



U3A

DUNEDIN



Newsletter, Issue No 3

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Editorial

The recent spate of publicity regarding the funding of community education courses and the Government's declared intention to reduce its contribution by 12.4% may have been a cause of concern to some members of U3A.

Whilst Government funding to U3A Dunedin via the University of Otago will presumably become proportionately less, the result will be far from the end of the earth for our organization. We have made a heavy financial contribution to our own continuing education in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

But in this context, it was both annoying and disappointing to find the ODT (Editorial 21.5.04) shafting the 1000 pensioners "aged 70 or more" who bravely undertook computing courses organized by the Christchurch Polytechnic, because they allegedly did not make "a value based contribution to the national economy". It's sad to see such an ageist and naively monetarist claim trumpeted on the editorial page of our regional newspaper.

Maybe it's up to us to put the point more loudly about what education means to older people and, in rather more subtle ways, to the overall economy of the country.

From the A.G.M.

We are continually looking for new ideas for courses and have found the suggestions made on our evaluation form most helpful. It is not always possible, however, for us to find someone, take a suggestion, and develop and teach a course from it. The Board is always keen to hear of members with particular areas of expertise who might be willing to teach a course or part of a course.

Annual General Meeting

YOUR NEW BOARD:

As you will be aware, 16 nominations were received for 14 places on the Board. However since both Antony Wood and Eldora Gilbert declined nomination before the AGM, no formal election was required.

Board members confirmed elected for 2004-05:

Honor Anderson, William George, Mervyn Smith, Michael Andrewes, Judith Gray, Sam Sneyd, Judith Cranefield, Sue Harvey, Elizabeth Timms, Wilson Daniel, Jenny Laws, Diana Wilson, Donald Feist, Michael Shelton.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD elected at the board meeting on 20 July:

Chairman: Elizabeth Timms

Deputy Chairman: Wilson Daniel

The following existing positions were confirmed:

Secretary: Judith Gray

Treasurer: Bill George

Programme Co-ordinator: Jenny Laws

RETIRING BOARD MEMBER

Eldora Gilbert, a Board member for the past 3 years, did not seek re-election at the AGM due to recent ill health. We wish her a speedy recovery and thank her most warmly for the enthusiasm and energy she brought to her work as a Board member. She had numerous ideas for courses and was responsible for developing and running two recent popular series, "Dunedin's Cultural Blend", and "Southern Maori".

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Chairman: Elizabeth Timms
Secretary: Judith Gray

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On holiday at last

Over a year down the track from her "retirement" as secretary/administrator for U3A Dunedin, Kathryn Dolby still feels as though she is on holiday.



"It was an all consuming task," she said. "The phone could ring at any hour and if people were worried about whether they had places on courses or any other problems, they had to be reassured."

In spite of the inevitable pressured periods, Kathryn

enjoyed her involvement with U3A.

"I loved it all," she said "the lectures, the people and just being part of such an exciting and fulfilling organization."

It was fortunate for U3A that Kathryn was one of its members from early on. After 8 years service, she had retired from her position as secretary of the Otago Law Society in May 1994 and was set to enjoy the pleasures of the not so long since founded U3A with her husband, David McKenzie.

Unfortunately, the association between the University of Otago and U3A began to falter at that time. By 1996, U3A was on its own and sorely in need of secretarial/administrative assistance. Kathryn took up the task on a voluntary basis and continued with it devotedly for more than six years.

During this period, which was one of rapid growth for U3A, she carried out the numerous tasks which were necessary to put the Committee's (later, Board's) plans into action. These responsibilities included for example, dealing with correspondence, booking venues, liaising with the staff of the Halls of Residence, communicating with speakers and members, hiring equipment, attending courses at their commencement and dealing with problems, worries and complaints.

It was Kathryn who initiated the relationship with Rodgers and Associates Law Practice which has proven invaluable in ensuring the continuing efficiency of the present course enrolment system.

Surprisingly, Kathryn found time to participate in several courses as a presenter, notably in "Six Lives and an Epilogue" in which she commented in depth on the course of her own life and, with husband David in a joint presentation on the Resurrection.

Now, with the heat off, Kathryn has more time for herself.

"At last I've been able to get around to doing something about the roses," she said.

U3A Dunedin is truly grateful to Kathryn Dolby for the essential role which she played over the most critical years of its development.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ THIS:

This newsletter comes with five brochures for Series 3 courses. Please note that the closing date for applications with the course fee, is Wednesday, 18th August. If you have not had a letter of rejection from Rodgers and Associates by Saturday, 28th August, you may assume that you have gained entry to your first choice course.

If you have questions about your acceptance for any Series 3 course after the ballot, please get in touch with Rodgers and Associates or the U3A Secretary, Judith Gray.

Also enclosed is the membership renewal form for 2005. Return of this form to Rodgers and Associates, plus the \$10.00 fee will ensure that you are on the mailing list for next year. Please note that the fee is \$10.00 per household, not per person.

There is a slight change in the information requested on the renewal form. This is to meet a variation in the information which the University of Otago is required to collect for the Ministry of Education.

Judith Gray



For the Computer literate

There is a mine of interesting information about U3A available on the Internet.

For local news try entering: u3a AND new zealand. It is important to type AND in capitals. You might be surprised at the results you will get.

www.u3aonline.edna.edu.au is a useful website which encompasses activities in both Australia and New Zealand.

Try the University of Otago's website for a description of our own U3A:

www.otago.ac.nz/courses/continuingeducation/u3a/html

If you enter simply u3a you will find yourself in touch with the whole international world of Universities of the Third Age. It's a large world, but if you have the time, a stimulating one indeed.

Let's know about any particularly fascinating websites you encounter.

Looking Ahead

As usual, the Board has many suggestions for future courses and we are now in the process of trying to decide what can be organised for next year as all the arrangements for the first series need to be finalised well before the end of this year. While we hope to provide a good mix of various subjects from history to nutrition in the traditional lecture-type courses, we would also like to consider the possibility of forming smaller study groups, in which members carry out the research and teaching themselves. We already have the Book Discussion Group, which has been operating successfully now for a number of years, and it would seem very much in keeping with the aims of U3A to set up more such small groups. Possible subjects for study and discussion are endless - the main ingredient being the enthusiasm of the members participating. So, if you have a topic that you would like to explore, especially if you know of others who share your enthusiasm, please contact a member of the Board or, better still, send your suggestion in writing to the Secretary, Judith Gray.



Jenny Laws

Programme Co-ordinator

If any member who was not at the Annual General Meeting on 8 July would like to have a copy of the **Annual Financial Statements** presented at that meeting, please get in touch with the Treasurer, Bill George (465 7806) or Judith Gray (467 2619) and we will be happy to send one to you.

Hidden Costs

"Voluntary work is an important but largely unquantified component of New Zealand productivity figures. The success of the University of the Third Age in New Zealand is attributable almost entirely to the work of volunteer course leaders and administrators who, collectively, commit tens of thousands of hours of unpaid expertise to the organization each year. U3A administrators were asked to complete a detailed survey into time/use activities within their organizations. After ascribing an opportunity cost of \$10 per volunteer hour the national figure for U3A voluntarism is conservatively valued at more than \$500,000 a year."

The above comment is an abstract of a paper written recently by Dr Rick Swindell, the founder of U3A in Queensland: "Half a million dollars a year: voluntarism within New Zealand Universities of the Third Age."

A Prayer

LORD,

Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

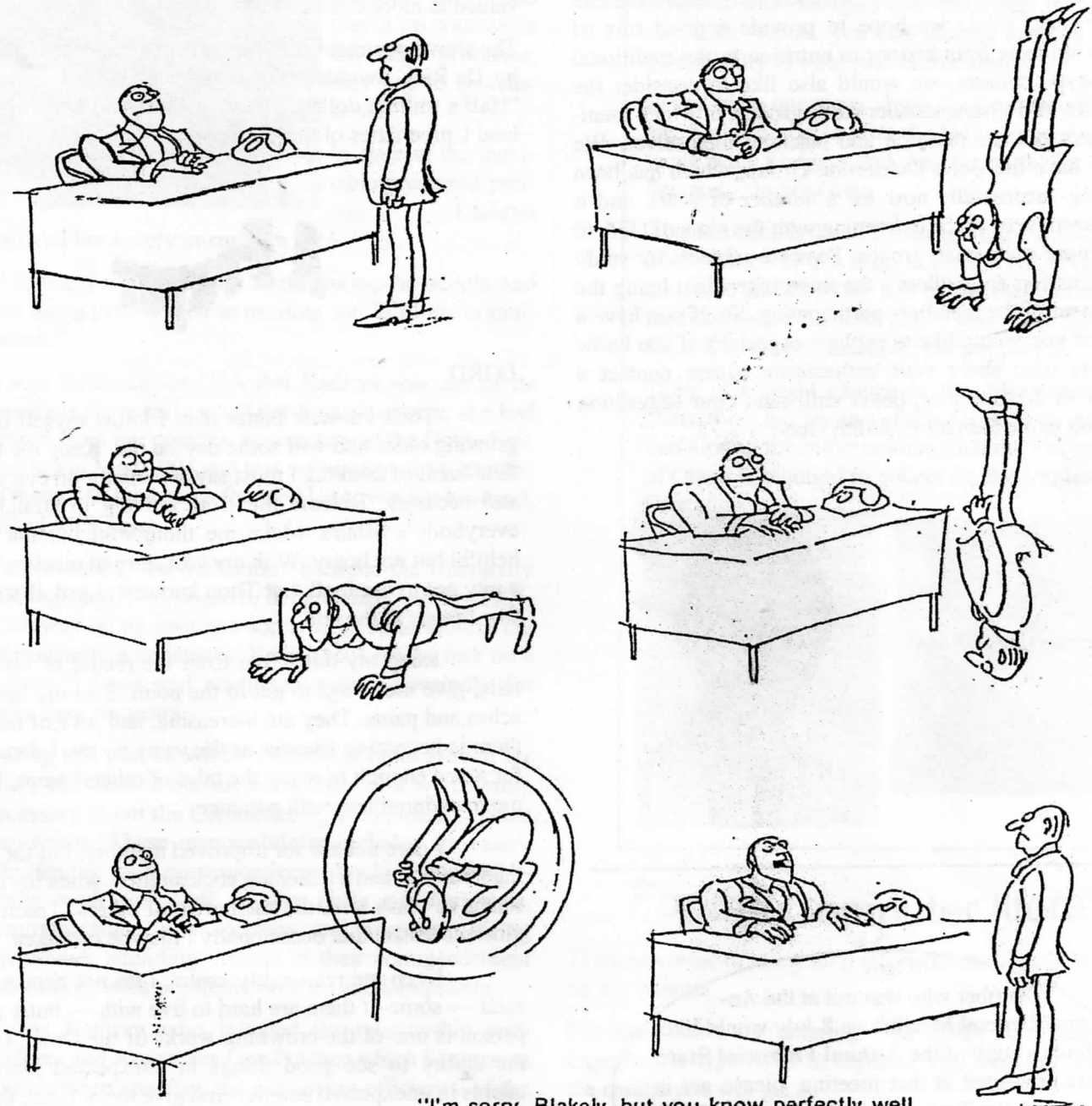
Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility, and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not expect to be a saint — some of them are hard to live with — but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the Devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

AMEN

JUST FOR FUN



"I'm sorry, Blakely, but you know perfectly well there can be no exceptions to our policy of mandatory retirement."

The members of U3A Dunedin are grateful for the assistance provided by Otago University Print in producing this newsletter.

The Newsletter Team : Brian O'Rourke (Editor), Mervyn Cranfield (Layout and Design), Elizabeth Timms (Board Liaison).