

### Manawatū



*Stu Schwartz, Committee Member, guiding us to the Autumn Seminars with one of the banners he organized.*



#### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Tricia Campbell  
John Cockrem  
Jane Dellabarca  
Elizabeth Hayman  
Catherine Thompson



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#### Changes to your contact details

If you have any changes to your contact details please advise Anne Spring, the Membership Secretary, [anne.spring35@gmail.com](mailto:anne.spring35@gmail.com), or 021 190 6322. This will ensure you continue to receive these newsletters and any other information from us.

#### Contributions to our newsletter

We would love you to contribute to our newsletter! Please contact the Editor, Rosemary Krsinich, [rkrsinich@gmail.com](mailto:rkrsinich@gmail.com) or 326 9598

#### New email and postal address

Please note our new email and postal address (we no longer have a PO Box).  
Email: [u3amanawatu@gmail.com](mailto:u3amanawatu@gmail.com)  
Post: 4 Bryant Street, Palmerston North 4412

## FROM THE CHAIR



*Chris van der Krogt  
Chair  
U3A Manawatū*

### *Welcome to the Winter Newsletter*

On the first of July this year – the beginning of a new financial year for the U3A Manawatū – we had 248 paid-up members. This is a good number though slightly less than at the same time last year. We welcome new members and new learning groups at any time of the year.

If you missed our Autumn 2025 seminar series on Volunteering, you can still listen to the recordings (prepared by Manawatū People's Radio) and see the speakers' slides at <https://www.u3amanawatu.org.nz/seminars/presentations/>.

We are planning another Spring seminar series for later this year. The details are still being worked out, but the speakers will be Massey University lecturers who will tell us about their current research.

We have a new learning group starting in late August. It will be a forum for discussing some of the most complex and controversial geopolitical issues of our time, focussing initially on the Israel-Gaza and Russia-Ukraine conflicts. More details are given in a short article in this newsletter.

In mid-June, the Committee and a good number of Group Coordinators met together for a catch-up. It was proposed (and subsequently agreed at the July Committee meeting) that the U3A create a fund (up to \$1,000) that can be drawn upon by groups needing to pay costs relating to a visiting speaker. Group Coordinators are invited to apply to the Committee. It is envisaged that subsidies of about \$50 will be offered.

Our AGM is scheduled for 24 September, so, if you have any proposals, do forward them. You will receive the Notice of Meeting well in advance, but it's time to mark your calendars!

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### **U3A Manawatū Spring 2025 Free Public Seminar Series**

We are currently working on options for the Spring seminar series, to be held in 4 consecutive weeks in the October–November period. The general theme is current and future developments at Massey University, including not only research areas, but also possibly the changing nature of universities. There is a lot going on so we should have an exciting lineup for you. Following consultation, we will be changing the start time to 1:30pm to fit in with people's lunch arrangements. A flyer will be emailed out and uploaded to our website a month before the first seminar.

**The Orange U3A is delighted to share the link below to videos of the sessions at the recent NSW U3A Conference held in Orange. They hope you find some of the sessions to be informative and useful.**

**<https://orange.u3anet.org.au/u3a-nsw-2025-conference-orange-april/>**

## A review of the Autumn 2025 Seminar Series: “Making a Difference: The Power of Volunteering in the Manawatū”

*by Anne Spring*

Everybody has heard the phrase “giving back” and for many people who give their time in various volunteering activities, this can have a heartfelt meaning.

The four speakers covered a wide range of social services where volunteers provide an essential service to their viability.

**Kate Aplin** is the Manager of Volunteer Central and coordinates a variety of volunteering opportunities to build capacity and capability. She reported that 53% of New Zealanders volunteer in some capacity, although this is a difficult figure to pin down as many people don’t recognise their services as volunteering, e.g., those who pick up rubbish around the streets or beaches. The majority of volunteering is done informally, for another person, say, whilst 27.6% is done through an organisation. As Kate explained, the essential features of volunteering are that there is no financial gain, it involves the giving of skills for the benefit of others and it is done by free will.

Referring to the idea of giving back, Kate used the example of someone who has survived cancer themselves, who chooses to volunteer for a cancer support organisation, offering their time and experience and gaining immeasurable benefits for themselves and those suffering from cancer.



*Image taken from ENM Presentation*

**Rennie Williamson** represented Environment Network Manawatu (ENM), a popular outlet for those looking to contribute to a cleaner, more biodiverse and sustainable environment. However it is a challenge to maintain a body of committed and involved volunteers, and ENM is looking at new ways to get people involved.

**Katrine Imrie** spoke of the work she does as Volunteer House Manager at Abbeyfield, a supportive housing development which relies on volunteer help to keep residents safe, supported and well fed. Kate reminded us that as well as supporting residents, volunteering activities have flow on benefits for the community at large, keeping people out of rest homes and avoiding unfortunate ends for people who struggle to maintain their independence.

**Kanchana Seneviratne** is the Manawatū Multicultural Council’s Service Manager.

*Continued on Page 4*

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*Audrey Hepburn: “As you grow older, you discover you have two hands, one for helping yourself and the other for helping others.”*



*Continued from Page 3*

She provided examples of the types of support they offer new migrants and the cultural events they organize, offering ideas and inspiration for people seeking volunteer opportunities. They welcome volunteers who would like to teach conversational English for example.

Despite the variety of opportunities on offer, and the solid benefits of volunteering for the volunteer and others, all organisations mentioned falling involvement and the need to recruit more people.

U3A Manawatū would like to thank our Seminar Coordinator, Stuart Birks, once again, for researching the topic and finding the speakers, and the U3A Committee for helping make it happen. Many thanks, also, to the PN Central Library for providing the venue, technology and refreshments, and to Manawatū People's Radio for recording the presentations. A copy of the presentations (audio and video) can be found on the U3A Manawatū website Seminars Presentations page.



*James K Baxter was a prolific NZ poet who, in 1969, founded a commune, embracing both Catholic and Māori values, at Jerusalem, or Hiruharama, a mission station up the Whanganui river, in the North Island. There, he wrote 'Jerusalem Sonnets' and 'Autumn Testament'. Baxter died, exhausted, at the age of 46, in 1972, and is buried on Māori land, at Jerusalem.*

## FINDING JERUSALEM

*by Ron Phillips*

*Our life is the one  
we make in darkness for ourselves.  
(from 'Autumn Testament')*

Here was our beginning: ribbon  
road, clambering above  
broad serpent waters; deep green  
valley; strange journey,  
and another's journey; layers

of sky and time; that ancient mill;  
this small red marae;  
sheepfolds up a stubborn track;  
glimpses, from above,  
of those far beguiling hills – soon:

river bend, squat steeped church,  
between native trees;  
untidy ghost still stumbling through  
rough paddocks, towards  
the patient stars – and we'd know

the place through the words that  
the place still breathed:  
restless spirit in a borrowed space;  
the weight of each  
day's survival; eating, sleeping,

and praying against the tics of time,  
and the returning dark –  
Alone we are born, and die alone –  
light as grace on a  
single unkempt grave, the sole end

of journeying, that was one life,  
is all of our lives –  
the Jerusalem we dream of finding;  
words that must always  
cease – that have always just begun.

## AROUND THE GROUPS

We currently have 36 learning groups running, some of which are currently full. Any U3A Member can set up a group so if you have an idea for one, contact Chris van der Krogt to discuss it (see contact info on back page).

There are also some general guidelines on our website [[click here](#)] on how to set up and run a group.

Meanwhile, here are some ideas:

*Genealogy, Geology, Human Behaviour, Psychology, Fixing Things, Astronomy, Finance and Investment, Remarkable People, Swing and Blues, Choir, Guitar, Singing for Fun, Card Making, Creative Crafts, History of Fashion, Blankets for Charity, Knitting and Crochet, Bridge, Draughts, Table Tennis, Tai Chi, Chess, Scrabble, Golf, Mahjong, Poker, Rummikub, Computer Workshop, Fine Dining, International Cuisine, Play Reading, Theatre, Reading Shakespeare, Debating, Walking, Nature Walks, Keep Fit, Yoga, Disco Dancing, Folk Dancing, Conversations in Māori, French, Spanish or Italian, Heritage Outings, Public Transport Outings.*

To name but a few!



## Updates to the Learning Programme

The following groups are no longer running

- Making Sense of the Current Debates on the Treaty of Waitangi
- Travel Writing Group

## Cryptic Crossword Challenges

*by Mike Carter: Group Coordinator*

There are vacancies for some advanced puzzlers in this group which runs from 1.30 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month.

To give you an idea of the level, here are some examples from the Times book which the advanced group uses:

Ill bred type once inspiring love song  
(Answer: carol)

Listener catches girl with unknown diplomat  
(Answer: emissary)

Contact Mike Carter at 357 3941 or [m.carter@inspire.net.nz](mailto:m.carter@inspire.net.nz)

## Current Affairs

*by Bernard Letts: Group Coordinator*

We have a few more places for people who have an interest in world current affairs. The group meets from 10 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month.

Our discussions are centred each time around two chosen topics but there is always time allowed for members' special topics of interest. Our discussions cover a wide scope of opinion and we all learn from members who may have specialized knowledge on the subject or have researched more before the meeting. It is quite surprising how often the press and other media inadequately cover quite major news events because of their selection policies. I am sure members are able to gain a broader view of what is happening in NZ and the world generally.

Anyone interested is welcome to ring me, Bernard, at 357 0727

## Sci-Tech

*by Stu Schwartz: Group Coordinator*

The Sci-Tech group meetings (from 2 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of most months) attract about a fourth of the registered members so some room is always available. And now that the joint Coordinator Bruce Thomson's house adjoining the Techno-Shed is finished, he has set up a second viewing room which will hold an additional number of people. The usual monthly turnout is about 15 with capacity for 33; Bruce's new house will allow us to provide crowd overflow of 10 or so. The Techno-Shed houses a 75" screen and a good sound system.

Animated meetings of the Sci-Tech group have featured live and virtual speakers on such diverse topics as climate change, ancient languages and scientific fraud. Each talk is often followed by a blizzard of intelligent questions that sometimes surprise even the guest speaker.

Besides the interesting speakers that we have had this year, Bruce organised an ad-hock meeting to demonstrate the functions of AI and the several internet channels where AI help is available. It was most interesting and informative. I am sure that we will have another meeting to address the AI phenomena early next year. Other 'informal meetings without a guest speaker have also been organised to enjoy group discussions on hot-topic YouTube videos. These have covered practical implications and use of technologies in our lives and are similarly good fun, talkative events.

Sci-Tech has developed to be more sociable than academic lectures, which is building good friendships and revealing some excellent candidates for speakers from within our own group.

Anyone interested in science, technology, engineering and the environment is welcome to join our mailing list. Meetings are not compulsory but your company is always welcome. Contact Stu at [finearts@taylor-jensen.co.nz](mailto:finearts@taylor-jensen.co.nz) or 027 355 4276

## Book Group 1

*by Sue Stirling: Group Coordinator*



*Some members of the group*

We continue to explore a vast array of topics each month. Our latest topic was vets. The old favourite by James Herriot 'All Creatures Great and Small' was re-read by one member and thoroughly enjoyed. Another read a book called, 'The Desert Vet' by Alex Tinson which explored the rarefied world of the Arab Emirates and the search for the fastest camel. We do find that we venture into books that we would have never considered reading if we weren't prompted by the topic chosen by another member of the group. These are wonderfully enlightening experiences and to be recommended.

Book Group 1 could include one or two more members. We meet from 1.30 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. If you are interested contact Sue at 021 127 4724 or [susanstirling@gmail.com](mailto:susanstirling@gmail.com)

## All About Gardening

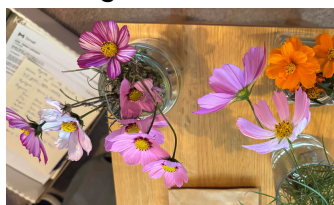
*by Graeme Siddle: Group Coordinator*

The All About Gardening group has been trying to get its programme sorted for the remainder of 2025. In common with other groups I guess this has been 'on again, off again'. We explored the possibility of having Professor Vaughan Symonds speaking about the plan for the Massey Botanic garden | Te Waimana o Turitea. Unfortunately that came to naught when his application for funding wasn't realised.

A gardening video afternoon was held in June, looking at garden videos from YouTube. Should the idea be repeated, the quality and age of the videos need to be carefully curated.

The original garden U3A group **For the Love of Plants** had approached us with a view to combining. We decided not to at this stage but that we look to organising three shared meetings per year. The first of those will be in October when we have invited Helen Lehndorf, local forager and gardener, to speak to both groups.

At each meeting of AAG a member volunteers to speak about *Plant of the Month*. This can be of the member's own choosing and they research the plant decided upon. This is always an interesting feature of the meetings and plants covered have included ornamental millet, kumara, clove pinks, figs, finger limes and peonies. The photo shows an example of cosmos from the May meeting.



*Plant of the month:  
Cosmos*

## Philosophy

*by Alan Cameron: Group Coordinator*

There are spaces in this group which meets from 2–4 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays each month. Contact Alan at 358 3848 or [aacameron@xtra.co.nz](mailto:aacameron@xtra.co.nz)

## NEW GROUP: International Geopolitics

*by Rod Holm: Group Coordinator*

The course on 'International Geopolitics' will focus on Ukraine and Israel/Gaza as examples of the struggle for world dominance by the great powers, particularly the United States. It will seek to go beyond the headlines and the dominant narratives in order to get at that old fashioned idea called 'the truth.' In part therefore it will have to examine concepts like 'a post-truth world', 'conspiracy theories', and how to find a satisfactory path through the mass of conflicting and contradictory facts and explanations. If this sounds like you, then welcome!

The group will meet from 10–12 noon on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.

If you are interested in joining contact Rod Holm at 021 0296 6983 or [ad.rjholm@outlook.com](mailto:ad.rjholm@outlook.com)

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## WFPB Degustation Lunch

*by Rosemary Krsinich: Group Coordinator*

There is a short waitlist for this group which meets from noon on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. Contact Rosemary at 021 202 8539 or [rkrstinich@gmail.com](mailto:rkrstinich@gmail.com).

Meanwhile, here is a quick and easy recipe for a delicious high protein dessert:

### Tofu Mousse with Peanut Butter

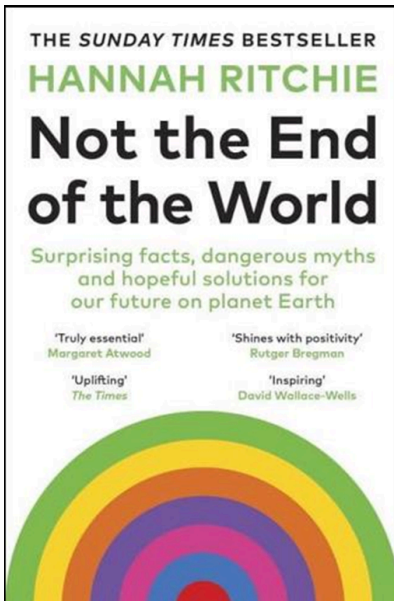
190 g soft tofu (or firm with 1–2 tbsp plant milk)  
2–3 tbsp peanut butter  
1–2 tbsp maple syrup  
1/4 tsp vanilla essence

Blend all together with a stick blender for about 2 minutes. Pour into individual bowls. Decorate with nuts and/or fruit.



# "NOT THE END OF THE WORLD"

*Gemini (AI) – a review*



*Not the End of the World: Surprising facts, dangerous myths and hopeful solutions for our future on planet Earth.*

*Vintage 2024 (\$28)*

"Not the End of the World" by Hannah Ritchie, Data Scientist and Senior Researcher in the Programme for Global Development at the University of Oxford, is a compelling and thought-provoking book that tackles the often-overwhelming topic of environmental challenges with a refreshing sense of optimism backed by data. Ritchie, an environmental data scientist, skilfully navigates the complex landscape of climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, not by downplaying the severity of these issues, but by highlighting the significant progress humanity has already made and the tools we possess to continue moving forward.

One of the book's greatest strengths lies in its commitment to data-driven analysis. Ritchie meticulously presents statistics and historical trends, demonstrating how many environmental indicators have, in fact, improved over time, contrary to popular belief. This evidence-based approach is crucial in dispelling the pervasive sense of doom that often paralyzes effective action. By showcasing past successes in areas like deforestation rates, air quality in many cities, and access to clean water, she instills a much-needed sense of agency and possibility. This isn't an exercise in greenwashing, but a call to recognize that collective effort and technological innovation can, and have, made a tangible difference.

Furthermore, "Not the End of the World" excels at reframing the narrative around environmentalism. Instead of focusing solely on sacrifice and deprivation, Ritchie emphasizes the positive societal benefits that often accompany environmental progress – improved public health, economic opportunities in green industries, and enhanced quality of life. She effectively argues that addressing environmental issues is not just about saving the planet, but about creating a better world for humanity. This reframing is essential for building broader consensus and inspiring action across diverse communities.

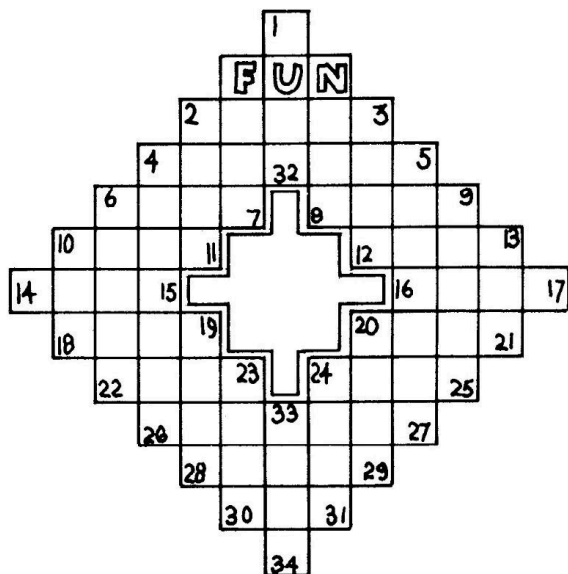
However, some readers might find the book's optimistic tone, while largely well-founded, occasionally bordering on understating the scale and urgency of certain looming crises, particularly the more immediate and severe impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations. While Ritchie acknowledges these challenges, the emphasis on progress could, for some, dilute the imperative for rapid and transformative change. Additionally, while the book highlights various solutions, a deeper dive into the systemic and political barriers to implementing these solutions might have further enriched the discussion.

Despite these minor caveats, "Not the End of the World" is an invaluable contribution to the environmental discourse. It is a meticulously researched, highly readable, and genuinely inspiring book that offers a vital antidote to climate despair. Ritchie empowers readers by demonstrating that while the challenges are real, the solutions are within reach, and that a more sustainable and prosperous future is not only possible but actively being built. It's a must-read for anyone seeking a more balanced, hopeful, and data-informed perspective on the state of our planet and our capacity to shape its future.

**"Not the End of the World" is currently  
being studied by Stuart Birks' Book  
Discussion Group**



# THE WORLD'S FIRST CROSSWORD



Crossword puzzles were invented by Arthur Wynne (1871–1945), a journalist from Liverpool, England. He is credited with creating the first known crossword puzzle, which was published on December 21, 1913, in the New York World newspaper.

Wynne's original puzzle was called a "word-cross" and featured a diamond-shaped grid with no black squares. The name was later accidentally changed to "crossword" due to a typographical error, and the new name stuck. The puzzle quickly gained popularity and evolved into the form of crosswords we know today.

- 2–3. What bargain hunters enjoy.
- 4–5. A written acknowledgment.
- 6–7. Such and nothing more.
- 10–11. A bird.
- 14–15. Opposed to less.
- 18–19. What this puzzle is.
- 22–23. An animal of prey.
- 26–27. The close of a day.
- 28–29. To elude.
- 30–31. The plural of is.
- 8–9. To cultivate.
- 12–13. A bar of wood or iron.
- 16–17. What artists learn to do.
- 20–21. Fastened.
- 24–25. Found on the seashore.
- 10–18. The fibre of the gomuti palm.

- 6–22. What we all should be.
- 4–26. A day dream.
- 2–11. A talon.
- 19–28. A pigeon.
- F–7. Part of your head.
- 23–30. A river in Russia.
- 1–32. To govern.
- 33–34. An aromatic plant.
- N–8. A fist.
- 24–31. To agree with.
- 3–12. Part of a ship.
- 20–29. One.
- 5–27. Exchanging.
- 9–25. To sink in mud.
- 13–21. A boy.

***Have a go at solving it!***

***The solution will be in the next newsletter***

## Some Definitions

From "The Complete Uxbridge English Dictionary: I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue"

Gladiator: unrepentant cannibal  
 Eyeliner: A big ship made by Apple  
 Funding: A humorous door chime

Clarity: a bit like red wine  
 Decrease: do the ironing  
 Horticulture: Grand opera

Remember to make use of our website, source of the latest information and an easy way to subscribe: [u3amanawatu.org.nz](http://u3amanawatu.org.nz)

## U3A Manawatu

*Life-long learning in retirement*



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