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## Newsletter June 2020

Life is for learning.....learn for life

### Next meeting

The June meeting has been cancelled we will let you know when our next meeting will be held.

### President's report

Life in New Zealand is looking much more positive than it was a month ago even if our borders need to be closed for a long time yet. Most of us will have been out for a coffee, a haircut, a visit to the supermarket and also met with family members we could not visit during the more severe lockdown. That lockdown has succeeded in protecting the vulnerable and other community members.

Some U3A activities have continued to take place over this time. Several groups have met through Zoom and more recently face to face and others plan to start again once we move to level one. The Committee met face to face on Tuesday this week and agreed we will try to hold the AGM and listen to a speaker on the third Wednesday in August though this is of course subject to further restrictions being lifted.

At the AGM we will as usual elect a committee to plan activities for the coming year. We are looking for members who would be willing to serve in any capacity but in particular we need a treasurer and an almoner as the incumbents are ready to retire after several years of service. The committee is a friendly and constructive one and

meets once a month. Please contact me if you are willing to join us. It is a great way to meet new people and feel a vital part of the organization.

Those of you who have visited the website during the lockdown will have noticed the blog which has updated members about online resources and opportunities for learning when we are forced to stay at home. Many thanks to our treasurer, Beverley, for maintaining this. The committee has also commissioned our web developer to design membership and group databases from which we will be able to email members directly. Members will also have the opportunity to update their own information (addresses, phone numbers) directly.

One of the most important roles for the committee is to ensure that new groups are formed to cater for interests in the organization and to maintain communication with the conveners of groups. We are delighted that Graham Harrison has agreed to take on the oversight of groups. A short bio of Graham can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. One of his first responsibilities, together with other committee members, will be to meet current conveners at a morning or afternoon tea to update them on any special requirements as we move out of lockdown.

One of the side-effects of the international lockdown has been that groups in different areas have wanted to share experiences and communicate. There is an U3A Facebook group in England whose entries I have enjoyed reading and some attempts to communicate in New Zealand. We have an invitation from an English group to share ideas with them. These activities have the potential to widen our horizons.

I look forward to our next general meeting - hopefully in August.

Noeline Alcorn, President, U3A Hamilton

## Groups

### **Interest group news**

#### Book Discussion Group

Although the group attained some success with Zoom, it's a real pleasure to be meeting again face to face (keeping social distance in mind). Zoom enabled us to swap titles and create a newsletter with the details of the books enjoyed. In addition, at Level 2 Hamilton Library's Click & Collect service allowed for some access to additional reading. This service, I am told, is to be a permanent fixture.

We will continue to meet & discuss books in each other's homes as we have before. An occasional foray to a cafe for lunch is also on the cards.

Happy 📖 reading everyone! Susan

## French group



I have kept in touch with my French group by sending the occasional document in French relating not surprisingly to the coronavirus pandemic. I also contacted by phone members of the group without internet access and took documents relating to our forward plans to them once level 2 enabled me to drive to their homes – even managed on that occasion a brief conversation from a distance!

As for our plans, I have made a booking with Age Concern for 4 Thursday afternoons from 11 June to 2 July, at the usual time: 1pm until just before 3pm.

We are going to use the River Lounge so that we can spread out more than we could around the Boardroom table.

Janice Smith

## Memoir Writing Group.

We continued to email our monthly writing to one another but, instead of meeting to discuss each other's work, we commented online and phoned one another. The lockdown gave us time to write some comprehensive and interesting instalments of our memoirs. From next month, because we are a small group and can maintain safe distancing, we will resume meeting in person.

Judy Macdonald

## History group

We will meet at the Celebrating Age Centre on Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>. Although we start at 1.30 pm it would be helpful if members arrived earlier to complete entry procedures. I will email members informing them of the centre's requirements. If you are not on the group list please contact me at [etheredge@xtra.co.nz](mailto:etheredge@xtra.co.nz) .

At this meeting we will conclude our discussion on mercenaries and relook at Ron's paper. You might like to check on recent news items on mercenaries in Libya.

Paul Etheredge.

## NZ History Group

Gavin and I will look at options for getting together after the Government briefing on 8 June. We will email group members with suggestions. In any event we will not meet until July at the earliest. At the first meeting Gavin will lead on The Vogel period (1870's) and The Great Depression of the 1880's.

Anyone not on the current list who is interested in joining the group contact the convenor Paul Etheredge [etheredge@xtra.co.nz](mailto:etheredge@xtra.co.nz)

### Philosophy

This group has been meeting at the convenor's home. At present, that is not possible - partly a Covid issue, partly a parking one. In the meantime we are meeting in the Boardroom at the Celebrating Age Centre. We meet on the first Wednesday each month from 10.00 to 11.30. There is a \$2 charge per session. The group limit was intended to be eight, but is one over that at present. Hence, no new members are being taken on, but a wait list is being kept. If you would like to try out this group, contact the convenor.

Gorham Milbank Phone: 855 4757 Email: [milbank@xtra.co.nz](mailto:milbank@xtra.co.nz)

### Current Affairs

This group operates flexibly on the first and third Friday afternoons at 2.00pm at the Celebrating Age Centre. We have been meeting in the Boardroom, but with the Covid issue, we are now meeting in the River Lounge. The group sessions run from 2.00 to 3.30pm, and cost \$2 per session. Members may attend either session, or both. If numbers increase too high, it may be that members will have to choose one or other of the sessions. We can take on some new members: if you would like to try out this group, contact the convenor,

Gorham Milbank Phone: 855 4757 [milbank@xtra.co.nz](mailto:milbank@xtra.co.nz)

## Committee news

### New committee member

We welcome Graham Harrison as our groups co-ordinator. Now that lockdown restrictions are easing he will be contacting those who have expressed interest in new or existing groups.

Graham was a school principal in Taranaki for 30 years but he and Frances moved to Hamilton so they could share in the lives of their grandchildren. He keeps busy with

reading, gardening, music, travel, walking groups, Tai Chi and being the speaker coordinator for 60+.

## U3A Hamilton Online learning Blog

During May the following fourteen postings were added to our blog:

- [Urban Ecological Restoration](#)
- [RHS Chelsea Flower Show](#)
- [Music Selection](#)
- [Milford Galleries \(Queenstown\) virtual exhibition, 'Inside and Out'](#)
- [Massey University No Lockdown for the Mind Series](#)
- [Waikato Museum Online Collection](#)
- [Pa Ropata, Rob McGowan, and Rongoā Māori, medicinal properties of native plants](#)
- [Documentary collection](#)
- [Auckland Art Gallery Online Exhibition](#)
- [New Zealand Ukulele Music](#)
- [Huntly Bypass on the Expressway](#)
- [Healthy for Life TV1 Programme](#)
  
- [Crown Lynn](#)
  
- [Auckland Writers' Festival](#)

I hope there is something in this selection for everyone. If not, please let me know what you would like to learn about in a blog posting. Beverley Bell

Of particular interest is the interview on Radio NZ with Rob McGowan who was scheduled to be the speaker for our March meeting which was cancelled.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/teahikaa/audio/2018744814/pa-ropata-on-rongoa-maori>

### U3A Archive

As a member of the U3A Committee, who has been tasked with developing the U3A archives, I have been researching and writing up an account of the beginnings of U3A in Hamilton, which arose out of a series of meetings held at the University between April and June 1995. Key people involved were Evelyn Goldrick who initiated the first meeting, Bruce Hosking who was Director of Continuing Education at the University. Beryle Osmond who was the first president and John Turner who led the first study group on the History of Mathematics and Music. The plan is to write up an account of the development of U3A since that time. Material or memories from that period would be gratefully received.

Gavin Muckle ([gwmuckle@gmail.com](mailto:gwmuckle@gmail.com))

**Special Messages**

As Noeline mentioned in her message we have received a letter from a U3A group in the UK. Here is an excerpt from that letter.

Ferndown is a small town of 20,000 inhabitants located in the county of Dorset, inland from the holiday seaside resort of Bournemouth. It is a favoured retirement area so is a fertile ground for U3A recruitment.

Ferndown U3A has 630 members and we run about 90 Groups as variable as Drama, Languages, Bridge and Table Tennis, to name a few examples.

You can see some of the activities on our website <https://ferndownu3a.co.uk>

We would really like to hear your experiences and how as a U3A you are operating during this unique period.

With best wishes from Ferndown U3A

Would any member like to communicate with them about life in Hamilton, and particularly during this time?

This poem could be written for us today but was written by Kathleen O'Meara in Ireland in 1869 during a famine.

And people stayed at home  
And read books and listened  
And rested and exercised  
And made art and played  
And learned new ways of being  
And were still and listened more  
deeply.  
Someone meditated  
Someone prayed  
Someone danced  
Someone met their own shadow  
And people started thinking  
differently...  
And people healed...

And in the absence of those who lived  
lives in ignorant ways  
Dangerous, mindless, and heartless-  
The earth began to heal.  
And when the danger ended  
And people found themselves-  
They grieved for their dead  
And they made new choices  
And dreamed of new visions  
And created new ways to live  
And heal the earth fully  
-just as they had been healed.