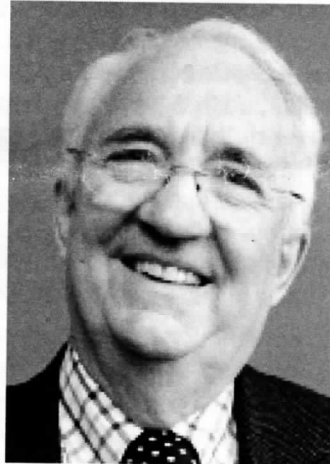




## Obligations of members put under spotlight

As this will be my last opportunity to write as chairman, I have chosen to review matters regarding membership, and the obligations of the board and individual members of U3A.

As most of you will know, we have 500 names on our roll, and a waiting list that averages about 50 at any one time.



By Graham Batts

We run three separate series during the year, and each series comprises six disparate courses conducted at one of three locations, Leith Bowling Club, Knox College, and Salmond College. We can accommodate 100, 50 and 50 participants respectively at these locations,

At times, we may conduct smaller specialist courses where numbers need to be fewer, such as for a participatory book group, or a hands-on digital photography class.

Attendances vary from course to course, but average at about 83%.

Currently, we are attracting about 580 applications for 350 places, and that is why we need to conduct a ballot for each series.

When you make an application for a course or courses, you are invited to make up to three choices in order of preference so that the courses may be awarded by ballot. This method provides you with the best possible outcome. While we cannot please all of you all of the time, it is clear that we satisfy most of you most of the time.

While you may choose up to three courses, you usually prepay for only one or two.

For series 1 this year, 336 members made 585 applications for the 350 available places.

Our particular U3A, unlike many others, is fortunate in having the support of our University both in terms of course presenters, and financial support. There is naturally a limit as to how far this resource can be stretched. There is also a limit to what can be expected from board members who have to arrange the courses. This is why we have put an arbitrary cap on membership, courses, and locations.

When you attend a course, you will be aware that you initially sign in and then check the attendance register

### ★ Chairman's message

- *'about 580 applications for 350 places'*
- *'there are some who register, receive a place, but only attend spasmodically'*

on each day of the course. This is important as it affects the subsidy we receive. Attendance is usually very good and most manage to attend each day, however, there are some who register, receive a place, but only attend spasmodically.

We appreciate that for some, circumstances change, however given the demand, we hope for an improvement in the future.

One of our members recently remarked--- " I cannot attend courses now, however I remain a member as I like to support such a good cause"! I am sure she meant well, but by such action, she was precluding the advancement of prospective members languishing on the waiting list!

Early in the new year, the board may consider ways whereby we can move more people off the waiting list, but without disaffecting less active members.

By now, many of you will be engaged with the Series 2 courses. I do hope you enjoy your experience.

### Albie's autobiography on the way

Dr Albert Moore (1926-2009), a founding member of U3A Dunedin who served on the board for a number of years, as well as lecturing to us on many subjects and an enthusiastic attender of our courses, completed an autobiography a year before his death last year.

We are pleased to report that it will be published (400 pages, soft-back) later this year, titled *More Than You Know*. Albert's son and daughter will furnish the book with photos from his overseas sabbaticals and academic life in New Zealand. The book will be priced at \$85. Members interested in obtaining a copy should contact Rachel Ovens (nee Moore) at phone 03-466 7756 or email her at [theoovens@xtra.co.nz](mailto:theoovens@xtra.co.nz).

[Albie's photo and obituary were in May 2009 newsletter.]

### ★ Plate boundaries poem, 'connections,'

by two inspired members — See page 3

★ administration

By Judith Gray

Secretary to the Board



Series 2 courses are well under way; informal feedback indicates that they are proving interesting and informative. Evaluation forms returned at the end of the courses will give the Board a more complete picture.

Thanks to those members who do fill in the forms as they allow the Board to see where problems occur and give many suggestions for future courses. Not all the ideas are possible or practicable, but they provide much food for thought as part of the planning process.

In Series 2, 2010 there were 532 applications for the 350 places available. Only two people missed out entirely.

It has been noted with some concern the number of people who have been accepted for a course and then fail to appear, thus keeping out people who might otherwise have attended the course.

Series 3 course options come with this newsletter and applications must be received by noon on Wednesday, 11 August. Please ensure that you only select one 'first choice', and remember to fill in the return address on the back of the form.

Some newer members have asked about applying for one, two or three options in a series. Yes, of course you may, but if you only want to attend one course, only send one \$30 fee. Providing several options gives members more chance of being selected for one course when applications are heavy.

At the closing date, four nominations for the four vacancies on the Board for the 2010-2011 year had been received and with the ten members who have been nominated for re-election, the Annual General Meeting elected the following:-

Graham Batts, John Burton, Sue Cathro, Judith Cowley, Mayford Dawson, Bill George, Judith Gray, Sue Harvey, Jane Higham, Rosemary Hudson, Norma Restieaux, Brian Robinson, Bill Wilson, Antony Wood.

(Officers will be elected at a meeting of the Board on 20 July, too late for inclusion in this newsletter).

Members who were not present at the Annual General Meeting on 8 July, and who would like a copy of the meeting papers, should contact me and I will forward a set.

**Poetry archive**

<http://www.poetryarchive.org> — Poetry enthusiasts should check this archive to read or hear poems recited by their authors.

For example type in Pam Ayres, click on the name and select *They should have asked my husband* — and you should be able to hear her reading her poem.

★ looking ahead

By Sue Cathro

Programme Co-ordinator



This is my last column as Programme Co-ordinator. Over the last three years, in planning and running courses, I have met so many interesting people and enjoyed their company. I did not do all the work myself, and I acknowledge the efforts of rest of the team: Gary Blackman, John Burton and Judith Cowley, and latterly, Sue Harvey. We have been a very "hands on" group for, on occasions, the number of courses offered has fallen short of the six we like to provide. We also aim for about 350 places in each series to cater for our 500 U3A members. Taking into account the positive feedback we have had and the full courses, I believe we have succeeded in what we have set out to do.

Looking forward to Series 3, the six courses are: *Charles Dickens's Career as a Novelist*, *The World in the 1960s*, *Dunedin's Natural World*, *The Nervous System*, *Art in Otago* and *Raiders and Traders*. We are confident that these give a good variety of topics from which to choose.

Work has already started on courses for Series 1, 2011, and once again we are planning a wide variety of topics. Your suggestions for future courses are welcome – doubly so if you can name someone who could be the presenter. These can be noted on an evaluation sheet or your idea passed on to any board member.

As I have mentioned before, you do not have to be on the Board in order to run a course. We have members who could run a course in their field of interest and many do. If you have a friend or acquaintance who may be prepared to either give a course or a single session within a course, the Programme Committee would love to hear from you and can provide support.

**Book lovers' website**

For Internet cruisers <http://www.bookgroup.info> is an independent website providing information for readers, book groups, reading groups and book clubs. It aims to provide a book lovers' community where you can find unaffiliated book reviews, literary news, interviews with distinguished authors and keep up to date with literary festivals and events.

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

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Secretary: Judith Gray ph 471-9913

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# Course entertained by impromptu reading of poem about 'dancing' plates

When a lecturer was running late, U3A member Kath Beattie gave an impromptu reading of one of her poems to a surprised, then appreciative 'Living on a Plate Boundary' class earlier this year.

She told course organiser Gary Blackman that the source of inspiration for her poem was that lively and fascinating course on plate tectonics, geology etc — and particularly a sped-up video of the continents 'dancing'.

Kath has submitted the poem to a forthcoming issue of a literary magazine. Her publications include both fiction and non-fiction for children and adults, as well as poetry and articles. Several of her stories have been broadcast on radio and she is at present working on a novel. By her kind permission the poem is printed at right. >>>

[A member's nice testimonial for our 'Dunedin's Written Treasures' course:](#)

## 'Amazing' connections strengthen this member's sense of place

Connections. I had always thought of myself as an immigrant who came to New Zealand from Scotland as a young child, and although my first memories are in Dunedin, I only lived here for 12 years, leaving as a teenager.

After living in various places around the world, by chance I returned to Dunedin 20 years later and have lived here ever since. I had thought my connection to Dunedin only went back to my childhood, but the U3A course on 'Dunedin's Written Treasures' made me rethink.

One of the written treasures we were shown was a copy of the May 1843 Act of Separation and Deed of Demission from the Church of Scotland which led to the establishment of the Free Church. To my surprise and delight, I found the signatures of two of my great-great-grandfathers on the deed. This breakaway of course led to the establishment of Dunedin by the Free Church.

Forty-five years later in May 1878, one of those great-great-grandfathers visited New Zealand as an evangelist, and spent some days in Dunedin preaching, and raising money for the recently established YMCA. I have spent some time exploring the webpages, *Papers Past* [National Library website of newspapers searchable online] and have read all sorts of fascinating articles regarding the visit of my great-great-grandfather and his son.

Another amazing connection in that when a child in Edinburgh, my great-great-grandfather played with the sons of Captain William Cargill, and Cargill was an important influence in his later becoming a minister. When visiting Dunedin he went to visit the grave of Cargill. Nearly 70 years after that visit, our family arrived in Dunedin, a year before the Centennial celebrations.

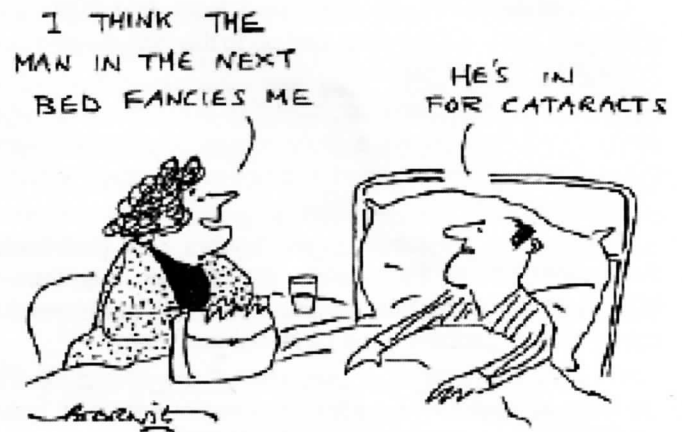
All of this gives me a much greater sense of connection with Dunedin, not one that goes back to 1947, but one that goes back to 1843. Thank you U3A for helping me to make all these connections, and giving me a stronger sense of place.

— Ann Knight

## *Continents Waltzing*

By Kath Beattie

Picture the globe as a giant dance floor, continents huddled together somewhere near Gwondana Land, listen to the music of tectonic plates striking, the subduction of shores wheezing, the beat of volcanoes booming and imagine it's six hundred million years ago and the dance is beginning or maybe continuing from six hundred million years before that. Whatever the time span, the movement is adagio, slower than the score where one note is played each century. At the change of rhythm the orchestral winds strum and thrum stirring India to take up the beat and glide with the hula swirl of a belly dancer across the open space toward Asia. At the same time Australia tangoes north fingers stretched to Indonesia, she loosens her grip of New Zealand — who is waltzing solo, one two three, one two three out into the wild and lonely Pacific Ocean ever widening the gap, never having paired with Africa, more intent to flirt (to no avail) with South America. Give a glacial age or two, a meteoric cymbal explosion, a few tsunamis, Lake Taupo exploding, the Poles up ending north to south a few dozen times and the dance ends ... or so it seems. Consult your GPS, compare the length of steps between the dancers and you'll find that the waltz of continents is everlasting, never-ending, that the music never stops.



[Oldie magazine archives]



## The University of the Third Age Asia Pacific Alliance

Following this year's highly successful International Conference at Chitrakoot University, India, the Asia Pacific Alliance of Universities of the Third Age is pleased to announce provisional plans for its next World Conference, to be held in Singapore in August 2011.

For full details click on <http://worldu3a.or/apalliance>

The University of the Third Age Asia Pacific Alliance grew out of a meeting held at the WorldU3A Conference at Chitrakoot, India, in February 2010. It is currently run by a 'core group' of six members — [Chairman: Thomas Kuan (Singapore), Secretary/webmaster: Tom Holloway (India), Secretary-General of WorldU3A). Members: Dianne Delchau (Australia), Jeevan Lohani (Nepal), Dr Sajjan Singh (India), Kathrine Fenton-May (South Africa)].

The following aims for the Asia Pacific Alliance have been fully discussed and agreed, but not formally adopted.

1. Worldwide promotion and publicity for the Singapore Conference to be held in 2011
2. Support for all emerging local and national U3A groups in the Asia Pacific Region
3. Encouragement of formation of rural U3A groups
4. Encouragement of fraternal visits by individual members and groups of members

The conference will take place on August 7 and 8, 2011 and August 9 is Singapore's National Celebration Day, with parades and street events. See the website listed above for provisional costs for three- or four-night bookings.

## Changes to the U3A Board

On your behalf, it is my privilege to thank the four retiring board members who have each contributed so much to the success of our U3A

Elizabeth Timms has been a board member since 2000, and chairperson 2004-2005. She has organised a total of 15 courses covering a very wide range of interesting topics.

Donald Feist, a board member since 2004, and chairman 2004-2005, has organised several philosophically challenging courses during his six-year tenure.

Graham Mortimer, on the board from July 2006, and chairman 2008-2009 introduced us to the fast-moving and fascinating field of genetics.

Gary Blackman, another scientist and board member since 2007, has been a very energetic organiser and presenter of some excellent and original courses from the sciences and the arts.

All four were outstanding, and we are very grateful for their contributions. Fortunately, they remain members of U3A, and I know that in the future they will be presenting rather than organising—we have not lost them!

As I write this note of appreciation, I am conscious that we have at least four excellent nominations for new board members before us.

**Graham Batts**

## What now? Here come the 'eBooks'

An eBook, as defined by the 'Oxford Dictionary of English', is 'an electronic version of a printed book which can be read on a personal computer or hand-held device designed specifically for this purpose'. e-Books are usually read on dedicated hardware devices known as e-Readers or e-book devices. Personal computers and some cell phones can also be used to read e-books.

Whitcoulls has launched New Zealand's first eBooks platform. Customers can now download whole books from its website [www.whitcoulls.co.nz/ebooks](http://www.whitcoulls.co.nz/ebooks), to be read on devices such as iPhones, BlackBerrys, PCs or laptops. Managing director Peter Kalan says two million book titles are on the database. Cost of downloading most books will be between \$12 and \$19.

Project Gutenberg (at [http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)) allows downloads of more than 30,000 free ebooks. It carries high quality items. The books were previously published on paper by bona fide publishers and digitised with the help of thousands of volunteers. All ebooks can be easily downloaded with choice between ePub, Mobipocket, HTML and simple text formats. No fee or registration is required.

e-Readers are a new rage. A US review written by older people states they are ideal for elders and others with poor eyesight because they are back-lit and can be easily read in any light.

<http://ebook-reader-review.toptenreviews.com/> rates 10 popular models. <http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2010/02/qualcomm-mirasol/> says eBook Readers are expensive and the technology is changing rapidly. A new generation of displays is almost ready to bring full colour and video to ebook screens while maintaining readability in different environments.

## Astute estate planning

Dan was a single man living at home with his father, and working in the family business. Dan found out he was going to inherit a huge amount of money when his sickly father died. He decided he needed a wife with whom to share such good fortune.

One evening at an investment meeting, he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.. He mustered up his courage and approached her. 'I may look like a simple and ordinary man to you,' he said, 'but in a short time my father will die, and I'll inherit \$200 million.'

Impressed, the woman obtained Dan's business card. Then a few days later — she married his father! Women are better at estate planning than men?

*Edited by Geoff Adams*

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