

U3A MANAWATŪ NEWS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF U3A MANAWATŪ

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

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

Mary Addington, Viv Stanley, Jill Stewart, Jenny Wrightson
STOP PRESS: Jenny Heir, Dianne McConnell, Maree O'Donoghue, Marion Soutar, Barry Stevenson, Veronica Stevenson



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There's even more in '24 (see inside)...

“Approaching End of Life”

Stuart Birks

The U3A Manawatu 2023 Spring Seminar Series, took place at Crossroads Church on four Wednesdays in October/November.

Our four speakers were given the question: “What should people be thinking about in advance to make their end of life as positive an experience as possible for all concerned?” Based on their expertise and experience, they each gave us their perspectives on these matters.

Apryl Cadman covered two topics. The first, Enduring Powers of Attorney (unlike “next of kin”), gives a person authority to make legal decisions on your behalf. There are two types, one for care, another for property. It is relevant for anyone 18 and older. Powers only apply while someone is alive.



The second topic was wills. Everyone will die and it can be problematic (long and costly) without a will. There are issues of joint ownership and joint accounts, what happens after death. Without a will, estate distribution is under the Administration Act.

There was a lot more information provided, but the general point is that it is wise to work through the issues early.

Kirsten Holst covered Advance Care Plans (ACPs)



These don't only focus on death, but can be a good way to identify issues we may face and how we might like to address them. The slides include lots of detail on aspects to consider. Plans can help family and health care professionals to make decisions on your care and treatment when you are less able to communicate your wishes.

We need to be aware of how we might deteriorate with age and to adjust our lives accordingly. Not everyone has an ACP, but it can still be useful to consider some of the issues raised in Kirsten's slides.

We are offering a new U3A group “Approaching End of Life” in which people can discuss such matters. See Page 3 and the 2024 Learning Groups document for more details.

Hayden and Kylie Cotton addressed the question of funeral practice. There are several options including burial or cremation, with or without a funeral service, whether to have a memorial service, types of coffin, and the option of eco-burials. There are legal requirements to be met and cost can be an issue. You

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FROM THE CHAIR

Chris van der Krogt

Welcome to the U3A Manawatū for 2024 (already).

I hope you have all had a chance to meet up with family and friends and perhaps to have taken a holiday over this very warm Manawatū summer.

In the recently circulated list of learning groups for 2024, there are seven listed as new and 32 as already established. Since then, we have an 8th new group: Opera. Actually some “new” groups are revisions of previous ones, and some “established” groups are being renewed. There are a number of groups focusing in different ways on books, several concerned with film, others on travel, four on cryptic crosswords, some on food – and much besides. The range is vast, from the more reflective to the more active and the practical. There is surely something for everyone, and some members, myself included, will have trouble keeping to a manageable number of groups to join. Some eager groups have already begun meeting, but most will start in February.

Of course, if you have an interest not yet catered for and would like to start up a group yourself, let me know (delftnz@gmail.com) and we can help you to get it started.

As usual, the U3A Manawatū will be running a seminar series in the autumn. Details have not been finalized yet, but we are planning something on a topic related to entertainment.

As you know, the U3A offers great opportunities to meet new friends and to keep our minds active, so remember to complete your re-enrolment form and keep learning in 2024.

We are happy to advise that our application and revised [Constitution](#) were both accepted after our AGM in 2023 and we are now successfully re-registered under the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022.

MARGARET TATE

Many members will remember Margaret Tate. She was, for many years, an active member of the U3A Manawatū and coordinator of the NZ History group. Margaret died in October 2023. A link to her obituary on the Heritage New Zealand website follows:

<https://www.heritage.org.nz/news/stories/obituary-a-tribute-to-margaret-tate-educator-and-historian>

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can specify arrangements in advance and also make financial provision using one of the available options. Funerals are more for the benefit of family, friends and associates. We saw a video on the importance of an opportunity to grieve that a service of some kind can provide. Consequently a person’s own wishes may not always be followed. It can still help to let people know what you might prefer.

Are your funeral wishes known?



Annette Forrest spoke on assisted dying, which became legal in New Zealand on 7th November 2021. There are strict eligibility criteria including having been assessed as being capable of making an informed decision, experiencing unbearable suffering and with a terminal illness that is likely to end life within 6 months. There are also several steps in the process with built-in safeguards. A health professional cannot initiate discussion of assisted dying. It is up to the person concerned to raise the issue. A health professional with a conscientious objection is still obliged to indicate where the person can go to access the service. It is still early days and we can expect the process to be reviewed and revised in coming years.

Images in this article taken from the speakers’ presentations

NOTE that Audio recordings and PowerPoint presentations are made available after each seminar on the Seminar Presentations page of our website at:

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

AUTUMN SEMINAR SERIES

“Entertainment” (provisional theme)

Four Wednesdays 2.15 - 4 pm in May/June
Crossroads Church, 220 Church Street, PN

Details will be circulated a few weeks prior and will also be available on the website at

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

Around the groups...

You should all, by now, have received by post a copy of the Learning Programme and the subscription form for 2024.

You do need to fill out a subscription form every year so we can keep our Membership Database up to date. It would also be much appreciated if you would pay your subscription fee as soon as possible.

Along with 32 established groups, we have eight new groups this year. Further details of some of these follow. Refer to the [Learning Programme 2024](#) for coordinator contact details.

Approaching End of Life (Stuart Birks)

The Spring Seminar Series on End of Life indicated many areas where prior planning is useful. What should we be thinking about and how can we go about it? Have you considered how your circumstances might change, what you would like to happen, when you should act, who could make decisions on your behalf, what they know of your wishes? This is a small discussion group for participants to speculate on some of these matters in a relaxed setting.

Exploring Religion (Chris van der Krogt)

The Exploring Religion group offers a forum for discussing aspects of religion and the nature of religion generally. While individual members will have their own perspectives on religious matters, the group itself will not endorse any particular religious or anti-religious viewpoint beyond the premise that religion can be investigated both analytically and empathetically.

Typical meetings (about two hours) will usually focus on a specific topic. There will be talks, lots of discussion and, hopefully, some guest speakers and visits to places of worship. Members will be encouraged to raise issues for discussion and offer presentations on their own areas of expertise or experience.

Opera (John Ward, Kevin Smidt)

Get together with John Ward and his large screen TV, Blu-ray DVDs and surround sound for eleven selected operas by Italian and French composers (with English subtitles). The full list and the running times can be obtained from the coordinator: Kevin Smidt, phone 022 406 9819, email kevinroaming@hotmail.com

The 11 operas planned for 2024 are: Aida, Don Giovanni, La Bohème, Madam Butterfly, Rigoletto, Tosca, Lucia di Lammermoor, La Traviata, Il Trovatore, Carmen, and Marriage of Figaro.

NOTE: new groups can be set up at any time. See the guidelines here (click on link):

<https://www.u3amanawatu.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Setting-up-a-U3A-Group-v2.pdf>

Russia and the West (Stuart Lawrence)

Here are some of the topics for discussion introduced in the notes:

1. The social system and the autocracy
2. Church and state and Russia's destiny (Holy Russia, the famous 'Russian soul', Moscow the third Rome)
3. Westernisers (notably Peter the Great, Belinsky, Turgenev, and much Russian art, music and philosophy)
4. Anti-Westernisers and Slavophiles (notably Dostoevsky)
5. The revolutionary tradition adapted from Western thought: populists (Herzen), anarchists (Bakunin) and Marxists (Lenin)
6. The Soviet Union: the opposition to the West redefined
7. Russia reborn (Yeltsin and Putin): back to the past? Myth and history.

The other new groups are:

European Fascism to 1945

Film Group

Sampler Short Course Humanism #101

SCI-TECH

GROUP COORDINATORS' END-OF-YEAR LUNCH 2023

Twice a year we run an event for our Group Coordinators. This is a chance to say thank you for the great work they do, and to provide a forum to discuss any issues. This year's event was beautifully catered for us by Merle Smillie. A photo from a previous event follows.



L to R: Merle, Graham, Christine, Stu, Mike.

Front: Food, glorious food!

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

We need a volunteer to provide backup technical assistance (Android platform) to Graham Slater at our Spring and Autumn seminar series (4 seminars each at Crossroads Church, 220 Church St, on Wednesday afternoons). If you think you may be able to help please contact Stuart Birks (Seminar Organiser) phone 021 204 7903 or email

kstuartbirks@gmail.com

We would love your contributions to our newsletter!

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

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



"Waiter... there's a hair in my soup!"
Image courtesy of Michael Leunig

Learning Programme 2024

The latest version is always available on the website at:
<https://www.u3amanawatu.org.nz/learning-groups/>

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 Anne's 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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