

# U3A southland April 2024

The year is away well. Our AGM reported that we are financially sound with excellent reserves, we have planned courses well ahead and we have upgraded our equipment. As some members indicated that they were not always aware of what was coming up we announced two new initiatives. This newsletter, edited by Des, which will now come out at the start of each term and will give some background on new courses and our new website [u3a.nz/south](http://u3a.nz/south) Chris will forward new information to our webmaster Garry at National U3A.

We have recently had talks which were given by some of our members. This was intended as part of the original u3a scheme. If members are willing to contribute, could they please contact a committee member for one of the one off dates.

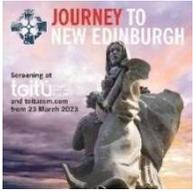
This article was edited out of the February on-line edition and is repeated here for the missed-out readers.

## **The history of U3A.**



U3A began in France in the mid-seventies. Professor Pierre Vellas of Toulouse University recognized the pool of experience, knowledge and intelligence of retired people. Within eight years by 1981 there were 60 branches in France with each one maintaining strong links with a university and members attending lectures. This was the '*French Model*.' Since then, U3A has spread worldwide. They arrived in Auckland in 1989 and there are 90 branches now in the country, mostly espousing the '*English Model*' which promotes increased personal learning, confidence and enjoyment by reading, research, discussions and field trips.

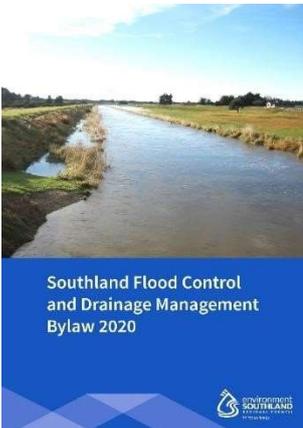
U3A uses the term university in its original sense as a community of those who come together to seek knowledge and to gain a greater understanding of life. This differs from today's more recognized use of the word university which implies set admission standards, lectures, examinations, qualifications and degrees. In New Zealand we use the term permitted by law to do, U3A as the word university cannot be used legally



**.JOURNEY TO NEW EDINBURGH-** There are over 40 fascinating short films on the Otago Settler's Museum web site on Otago /Southland families that you can follow up on Sean Brosnahan's talk. You can also view them at the Museum. They are well worth watching.

## **This term River Management and Flood Mitigation.**

**Commencing May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**



We are fortunate that we have our secretary/ vice chairman Maurice [redacted] as a member of the Southland Environment Council, and he has been able to organise a very informative programme on River Management. The series is starting after the school holidays. It will be about the risk of flooding in Southland, and other long term climate variations that are predicted to occur. Randal and Tanea are senior Environment Southland staff members who can tell us about how we can plan to improve our flood defences. You can make submissions on these plans which close on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

The other two speakers will cover the topics of wholistic river management and how river works can affect river ecosystems. Ian Fuller is a river management scientist from Massey University while Zane Moss is the Chief Executive with Fish and Game New Zealand who will inform us about how river management can have adverse effects on river ecosystems.

## **Wilding Pines- a Pest Par Excellence.**

What started out as a plan for good or as an experiment has ended up as an environmental disaster for Southland.

Wilding pines have been changing our landscapes, our ecosystems and the productivity of our land declares speaker Vannessa, since the 1980s due to the planting of the number of species including contorta, mugo, and Scot pines.



Richard Bowman will place the issue at a national level. The national conifer programme began in 2016 and was a major turning point. Since then, \$137m has been invested in the work and it is starting to make spectacular progress. This funding has been run down and it is no longer possible to continue the progress away from biosecurity disaster.

Such a view is shared by another speaker, Graeme Watson, who believes that the Remarkables, Walter Peak and Skippers will be covered by Wildings in ten years. He works to prevent this with other volunteers.

## **One off special May 31<sup>st</sup>; Scamming and other banking irritations.**