



# The Communication Hub



Whakatāne

Issue 1, 2024



From the President

2024.. Hmm. It looks like it's going to be even more of a tumultuous year than 2023. What with the international horrors of Ukraine, Israel/Gaza, Huthis firing on freighters in the Red Sea, Kim Jong Un firing missiles around the place, China making threatening noises against Taiwan, the prospect of Trump becoming US president - things don't seem to be improving! Closer to home Covid still lurks in its rapidly evolving forms and there are the threats to our coastline from globalwarming - not to mention earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, droughts and other natural disasters!

Politics in NZ looks to be heading into turbulent waters too...Then the on-going rapid ( seems like speeding up) passing of the years heading towards our own individual inevitable demise.. With all this going on it is easy to get depressed!

However, life for most of us is pretty good, albeit with some dangers, that require a little caution! Technology allows us to communicate face to face with loved ones overseas in real time -as well as making it possible to dwell on the depressing aspects of world events in up-to-the-minute technicolor. We have rapid access to amazing libraries of knowledge and solutions to most of the problems we might have. On the other hand there is the presence of a whole fearful new on-line world of "Alternate reality" created by those with vivid imaginations and maybe axes to grind, often stirred by totalitarian regimes with the specific intention of undermining Western democracies and institutions by distorting statistics and facts and sowing distrust and fear. Now Artificial Intelligence is threatening to do everything better than humans!

Internet banking and purchasing by credit card from around the world has opened up all sorts of opportunities for easy transfer of money and purchases, as well as created opportunities for the unscrupulous to find devious ways of depriving us of our hard earned savings!

These are but few of the challenges we all face in the modern era -some things good- some things bad. It all calls us to temper trust with a measures of scepticism and caution, and to exercise a whole dollop of wisdom!

The grey hairs testify to our accumulated wisdom, part of which is to know when to seek help when we get out of our depth; to know when to "bale out" of a risky venture and be prepared to own one's mistakes. Also how and when to have fun!

U3A Whakatane is in good shape and I believe we can look forward to an interesting and enjoyable time in 2024, starting with our AGM on the 20th February.

We have an enthusiastic and capable team in your Committee ( subject to your approval at the AGM !) largely carrying on from 2023. At that meeting we are also required to approve an updated Constitution that aligns with recent Legislation. A copy of what we have prepared was sent out with the Notice of the AGM. Most of it is a direct take from the model constitution provided by the NZ Companies Office, adapted to reflect our practices and needs. It does not look too contentious but there are some relatively minor procedural changes that we will have to attend to.

After the AGM there will be our usual annual "Show and Tell" from the activity groups. Convenors please do your bit to organise an interesting display that describes your group activities and be ready to answer questions and take names.

Please do this even if your group is growing unwieldy- you may be able to help another group form- or consider splitting into two smaller less cumbersome groups.

For the rest of us - take the opportunity to learn what activities are available - and maybe add a few to those you already do!

Let us not entirely ignore the storms around us - but make the most of the many wonderful opportunities still available to us here in the beautiful Eastern Bay of Plenty!

Dave Hall

*Happy 2024*

# Out of Interest

Recently, I came across the wonderful art work of Jane Perkins and with her consent I am able to share the pictures below. Look at them as they are, then enlarge them to see the intricate details of her simply outstanding work.

Jane writes from Devon. 'After 17 years of nursing I enjoyed a career break to raise my children and then took a degree in Textiles, graduating in 2006. I discovered my quirky side. I found excitement in using materials with a history and a love of art with an element of fun and the unexpected.

While researching my degree thesis on Art from Recycled Materials I discovered images of religious festivals' headdresses from Ecuador.

These were so bizarre– decorated with a crazy mixture of random found objects: broken jewellery, shells, dolls, light bulbs, coins etc. I loved them. The headdresses became my inspiration for my final year project– a collection of hand stitched brooches embellished with small found objects.

While making the brooches I collected lots of materials which were too big to be used. One day, about a year later after completing my degree, the idea of making a portrait just came into my head. A new direction was born.

I use any materials of the right size, shape and colour: toys, shells, buttons, plastic cutlery, beads, broken jewellery etc. No colour is added– everything is used 'as found'

After making many portraits, I started creating Plastic Classics followed by a series of animals and birds'



Here is a sampling of Jane's work (in the style of Vermeer, Van Gogh, and Ed Sheeran) I hope you can take time to search the internet to appreciate the scope of this artist's work

Enlarge the pictures and you will see all sorts of recycled materials that most people would put out in their garbage

# U3A- our people

During January we said farewell to our lovely friend and fellow U3A member, Dianne Erskine.

Dianne had been battling with health issues for many years but in spite of that she lived life with courage and made sure each day counted.

Dianne belonged to many interest groups over time including Scrabble, Rummikub, Mahjong, Gardening, A-Z and I believe the cycling group. Dianne led the weekly Petanque group and even took the group to Mt Maunganui on Bastille day one year all decked out in French kit. She was nominated as best dressed !

Dianne was really appreciated by our members, she was friendly and always had a viewpoint worth listening to. She always seemed to light up the room by her presence and had the ability to draw people to her.

We will miss her- her smile, her humour, her tenacity and her innate goodness. Dianne certainly enriched our lives

Our deep heartfelt condolences to Ray, her two sons and daughter.



## Try the A-Z Nut Quiz

Thanks to Alison Bowis

- 1) What is the oldest nut known?
- 2) Are coconuts nuts?
- 3) What nut is actually a stone fruit?
- 4) Which type of nut tree produces pecans?
- 5) Which nut has a toxic shell?
- 6) Which nut has the hardest shell?
- 7) Which nut is poisonous to dogs?
- 8) What two nuts are mentioned in the Bible?
- 9) What is a small nut called?
- 10) Are pistachios nuts?
- 11) A nut that is not a nut but a legume?



Answers on page 6

## February in the Garden with Phyl Voss



- \*Watch for powdery mildew
- \*Cuttings can be taken but keep cool/shaded
- \*Buy new seasons bulbs but plant later
- \*Keep deheading and remove diseased leaves
- \*Encourage roses with deep watering and liquid manure
- \*Check citrus for scale
- \*Remove old strawberry leaves and runners
- \*Keep planting zucchini, beetroot carrots lettuce spinach brassicas
- \*Sow vacant lots with oats, mustard, lupin mix
- \*Dust brassicas with Derris dust
- \*Keep up the watering Heat in February can be brutal

# From our groups

## Looking at Expressions of Interest for an overnight trip to Hamilton Gardens 26/27 March

Sue Williams has researched accommodation and looks like Koromatua Homestead in Whatawhata would suit our needs

The homestead has a variety of accommodation options available

Such a great opportunity but you do need to get in quick to reserve your space

Sue's number is 308 0945



## Norsewood

Tucked away in the Tararua district is the rural settlement of Norsewood—a small community with an amazing history.

In 1872 the Hovding bought around 400 Danes/Norwegians to Napier to clear the land so that road and rail could connect people from Hawkes Bay to Manawatu/Wellington at the request from the NZ Government. They were also promised land at one pound per acre but were led to believe that it was beautiful farmland all ready to go. The land was totally unfit for farming - vast areas had to be cleared which in turn gave rise to many timber mills in the area which later became known as 70 Mile Bush

It took 50 years to clear the land, forest said to be so dense you could not swing an axe. Living in tents, makeshift houses made for a very tough life for these families. It is reported that the woman cried when they arrived and wanted to return home to Scandinavia but that was not possible for them.

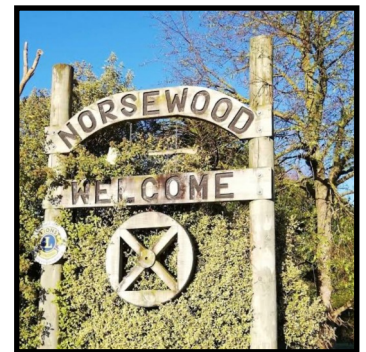
The Norsewood Cemetery is the largest Scandinavian cemetery in the southern hemisphere. Many lives would have been lost while clearing the bush but as well some stayed on in the area and made it their permanent home. However, there were many who moved to other areas once they had enough money to do so.

Norsewood continues to keep their heritage alive by celebrating Norway Day on the Sunday closest to May 17—Norway's Independence day.

As well they celebrate Vikings Day in February so people can learn more about the Vikings.

When you drive through Norsewood, take a break and ponder their history and the brave, resilient Norwegian early settlers.

Look at the rolling country side and remember that once it was dense bush full of amazing native trees



Stave church

## Dates for the Diary

Feb 2	India meets Ireland
Feb 3	U3A Social Croquet
Feb 9	Operatunity
Feb 20	AGM /Show and Tell
Mar 3	U3A Social Croquet



Happy New Year 2024

Just a few remarks as the editor of the Communication Hub Well done, if you have read so far.

Over the holidays, I am sure that you will have done some refreshing things, seen some interesting places, eaten at some wonderful restaurants and maybe even had time to create.

I would really appreciate it if you would consider sharing some of your experiences in the Communication Hub.

It could be a new word that you have learnt , a new recipe you have tried or a book that caught your attention.

Please send any contributions to me at [gaylene.bland@gmail.com](mailto:gaylene.bland@gmail.com)

Just prior to Christmas Kyrill and I went to Waikato Heads and absolutely loved the remoteness and the beauty of Sunset beach and wished we had taken our lunch in order to stay longer.

On the way back we stopped at the cutest reserve which is maintained by four of the locals. The 3 acre area of land was gifted to the district by the Cobourne family in 1983 as a recreational area. The park, on the banks of the Waikato River is a delight, the mature trees give wonderful shade to plenty of picnic tables as well as to the many sheltered coves. A definite place to spend some time.

While there we had time to browse at the Free Book Library and to my joy found some old magazines called 'Daphne's Diary'

This magazine is fabulous ( for ladies) and one that you would read from cover to cover. It started out about 12 years ago in the UK by Daphne who loves journaling, crafts, photography, shopping, chatting, cooking and travel etc

So this magazine is a delightful combo of all things that Daphne loves . It is colourful, informative and really quite inspiring.

So off I went to Paper Plus once back in Whakatane and there was one magazine sitting on the shelf - but not for long! This is my best present to myself. I am inspired by the content and cannot wait until the next one arrives -8 wonderful magazines a year

Thankyou for still reading! I hope you will share some of your joys/finds with the rest of us and we can be inspired and maybe share in a new adventure/activity Gaylene

**ARTS ON TOUR NZ PRESENTS**

**INDIA meets IRELAND**

creative nz  
ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND / TOI AOTIAROA

Following their 2023 sellout concert series **India Meets Ireland's AOTNZ tour** offers a unique fusion of traditional and contemporary Indian and Irish music.

This joyful collaboration features Indian ragas with tabla master **Basant Madhur** and his daughter **Sargam**, and Irish music with internationally acclaimed musician **Jon Sanders** and his daughter **Jenny Os**.

With ragas, reels and more **India Meets Ireland** showcases the musical magic of two cultures and reveals that there is more than a little in common between them!

**Friday 2 February 7pm**

Church of St John and St George, Whakatane  
Adults \$30, Students \$5. Book at The Good Life or online: [www.artswakatane.co.nz](http://www.artswakatane.co.nz)



# U3A – for your information

## Your Committee

Dave Hall	President
Mob 022 126 0070	
Carol Friend	Vice President
Jill Steele	Secretary
Mob 0210 823 3772	
Allen Teirney	Treasurer
Christine Simpson	Assist Treasurer
Mob 027 833 1497	
Dianne Gates	Interest groups /
registrations	Mob 022 422 7934
Noreen Shannon	Almoner
Glenn Baker	
Pat Doran	
Sue Robertson	
Mob 027 603 0889	
Sue Smith	
Gaylene Bland	Communication Hub

Committee meets 1st Tuesday of the month  
1:30pm

To contact members of the committee you  
can use this email address  
whakataneu3a2@gmail.com

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter  
please email gaylene.bland@gmail.com or  
Ph 308 9909

## AGM February 20th

followed by

### 'Show and Tell'

**This is a great time to bring along  
your friends so they can see what  
U3A is all about**

**The convenors will be showcasing  
their group activities and this is  
your chance to sign up to  
something new for 2024**

**Want to go away on a holiday but worried  
about security for your house? Or pets?**

**Ruth Ennatra, a retired German school  
teacher is available to house sit for you  
Mob 022 369 2018 to check availability.**

## U3A Social Croquet First Sat each Month

Commencing  
Saturday **Feb 3. 9.30am**



Wear flat shoes, everything else provided.  
Tea/coffee included. Only \$5

Ring Mike on 0274 934982 so that they can  
have staff present to assist players

## Answers to the Nut Quizz

1)Walnut, 2)No, Coconuts are fruit,  
3)Almond, 4)Hickory, 5)Cashew,  
6)Macadamia, 7)Macadamia,  
8) Almonds and Pistachios,  
9)Nutlet, 10) No, they are the seeds of  
a grape like fruit, 11) peanuts



**Hurkle durkle**—to lay around in bed long after you  
should have got up Hope that new word made you smile!