Zealand

Details have been circulated but can also be found on the website at

<https://www.u3amanawatu.org.nz/seminars/>



EARLY DAYS IN THE MANAWATU

by Inda Adams

My sister, Muriel, is 93 years old today and so am I because we're twins. We grew up on a farm in Oroua Downs in the lush, gentle Manawatu with our four older brothers and three younger sisters. Enough rain falls, usually at night, to keep the landscape green and enough breeze blows after the rain to keep the air fresh. The days are quite often filled with sunshine. Perfect! Our egg lady from South Africa says Manawatu winters are never-ending mud. She should wear some gumboots, that's all.

A most endearing feature of the Manawatu is its wide sky which stretches to the sea in the west with a bright light drawn along its horizon. Stretching not so far to the east are the Tararua ranges which by another trick of light can change colour throughout the day from deep purple on some late summer afternoons to green, pink, or even navy blue on other days. Sometimes the Tararuas seem close up, as if only a bike ride away and other times they are far faraway.

But I digress. It's our birthday, Muriel's and mine and I'm hoping her grandson will bring her up from Poroutawhao to spend the day with me here in Palmerston North. She is almost blind and we both fall asleep easily, even in the middle of a sentence and get annoyed to waste our precious time together by dozing off. But the best thing about when we get together and close the door behind us is that we become lighthearted girls again and we reminisce; oh boy! do we reminisce!

She arrives. We settle, after many adjustments of cushions and footstools and teapot and pikelets and fruitcake and her favourite cucumber sandwiches with "plenty of butter to the edges and a smear of bovril". The grandson will return later in the afternoon. We are happy.

"I was thinking", she began, and a delicious tingle of anticipation fluttered up my spine. "I was thinking about how we used to whistle and yodel and sing while milking. It really calmed the cows. We sang in harmony, interspersed with yodelling. Favourites were 'The Blue Skirt Waltz', and 'Forever and Ever'. Neighbours used to have their afternoon tea outside at 4pm to hear our singing.

We sang at every opportunity. "Remember when our youngest sister, Mavis, got crushed by a cow in season while she was trying to get its leg rope off? She developed bovine TB from that, poor dear."

Sometimes when we children had to visit Palmerston North we found it the noisiest and busiest place on earth with its shunting train engines and horse-pulled carts and men shouting and the occasional spluttering car and everyone in a hurry. We couldn't wait to get home to Oroua Downs again; to its soothing silence.

I regard our regular singing practise as the reason we became quite polished performers and when we were older we used to sing at social gatherings at the pub, at weddings and in the Gold Room at Duckworths on Broadway. Requests for us to sing particular songs would be accompanied by bribes of a shot of whisky and ginger ale. Often the shots were lined up along the bar!

We made lovely frocks out of material acquired from ingenious sources. During the war there weren't many homes with daughters which had the curtains remaining in situ! Also in these war years we used to make fruit cake for the soldiers which Dad would solder into tin containers. Some soldiers used to write their appreciation back to us. There was one soldier who used to write to me regularly and we planned to meet up when the war was over but after a period I never heard from him again and I can only presume he had been killed. Very sad those years, especially for the women left without hope of a married life and family because of the absence of young men returning home.

"Muriel!"

"Did I doze off?"

"We both did dear and I can hear the grandson's car. Remember the whitebaiting? Dad said "never put your shadow over the net because it frightens them off." There were shoals of whitebait in those days. They would put the whitebait into kerosene tins at Foxton and send them on the goods train to Sanson. This was always called 'The Whitebait

Express'.

Muriel chuckled as she grunted around trying to gather her belongings. "I often remember that publican with his corker little children. He lined up his little children along the end of his driveway in order to keep out the sheep as they were being driven past and the sheep just jumped over the children as if they weren't even there!"

"Goodbye, darling".



We would love your contributions to our newsletter!

Please contact the Editor (Rosemary at 326 9598 or rksinich@gmail.com)

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During the past year we have spent some time reviewing our constitution in line with changes to the Charities Act. This activity has been led and coordinated by Claire Barrett. The reviewed document will be available to the AGM.

We are once again indebted to Alan Martin for his review of this year's Financial Statements in the Performance Report.

We reach the end of another year in a strong position, financially secure and with a thriving learning community. We are well placed for another successful year of learning together.

I would like to wish everyone a restful Christmas and a better New Year.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our members, volunteers and committee who have contributed to the success of U3A Manawatū. You make our organisation truly exceptional and inspiring. Thank you all.

Graham Slater



Image courtesy of Michael Leunig

U3A Manawatū—the first 20 years. By Carol Phillips. Available from the Heritage Desk, Level 2, City Library, \$10 (cash only)

Please advise Anne Spring, the Membership Secretary, if you have any changes to your contact details to ensure you continue to receive these newsletters and any other information from us. (See Contact Details below).

- Remember to make use of our **WEBSITE**, source of the latest information -
- and an easy way to subscribe: u3amanawatu.org.nz -

U3A Manawatu

Life-long learning in retirement



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U3A MANAWATŪ CONTACT DETAILS

Mail: PO Box 9076, Palmerston North 4441. **Email:** u3aman@gmail.com. **Website:** u3amanawatu.org.nz

Committee

Chairperson: Chris van der Krogt 357 7825 or 021 1224701 delftnz@gmail.com

Secretary/Newsletter: Rosemary Krsinich 326 9598 rkrsinich@gmail.com

Treasurer: Ron Paddock 357 5857 smallfield48@gmail.com

Membership Secretary (including changes to address/email): Anne Spring 021 190 6322 anne.spring35@gmail.com

Learning Programme: Janet Black 356 6251 janblack@xtra.co.nz, Stuart Birks 021 204 7903 kstuartbirks@gmail.com

Seminars: Stuart Birks 021 204 7903 kstuartbirks@gmail.com

Website: Rosemary Krsinich 326 9598 rkrsinich@gmail.com

Social Events: Janet Black 356 6251 janblack@xtra.co.nz, Claire Barrett 021 379 035 x84661@gmail.com

Enquiries: Chris van der Krogt 357 7825 or 021 1224701 delftnz@gmail.com

Promotion: Janet Black 356 6251 janblack@xtra.co.nz,

Science group - restart: Stu Schwartz 359 4423 finearts@taylor-jensen.co.nz

Other contributors

Website: Chris Phillips 021 206 9684 chrisphillips@inspire.net.nz

Technical Equipment: Graham Slater 353 0586 gandg@inspire.net.nz