

## Your Board: its work 'behind the scenes'

By Donald Feist, Chairman of  
U3A Dunedin

Your Board began this year with a bit of a scramble.

The basic ongoing core of our job is to offer you, three times a year, about half a dozen courses you might like to take part in. And over the years successive Boards have developed a pattern of Board meetings, and groundwork before and between meetings, that have provided this. But at our February meeting this year we were faced with a series of deadlines for Series 2, looming in March and April, and not enough courses in the pipeline.

One thing that complicates our providing a steady flow of courses is that sometimes a suggestion can proceed in only a couple of months from initial idea to where the course details can be posted out to you. At other times, this process takes a year or more. Perhaps the initial idea is too broad, and needs refining, or we cannot find presenters who are knowledgeable, willing and available, for some parts of it and it has to be rethought.

Sometimes a presenter, after agreeing to the course and the dates, becomes unavailable and the course has to be delayed. Sometimes, a course has to be dropped altogether, when planning for it is well advanced. Then too, the Board tries to see that in each



Donald Feist

series we have a balance of science and humanities courses, and of the larger, lecture-style courses and smaller ones that provide for greater participation.

When we met last November, we knew that our First Series for 2008 was under control, and information would be ready to be posted to you in January. And the ingredients for the Second Series, to be posted in May (at that stage a whole six months away!) seemed to be coming together satisfactorily. But at our February meeting, with those deadlines in March and April getting close, we found we were definitely short. Over the next four weeks, a small sub-committee did a lot of work, and came up with further proposals, so that, with some relief, our March meeting was able to finalise and approve the courses for which details are enclosed with this newsletter.

My point in telling you all this is not to apologise for anything, or ask for sympathy for hard-working Board members. They all do this work willingly and enjoy it. Rather, I think it is good you should have some understanding of what goes on behind the scenes, throughout the year, in providing you, three times a year, with a selection of varied and interesting courses, such as we are pleased to be able to offer you once again, this time. I hope you find something on the enclosed forms to tempt you.

**Wait and see policy on  
important issues —page 4**

### Every picture tells a story

Right: The first U3A class held in the new 'jumbo' venue at the Leith Bowling Club rooms (Ross Grimmett lecturing on art.)

More photos —page 3.



## ADMINISTRATION

## Time to study Series 2

By Judith Gray, Secretary

Enclosed with this Newsletter are the course brochures for Series 2. The Board hopes that there will be something to appeal to everyone. The deadline for applications is noon on Wednesday, 14 May 2008.

Series 1 is in full swing and favourable verbal comments have been heard about each course. The Board does, however, appreciate written comments, and we would encourage all course participants to complete the evaluation forms handed out towards the end of each course. You may, if you prefer, make your comments anonymously. Ideas for new courses, matters which need fixing, and any other comments are welcome. The Board cannot always respond to every idea received, but be assured that they are considered,

Series 1 this year attracted 257 applications from members, approximately 55% of our total membership. Although quite a number missed out on their first choice of course in the ballot, no-one missed out completely. This is in contrast to Series 1 last year when 256 (about 51%) applied and 15 missed out. The vast majority of applicants this time (224) only wanted to attend one course, with the remainder hoping to attend two or three courses.

Our membership continues to grow again, despite losing a number of members at the end of last year. Those people still on our waiting list will have been offered membership by the time you read this Newsletter, and our membership cap will be close to implementation once again.

Also enclosed is an invitation to attend the luncheon that will precede the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 3 July 2008. The luncheon and meeting will again be held at Salmond College. Acceptances for the lunch should be returned to Rodgers & Associates, along with an appropriate cheque, no later than Friday, 20 June 2008.

## Deputy Chairman

Graham Mortimer has been elected deputy chairman of the U3A Dunedin Board, after Graham Batts resigned from that post.



Judith Gray

## LOOKING AHEAD

By Sue Cathro  
Programme Co-ordinator

The small programming sub-committee set up to consider topics and presenters for the Second Series and to look further ahead to our Third Series has been very successful. The committee has worked very hard to organise the Second Series (brochures with this Newsletter), and we are very pleased to be able to offer six



Sue Cathro

'courses on a variety of topics that we hope will interest you.

The 'Women in Society' course, foreshadowed in the January issue, is confirmed, together with courses on Dunedin — Your City,' 'Brief Lives,' presented by members, 'George Eliot, and two small groups concerned with Book Discussion and Poetry Reading.

Courses for Series 3, that starts in September, are being finalised and you can look forward to 'The Arts at the time of the Great War,' 'Doctors, Disease and Death,' authors talking about their own works, and one on embroidery, to name a few. Two other exciting and interesting topics have yet to be finalised.

## Writing competition

Closing date for a Writing Competition, open to members of any U3A, being held by U3A Sunshine Coast, Australia is 15 June 2008.

Four sections: Short Story 1500-2000 words, Rhyming Poetry 20-40 lines, Free Verse up to 40 lines, Autobiographical Experience 1000-1500 words. Prizes: \$150, \$75 and \$25 in each section. Single entries cost A\$7.50 (two or more \$5 per entry.) Contact Secretary or Newsletter Editor for conditions and entry form.

## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the U3A Dunedin Charitable Trust will be held at Salmond College, Knox St, Dunedin on Thursday, 3 July 2008, immediately following a luncheon which will commence at 12.15pm.

Nominations for membership of the U3A Board for 2008-9 will be welcome.

Nomination forms are available from Judith Gray, Secretary to the Board, (P O Box 117, Dunedin; email [graysinn@clear.net.nz](mailto:graysinn@clear.net.nz)) or from Rodgers & Associates. Nominations close with the Secretary on Friday, 20 June 2008.

Copies of the agenda and other papers for the meeting will be sent to all members who accept the luncheon invitation, or, on request, from the Secretary.

*Judith Gray, Secretary to the Board.*

**UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE  
CHARITABLE TRUST, DUNEDIN**

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Chairman: Donald Feist ph: 476 3268  
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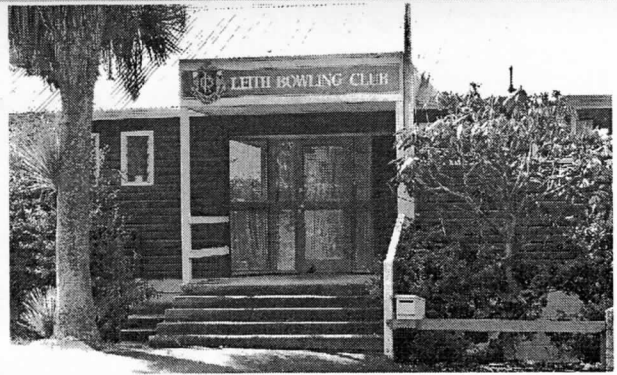
# Leith Bowling Club venue gets rolling

**Below:** Members of a U3A class of 100 await start of their course in our new and larger 2008 venue.

**Bottom left:** Picking up name tags in the entry lobby.

**Bottom right:** Break for refreshments in the lounge.

*Photos: Bill George*



## Wait and see policy agreed on for important issues

The U3A Dunedin Board has agreed with its Policy Working Party that it is not appropriate to suggest immediate action on any of the three main points that it has raised, but it will wait to see how things develop over the next 12 months or more.

The Board agreed, last September, to the recommendation of the Working Party to use the larger venue of the Leith Bowling Club this year, and it also asked the group to look further at the issues of membership numbers, expansion into new groups, and the number of courses being run.

The Working Party met again last November. A report by convenor Donald Feist was discussed and accepted by the Board at its February meeting this year. These were the main points.

1. **Number of courses:** 'We reckoned that with a membership of 500, and allowing for the various reasons why in each series, some people would not apply at all, it would be sufficient to provide courses for between 260 and 300. If only one course is at the Leith Bowling Club and four are at Knox/Salmond, then five courses have a capacity of 300. Six courses in all, with two at Leith, could cater for 400. Therefore the present target of five to six courses per series should be adequate, provided at least one caters for up to 100.'

2. **Expansion into new groups:** 'It is our understanding that it is part of the ethos of U3A that each group is autonomous, and therefore it is not mandatory for our U3A to take the initiative to set up a satellite group. Rather, the initiative needs to come from those who will be foundation members of the new group, who will decide for themselves the style and operation of the new group. We take it for granted that the existing U3A Dunedin would be willing to offer advice or practical help to a new group — but only if it was asked for.'

3. **Membership Numbers:** 'We were of the opinion that the stricter regime the Board agreed to in October may well have some effect on numbers resigning or failing to renew their membership. It will take a full year or more to know whether, with the changes we have announced concerning membership, the numbers will stabilise around 500, or continue to rise (or even fall.)'

Edited by Geoff Adams

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Elizabeth Timms — U3A Board liaison.

U3A Dunedin is grateful for assistance from Dr Claire Matthewson (Director, Summer School and Advisor, Distance Learning and Continuing Education, University of Otago) in producing this publication.



**NUT-RITION:** Members of the 'Current Research in Human Nutrition' U3A course at Salmond College hold trays with three forms of hazelnuts (ground, sliced and whole) to assess their taste preferences. Nuts lower cholesterol, so are useful in prevention of cardiovascular disease.

## UNIVERSITY UPDATE

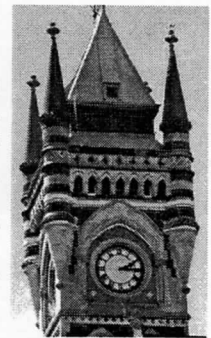
### Mutual goodwill

By Dr Claire Matthewson

Mutual goodwill continues to sustain the U3A - University of Otago partnership. I'm sure that academic staff enjoy being involved with U3A because of the excellent audiences and organisation.

For many Departments, U3A is their only community educational activity.

The University's devolved model (no Continuing Education Centre) makes collaboration with other entities especially valuable. Members may have noticed that the University is now offering courses jointly with Southern Sinfonia. The Music Department is certainly high in community spirit.



### Is that a fact?

*Everyone is entitled to his or her own opinions, but no one is entitled to his or her own facts* ~ Senator Daniel Moynihan.

*When the facts change, I change my mind* ~ John Maynard Keynes.

*Creative Thinking may mean simply the realisation that there is no particular virtue in doing things the way they have always been done.* ~ Rudolph Flesch, philosopher