



# U3A



## DUNEDIN

Newsletter, Issue No 1

Date: January, 2004

### The President Says

*In the past, communication between members of U3A and the Board has been sketchy at best. I hope this letter will improve matters.*



*Last year U3A came full circle and re-established ties with the University. For many years we have benefited greatly from the talents and generosity of University staff and it is good to know they will now get some formal recognition of their efforts. We are fortunate in Dunedin to have such a pool of talent to draw on.*

*There is, however, a down side. While it can be fascinating to listen to an expert talk on his pet topic the experience tends to be passive. One of the aims of U3A is that members themselves contribute actively to their own learning.*

*I have always found that I learn more from preparing and teaching a course than from listening to someone else, no matter how expert, and I am sure this is a common experience. Perhaps others have suffered from my lack of expertise but they usually have been kind enough not to complain.*

*With this in mind, this year we hope to introduce courses that require more active participation although we will retain the traditional lecture format as well. I look forward to some interesting presentations.*  
J.G.T. (Sam) Sneyd

#### A THOUGHT:

*The wise man is astounded by anything.  
- Andre Gide (1869-1951)*

### Editorial

*U3A Dunedin offered its first course in February 1994. Now, ten years later and with a membership of nearly four hundred, it is appropriate that U3A should have its own newsletter.*

*In the early years, communication across a small, tight knit group was relatively easy. Now, it has become harder for members to express their opinions about matters of significance to the organisation and equally difficult for the Board to convey its intentions to the membership.*

*It was not surprising then that a Futures Working Party reported to the Board in 2002 that "at present communication is largely limited to what might occur between facilitators and members during courses and to the very restricted discussion time at Annual General Meetings... there is a clear indication of the necessity to improve communications in both directions... the Board should arrange to inform members of policy and development matters through a regular newsletter... this could be on a small scale and could be included in brochure mail-outs."*

*Hence, the Board resolved that a newsletter should be issued in each term, commencing in February, 2004. Brian O'Rourke (Editor), Elizabeth Timms (Board Liaison) and Mervyn Cranefield (Layout and Design) were asked to implement this decision.*

*It is our hope that the newsletter will in time contain regular messages from the President and from the University of Otago. Other content will include reports of present courses and indications of the Board's planning for future courses as well as reports from Board meetings generally. Profiles of members and presenters will be included as well as news from other U3A groups.*

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Email: [graysinn@clear.net.nz](mailto:graysinn@clear.net.nz)

Chairman: Sam Sneyd  
Secretary: Judith Gray

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But most of all, it is hoped that the newsletter will be a forum in which members will be able to express their ideas and opinions. I invite members to put pen to paper or fingers to word processor in order to communicate with the membership through these pages.

Mervyn, Elizabeth and myself ask you to bear with us as we, not entirely confidently, get the newsletter underway

Brian O'Rourke

## Looking Ahead

Although June sounds along way off, plans are already afoot for Series 2 in the winter of 2004. As members will appreciate, the best laid plans do not always materialise, especially when trying to put together a series of lectures with many different speakers.

At this stage it looks as though we shall be presenting a course on New Zealand law and judicial systems and on the history of the atom. The Book Group also hopes to renew its activities over Series 1 and 2.

Other future plans include several courses on history and literature and possible ones on psychology, computing, genetics, medical matters and nutrition.

All in all, the rest of 2004 looks as though it will produce a wide range of subjects from which members can make their choice.

Jenny Laws, Programme Co-ordinator



Dr  
Claire  
Matthewson



The University was very pleased to be associated with the four courses in Series 3, 2003 - the first to be offered jointly under the Agreement between the Trust and the University. The courses for the 2004 Series promise to be equally engaging. It is good to see so many University staff contributing as presenters. Over recent years, the University in its own right has been involved in few community-based courses. Strengthening its support for U3A initiatives in a range of ways denotes a change for the better.

Now the U3A-Otago partnership is in place, I have the chance to attend some U3A Board meetings as an observer. These occasions are highly enjoyable. The level of commitment, debate and creativity that the Board members bring to the planning the U3A programme strike me as formidable. I am finding it a privilege to be associated with the Board and its processes.

Dr Claire Matthewson,  
University of Otago Liaison

## CHRISTCHURCH U3A GROUP VISITS

Four members of U3A Dunedin found time on the late afternoon of 25 November to enjoy a glass of wine with 16 visiting U3A devotees of art from Christchurch.

The visitors, members of the Rutherford U3A group, were in Dunedin on a "field trip" in order to view the current exhibition of Pre Raphaelite works.

The visit, which also included a morning at Olveston, had been very much enjoyed by all.

Ann Schrader, leader of the party, commented that few Christchurch people were familiar with Dunedin and some, even in the Third Age, had never visited this city previously.

Ann is well aware of our city's attractions and is planning further trips.

She is willing to assist Dunedin U3A groups which may be wishing to visit Christchurch for study purposes. Ann has a wide knowledge of suitable accommodation facilities in Christchurch and of potential presenters as well.

We'll be keeping in touch.

Incidentally, there are now seven U3A groups in Christchurch and although none are as large as U3A Dunedin, they all have a capped membership.

We look forward to further visits and social exchanges with U3A groups from elsewhere.

## REFUND OF COURSE FEES

There are occasions when a member has to withdraw from a course and in some cases refunds have been requested. At a recent meeting, the Board has adopted the following policy, mindful that a withdrawal should allow someone else to take the vacated place.

(From Board Minutes):

Any member who has to withdraw from a course because of illness shall be entitled to a full refund of the course fee paid provided that he or she notifies the Secretary, the Treasurer or Rodgers and Associates before the course begins.

Any member who withdraws from a course for any other reason shall be entitled to a refund of 80% of the course fee provided that he or she notifies the Secretary, the Treasurer or Rodgers and Associates at least 24 hours before the course begins.

Any person who takes up the place vacated will pay the full course fee.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE?

Are you aware that there are about 27,000 websites around the world on the Internet devoted to U3A? Of course, this would be only a small proportion of the U3A groups which exist. If you have access to The Net, try entering "U3A" under the search engine "Google" and be prepared for some surprising results.

Extracts from two such sites follow:

[www.u3abbay.org.au/](http://www.u3abbay.org.au/)

U3A Batemans Bay is part of the world-wide university of the Third Age movement. Our aim is to provide shared learning for retired residents of the Eurobodalla Shire and surrounding districts (New South Wales, Australia).

We provide a varied range of activities including courses, public talks, group activities and special events covering subject areas such as arts, literature, languages, science, music, information technology, and more. We are also keen to foster a range of social activities for members, their families and friends.

Learning activities are undertaken on a term basis. There are four terms each year that correspond to the NSW school terms. Courses usually run for one term. There are a number of other activities that are on-going. We are beginning to offer courses and course material on-line via this web site.

Members are kept informed via this web site and a newsletter that is published prior to the start of each term.

Membership applications and brochures are available at the Batemans Bay and Moruya public libraries. The annual subscription is \$25 for an individual and \$45 for a couple. If you join after the end of the third term the membership fees are reduced to \$7 and \$12 respectively.

[Www.harrowu3a.co.uk/](http://Www.harrowu3a.co.uk/)

U3A stands for

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Harrow U3A membership now about 1,400

Life President: H. Peter Sinclair

Chairman: Sylvia Sherwood

Harrow U3A, a registered charity (No 1009872), is a member of the Third Age Trust, and is affiliated to the Harrow Association of Voluntary Service (H.A.V.S.). Harrow U3A receives no direct funding from Central or Local Government. We are financially independent and rely solely on our members' subscription income. Lecturers, guest speakers and administrative staff all give their services entirely free.

HARROW U3A PARTY

Celebrating our Tenth Anniversary - June  
2001

Next Issue - Next Term

## Be in touch

If you have ideas or opinions, please contact the Newsletter by email at [graysinn@clear.net.nz](mailto:graysinn@clear.net.nz) or by writing to The Secretary, U3A, 5A Fifield St, Roslyn, Dunedin.

## EVERYBODY'S DREAM

*"This is what I prayed for! A piece of land not so very large, with a garden, and near the house a spring of ever flowing water, and up above these a bit of woodland".*

*Horace (First Century A.D.)*

## WHAT SHOULD U3A BE?

*"There is no single model of what a U3A should be. Therein lies the strength of the concept because it implicitly identifies the great diversity of needs and talents of potential U3A participants"*

*Cliff Picton (Australian educator)*



*Elizabeth Timms  
Board Liaison*

## IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ THIS:

### *Series I Courses for 2004*

*Enclosed with this newsletter are the five course Brochures for Series I for 2004. Please note that the date for the return of your completed application forms before the ballot is Wednesday 11 February. Indicate clearly on each form you return whether it is your first, second or third choice and remember to enclose the appropriate fee.*

*If you do not receive a letter from Rodgers and Associates by 20 February, you may assume that you have gained entry to your first choice course, so do remember in which order you submitted your preferences.*

*Application forms received after 11 February will not be considered as part of the ballot. If space is available in any course after the ballot is completed then late applications may be considered.*

*If you have any queries about your acceptance for any course after 20 February please contact Rodgers and Associates, or Judith Gray, Secretary to the U3A Board (telephone 467 2619, or email to <[graysinn@clear.net.nz](mailto:graysinn@clear.net.nz)>).*

## BOARD BUSINESS

Members of the U3A Board wish to ensure that the membership generally, insofar as it is practically possible, should be aware of the various matters which the Board is required to deal with.

Elizabeth Timms, Deputy Chairperson of the Board, reports on statistics, problems and decisions currently under discussion which, she believes, will be of interest.

### REPEAT COURSES:

Members frequently ask for courses to be repeated. This is done as often as possible (e.g. "Islam" and "Food, Glorious Food") but there are reasons why it cannot always happen.

Sometimes a speaker may be visiting Dunedin for a short visit and thus a repeat is not possible; we

need to be careful not to make too many demands on lecturers from other organisations or educational institutions particularly when a course is conducted by only one or two speakers or is a Departmental combined effort.

If speakers are largely from our own membership it is easier to ask them to speak again.

### THE BALLOT:

The present ballot seems to be fairer than the earlier 'first in, first served' system of allocating places in courses.

An exception is made for course organisers and their assistants who naturally must have automatic right of entry to the course for which they are responsible.

In addition, members who are aged 90 years and over are given automatic entry to one course in each series i.e., the course that they list as a first preference. However, they are <sup>still apply</sup> ~~still required to~~ pay the normal course fee. <sup>through the</sup> ~~is~~ ballot system <sup>and</sup>

Some statistics relating to demand for courses are presented below:

Course Participants-2003		Enrolled	Maximum	*Turned away
Series 1	Changing Landscapes	40	40	28
	Greek and Roman Comedy	44	50	
	5 Scientists	50	50	22
	Heraldry	25	50	
Series 2	Dunedin's Rich Heritage	49	50	43
	Money	39 ?	50	
	Art Now	50	50	21
	Antarctica	50	50	16
	Book Group	11	12	
Series 3	Enjoying Opera	50	50	28
	The Brontes	50	50	22
	Food, Glorious Food (repeat)	50	50	21
	This Is the Way the World Ends	50	50	29
Other courses where larger numbers have been turned away:				
	Renaissance(2001)	50	50	~60
	Islam (2002)	50	50	50
	Islam repeat(2002)	50	50	35

\*These numbers overstate the true position. They include ALL rejections for first, second and third preferences. More detailed statistics are needed in this area.

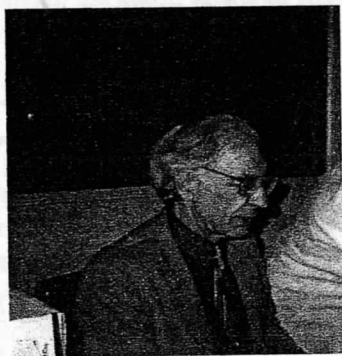


Celebrating their release from long-term responsibilities of Board membership - Kathryn Dolby, David McKenzie and Brian Maguire.

# PROFILE

## Albert Moore: Educational Innovator

When Albert Moore, Associate Professor, Religious Studies, at the University of Otago retired in January 1992, he could have had little idea of what the future might hold for him in terms of any further involvement in education.



During his long career, Alfred made significant contributions to the study of world religions, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. But it was his passion for teaching which helped build his reputation in the University and elsewhere.

Long before most lecturers had fully appreciated the value of photographs as "visual aids", Albert had made extensive use of slides taken on his wide ranging travels to create interest and enhance understanding in his lectures. His 15,000 slides are now held by the University and many are available online.

It was a coincidence, perhaps, that while Albert was slowly easing himself out of the University and his ongoing research, the idea of setting up a U3A group in Dunedin was beginning to be talked about in University Extension. After a visit to Christchurch where U3A was already firmly established, Lorainne Isaacs (then Director of University Extension) assisted by Charles Croot, drew together an initial planning group. These pioneers planned an initial lecture series and publicized the venture.

Albert attended the first course along with 39 other foundation members.

"The Peopling of Otago" was presented by 10 contributors in weekly two hour sessions from 11 February to 27 April 1994. The venture was a resounding success and set a pattern for course development which has continued for ten years.

Albert feels that he was hooked on the concept of U3A from the beginning. His moment of truth came during "The Peopling" when a field trip took the class to the summit of Flagstaff.

"We were like children," Albert reflected, "asking questions, making discoveries and taking a

simple delight in what we were doing." Later this notion of recapturing the delights of childlike learning has become an important element of Albert's educational philosophy.

"Now freed from learning because we have to, we can learn with excitement and pleasure because we want to."

Albert soon became a member of the U3A Committee and eventually, the Board. Here he made an important contribution to the management of the affairs of the organisation. Over those years he organized a number of courses in such diverse topics as Art, Pacific Culture and Jazz. In many of these he was a significant and sometimes, the only presenter.

Although Albert retired from the Board in 2003, he is continuing with the task of course organisation. His most recent contribution is "Freedom, Religion and Spirit" which features in this term's programme. This course has as its central theme the opportunities and also problems which arise from the freedom to choose amongst the teachings of contemporary religions.

In 2001, the Board created a Futures Working Party whose task was to chart some possible directions for the next few years. In his submission to the Working Party, Albert stressed the need for creativity in designing learning programmes in order to avoid stagnation.

"I suggest that we need also to keep in mind the responsibility of U3A to the future. Here I have been impressed by the stance taken by that enthusiastic British advocate of U3A and authority on the history and sociology of ageing: Peter Laslett (*A Fresh Map of Life: the Emergence of the Third Age*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989, 1996)."

"Laslett suggests that older people should act as cultural trustees who prepare a place for their immediate successors and set precedents for further innovation."

"We also have to play our part along with other organisations for Third Age people many of whom do not have the intellectual interests of U3A. What we can contribute here has not yet been discovered."

"I think that this vision can help to reinforce us as we seek to 'hand on the torch' to a new wave of U3A members and programme planners."

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## IDEAS FROM MEMBERS

The Board has received many ideas for courses from members, usually expressed on course evaluation forms. Sometimes this is only a topic heading but many have gone into detail and this is always helpful. Suggestions are welcomed at any time. Please contact the Secretary.