

## Great way to enjoy that retirement

### Message to members from Honor Anderson, new chairman of U3A Dunedin:

A few days ago I happened to meet an acquaintance I had not seen for over ten years. Younger than myself, he had only recently retired. I asked him whether he was enjoying retirement. 'Oh yes,' he said, 'My wife and I have joined an organisation called U3A. Do you know about it? It's great.'

I myself was fortunate to hear about U3A Dunedin from a friend within weeks of my retirement in 1994, the year when the first local course was offered by a small group of founding members, most of whom were retired University staff. The course was a success, to be followed by several others in the same year. There was never any need to advertise courses. News of U3A spread rapidly through the Dunedin area by word of mouth.

Since then membership has grown year by year — a success story in almost all respects, although ever-increasing numbers have created problems of their own.

For members who may be unfamiliar with the origins of U3A, the concept evolved in France during the early 1970s when growing numbers of older people were beginning to look for some form of further education during their retirement years.

The University of the Third Age was so-named when it was recognised that the third stage of the human life span, following the earlier periods of childhood and work/childrearing, might offer unique opportunities for learning, if these could be made available to retired people. The approach adopted in France was to follow the style of the medieval universities. This involved setting up localised communities of 'scholars' who sought greater understanding through learning.

The U3A idea spread rapidly through the Western world and there are now hundreds of thousands of members of U3A groups in many countries. Each is an autonomous, independent body free to set up its own structure, select courses appropriate to its members and decide on the style of presentation.

At a local level, the agreed purposes of the U3A Dunedin Charitable Trust are as follows: 'to foster

*Continued on page 2*

### MEET OUR NEW CHIEF

*Honor Anderson has been elected chairman of the Board of U3A Dunedin, succeeding Wilson Daniel. Honor kindly provided this brief biographical sketch for readers.*



Honor Anderson

'I spent my first 17 years in a Devon village, where my father was a country parson. I was the fourth of five daughters. A sheltered and happy childhood apart from occasional frightening experiences at school in Exeter from German air raids during World War 2.

Graduated from London University with BSc in Human Biology. Further studies interrupted by migration to New Zealand with my husband in 1954. Settled initially in Wellington, where I worked as librarian in the British High Commission.

Moved to Auckland, 1964. Reared a family for next eight years. Completed teacher training, then taught in schools on North Shore for three years.

Accepted position in Dunedin, 1975, as a vocational adviser in Ministry of Education, (later transferred in same role to Department of Labour).

1985-1994, Careers Adviser at University of Otago. Graduated extramurally from Massey University with BA in psychology and education, 1989. Post-retirement, completed MA in History, University of Otago, 1997.

Interests: Reading, gardening, walking, U3A, Citizens' Advice Bureau, my family and friends.

*[Donald Feist is new deputy chairman of the board.]*

### NEWS ON OTHER PAGES

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Your brochures for 2007 .....          | 2 |
| Gift to University for law database .. | 2 |
| Course feedback, Book Group, Milton    | 3 |
| What a tangled web! Your interests ..  | 4 |

## ADMINISTRATION

By Judith Gray, Secretary  
Enclosed with this newsletter is the Membership Renewal form for 2007.

Please complete it and return it with your cheque (\$10.00 per household) to Rodgers and Associates to ensure that you are on the mailing list for next year.



Judith Gray

The first mail out for 2007 will be sent in late January, with the first course commencing on 1 March.

In order to eliminate some of the difficulties experienced by the staff at Rodgers when conducting the ballot, and any confusion to members, the U3A Board has decided to alter the method of applying for courses from the beginning of next year.

You will still receive a separate sheet describing the information for each individual course, but there will be a new application form. This will be a single sheet covering all the applications and preferences for a household, or for two people who apply together for transport reasons etc.

Each person will be able to indicate in order of preference the courses for which they wish to apply, and the dollar amount of the enclosed cheque will indicate how many courses each person wishes to attend if successful.

All applicants will receive written advice of the success, or otherwise, of their applications, within about ten days of the ballot.

## Chairman's Message *Continued from page 1*

and develop education for people who form the Third Age population of the Dunedin Region: to organise and present educational courses alone or in conjunction with tertiary education institutions in Dunedin and elsewhere in New Zealand; and to enter into such contracts loans and other arrangements as are necessary to achieve the educational purposes described.'

As the end of 2006 approaches I would like to thank Board members for the hard work they have put into organising many interesting and stimulating courses during the year, and our members for their enthusiastic participation and support.

I wish you all a happy and relaxing break over the Christmas/New Year season.

## WHAT'S COMING?

By Jenny Laws, Programme Co-ordinator

Most courses for Series 1 next year are still in the planning stage, but one that is set to go is John Hale talking about *Paradise Lost*.

Topics and speakers for several other courses are in place, but the times have to be finalised to suit everyone and some will be held over to Series 2 or 3, 2007.

At various times during the year, members can expect to find out about plate tectonics, how to look at a picture, how to read a Holy Book, the migrant society, peopling the Pacific, T.S.Eliot's later poetry, fantasy literature, stained glass, and many other subjects from music to psychology.

We are sure you will all find plenty of interest.

### Gift to University

The U3A Dunedin Board has agreed to make a further donation of \$5,000 to the University of Otago Library. This will assist in the purchase of an expensive database, which carries 19th and 20th century legal treatise documents and will be most useful for the Faculty of Law.

### International U3A

At the recent 23rd Congress of AIUTA (the international U3A) in France, Stanley Miller, vice-chairman of the Third Age Trust, was elected as the first native English-speaking president for a term of four years. [See <http://worldu3a.org/aiuta>]

### Climate Change

Are you keen to keep up-to-date on climate change and willing to help others to do so too? Members of Henley U3A in England have started doing this on <http://www.3as.org.uk/climate>

### Correction

There were errors in the last newsletter when the new board member John Burton was wrongly stated to be an emeritus professor of dentistry. He was actually senior lecturer — and born in London, not Dunedin. Apologies. With the Burtons overseas, we had accepted a person's faulty recollections.

## UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE CHARITABLE TRUST, DUNEDIN

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## YOUR FEEDBACK

*Reports on courses held in the second series of this year between June and August:*

**After the Great Dictator, Part 1** — Art and Culture in the Soviet Union after 1953: "Spot on!" as one evaluation form stated. Having Part 2 to follow was regarded as an excellent idea. For the final session pianist Pascal Harris gave a lecture-recital on Prokofiev's war sonatas and the Master of Knox College, Bruce Aitken, made the Great Hall and its fine piano, newly tuned, available for the performance.

**Through *The Waste Land*: the Early Poems of T.S. Eliot**: much appreciated by the group of 20 (14 evaluation forms handed in). Associate Professor Chris Ackerley may give another course on the later poems of Eliot, next year. An interesting feature was an electronic book on *The Waste Land* by Chris, which was able to be circulated by email to two-thirds of the group, with a print copy circulated round the others.

**Architecture — Building Dunedin**: 31 evaluation forms handed in out of attendance of 51. Thanks to Gary Blackman for devising this course and arranging the speakers. It was a course that relied for its effect on visual representations of buildings etc and our overhead, data and slide projectors all worked well.

**Do We Get The Media We Deserve?** The 32 forms returned found the course interesting and entertaining — a good mix of insight, information, friendliness and entertainment (said one.) Opinions vary on whether there should be more time or less time given to group discussion or questions. One person had become more discerning and now 'happily turn off TV and read instead!'

**Antarctica** was a repeat course, due to popular demand. There were 47 enrolled. Participants overall were impressed by enthusiasm of lecturers and their ability to communicate up-to-date information with lay persons.

### Please avoid that busy tea traffic!

At morning and afternoon teas U3A Dunedin requests you to move away from the tables after you have poured that coffee or tea, and gathered your plate. Lingering in the crowded vicinity just hinders others still queuing or serving themselves and also may present a hazard when people have to move past you, carrying their hot drinks. Good sense and manners: move well down the bus please! Or perhaps enjoy fresh air outside?

## BOOK GROUP



This year there were 11 members, with an average attendance of 9, in the Book Discussion Group. A great variety of books was presented, ranging from a psychiatric study to an entertaining dramatic presentation of a local author's pastiche of Sherlock Holmes' work, this being accomplished with the help of two visitors.

John Rave reports that members' wide tastes ensured books were presented differently, with plenty of group interaction. A factor much appreciated by the group was expansion of reading horizons. Company was always congenial, with plenty of humour.

As sole participating male member, John must have felt isolated on occasions. But he hopes for more male support in the group next year.

### Paradise Lost

Next term Dr John Hale will present a series of six sessions on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, discussing the work from before its inception to aftermath — and presenting a number of different ways of understanding the poem.

Each session will have two parts: the first hour being a lecture and discussion, the second part including dramatic readings from the poem, involving any U3A members who are interested and also possibly some guest performances.

Participants should have a copy of *Paradise Lost*, one that includes line numbers. Dr Hale particularly recommends the Penguin edition edited by John Leonard (ISBN 0 14 042426 1).

Dr Hale recently retired from the English Department of the University of Otago. Interested in Renaissance literature, he has published extensively, with a particular emphasis on Milton (a collection of selected essays, 1982-2004, recently appeared under the title *Milton As Multilingual*.)

### Quick quotes

'Classic,' a book which people praise and don't read. ~ Mark Twain

*It is better to ask some questions than to know all of the answers.* ~ James Thurber

*The important thing is not to stop questioning.*  
~ Albert Einstein

*The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it.*  
~ Oscar Wilde

*Men are born ignorant, not stupid; they are made stupid by education.* ~ Bertrand Russell

## Oh! What a tangled web.



U3A web-surfers may care to share personal favourites. (Email interesting or unusual website to [hgadams@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:hgadams@slingshot.co.nz))

Warning: these were going well last time checked — but things can change quickly on the Internet. Sites can suddenly pack up or get a new address! Google for them if necessary!

**www.thefreesite.com** has lists and reviews of all the many free resources on the Web. Tons of fun and sidetracks to explore.

**www.I-Am-Bored.com** lists more sites which may cure the ailment!

**www.homeandlearn.co.uk** gives free tutorials for computer beginners.

**www.aboutseniors.com.au** shows what is happening in the U3A age group in Australia.

**www.wordspy.com** records some interesting new words and phrases and their recent origins. Do you know “age heaping” or “familymoon”?

**www.godchecker.com** is a database of more than 2,850 Gods that have been worshipped over the past few millenia.

**www.cricketinfor.com** is the best cricket news site to keep in touch with the summer game.

**www.badastronomy.com** — Phil Plait, a professional astronomer, debunks myths in astronomy and related topics.

**www.noslang.com/index.php** is where to find out what your children or grandchildren are talking about — an Internet slang translator.

**www.collectbritain.co.uk** has 90,000 images and sounds from the British Library arranged in fascinating collections (with a search index.)

**www.whitehouse.gov** contains lots of US history and facts.

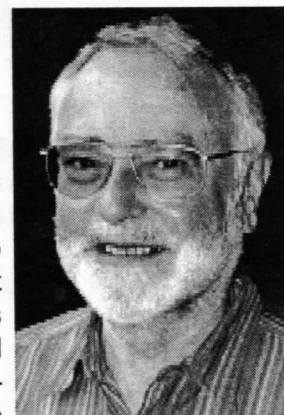
**www.behindthename.com** concentrates on first names with notes on their history and etymology and even some anagrams and research.

**www.apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk** — the site of the Apostrophe Protection Society, set up to preserve this endangered species in the English language.

**www.cornucopia.org.uk** is an online database of information about more than 6,000 collections in the UK's museums, galleries, archives and libraries.

## Keen interests in our Dunedin

By Bill George, Treasurer  
Analysis of the evaluation forms for Series 2 courses shows an interesting trend in strong preferences, no doubt influenced by that term's subjects. There is also a wide and thoughtful range of suggestions for future courses which will help planning ahead.



Bill George

The overwhelming response is for more courses dealing with Dunedin and the surrounding area, its past, present, history, industry, arts, geology/environment, etc.

A very close second comes a very topical question and all its ramifications — the sustainability/environment/global warming/population pressures/resource management and all that is involved in that big question — this may require several sets of lectures if we are to cover all that concerns our members.

Then follow more requests for courses on the arts in all their many forms, with frequent reference to successful courses already run, wanting repeats or further use of lecturers from those courses in other, similar areas.

The last group contains many individual ideas which may make a course alone or in combination, but are a source of ideas for the Programme Committee and Board to consider. Such things as our responsibilities and legal obligations, our attitudes to long-held beliefs, or simply how we rate in the real world, may bear fruit as courses or discussion groups. The Committee and Board need this interest by members; all suggestions are gratefully received and considered.

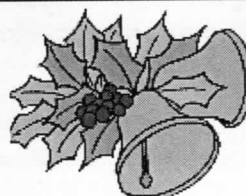
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*Wishing You a Merry  
Xmas and a Happy  
New Year in 2007*