

Taradale U3A Newsletter

April 2022



PAST - PRESIDENT PETER'S PONDERINGS:

Hello again everyone! It seems that our uncertain Covid times are now a little more relaxed and that being face-to-face with friends and neighbours does not require as much planning as it has in recent times. Come along to our meeting next Wednesday and mingle with fellow U3A members! The business part of the meeting should not take too long and our speaker, **Tony Smith**, will enlighten all on a very interesting topic – see below!



PS – it's probably a good idea if you bring your masks.....

Special General Meeting

Wednesday 4 May, Taradale Town Hall, 10am.

This meeting has been called to enable members to vote for nominees for the position of President of Taradale U3A. You will recall that no nominations had been received at the AGM and that, under the constitution, a special meeting needs to be held should a nominee for the position be found. Keith Rowe has accepted nomination and the formalities can now be completed.

Once those formalities are over our speaker, Tony Smith, will let you all know about

“ Some of the Science and Engineering Regarding Earthquakes and Buildings ”

This will be followed by the usual cuppa and conversation!

The hall will be open at 9.30 for a 10am start.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Profile: Keith Rowe

Keith will be away from Napier and unable to attend the meeting on Wednesday so a brief biography follows

Keith Rowe, who has been proposed as the next President of *Taradale U3A*, is a retired Protestant Christian Minister who, with his wife Kathleen, moved to Hawkes Bay in 2016.

He began his working life as a secondary school teacher of history, geography and biology. Following theological education, he was ordained by the *Methodist Church of New Zealand* and served as a parish minister, teacher and educator for 30 years. He was Principal of *Trinity Methodist Theological College* and lecturer within *St John's College*, Auckland. He was President of the *Methodist Church of New Zealand* in 1993 when he played a leading role in the *Church Leaders' Social Justice Initiative* in that election year. As a younger man he represented the Stratford Borough on the *Taranaki Hospital Board*. He and Kathleen (a secondary school teacher) retired after a period in Sydney where Keith was a parish minister in the *Uniting Church in Australia*, first in an inner-city parish where support of gay people was a significant focus and then engaged in ministry with Tongan migrants. During these years he was deeply involved in building dialogue and understanding between Muslim and Christian groups. Within church circles Keith identifies with the 'Progressive' or 'Liberal' stream in belief and practice.

Since retirement, Keith has continued to follow interests that shaped his working life. He wrote a couple of books, one on interfaith issues (*Friendship in the presence of difference*), the other a history of an Auckland church. He enjoys membership of a Havelock North environmental group and rarely misses meetings of the *Hawkes Bay International Affairs* group. He has been President of the *Howick Historical Society and Historical Village*; Co-President of the Auckland-based *Council for Christians and Muslims*; developed a specific programme, '*Pilgrimage into our neighbour's world*', for building friendship and understanding between followers of differing religious traditions. He continues to read, write and speak of the nature of life within an evolving universe and in an age shaped by amazing scientific and technological discovery but sadly divided by race, culture, wealth and privilege. In retirement he is sometimes called upon to lead worship and to preach in congregations without a current Minister.

Within *Taradale U3A*, Keith is convenor of the *Contentious Issues* group and is a member of one of the *History* groups. He's a relative newcomer to the *U3A* and is impressed by the whole idea of cherishing accumulated wisdom, continuing to learn, and opportunities for friendship and mutual support. He finds increasing age to be a most interesting experience – pretty much as it's described in the textbooks but punctuated with all manner of surprises and challenges. He wonders and worries about the collective political and social willingness of the human family to face the great challenges of coming decades – climate change, environmental destruction, the gap between rich and poor, international instability, the possibilities and perils of artificial intelligence. He is convinced that in such a time those who have lived longest have needed wisdom and experience to contribute to society, supplementing more recent and unfolding knowledge brought by others.

Groups:

How does your garden grow?

Christine Smith would be happy to get a discussion going about the possibility of starting a gardening group but, although she is happy to initiate the idea, she would prefer someone else to act as Convenor.

If you are interested, please contact her at chrismsmith999@gmail.com or on **834 1300**



Book Group

The Book Group has resumed our regular meetings. Our numbers are a little depleted, owing to Covid cautions and other things. We continue to report on a wide variety of books which we have read, some of which generate interesting discussion. We currently have one vacancy.

Book review: A STREET CAT NAMED BOB By James Bowen. Non-fiction

Bowen was a recovering drug addict, busking for a living and residing on the 5th floor of sheltered accommodation. He found this injured stray cat on the ground floor one evening, fed it and spent money having it treated. So the cat adopted him. He named the cat Bob after a character on television. When James was going busking the cat insisted on going with him, except when it was raining. On the busy streets in Central London Bob rode on James' shoulder and became something of a tourist attraction. James tells several stories of his life with Bob which appears to be an exceptionally intelligent cat. The story was subsequently filmed for television.

James has written a second book "The World According to Bob". This relates more stories about Bob and their life. James is now clean of drugs and, with the success of the first book, is more financially secure.

Both books are an entertaining light read and are available in the Taradale Library.

Vic Chick - Convenor

Learning Mandarin

I wonder if there is anyone else interested in forming a group with the aim of learning Mandarin. Like any language learning it is best done daily, and nowadays there are on-line resources that are designed to support you in this. I would suggest that each of us sign up to one of these systems. However, it could be a great help to meet once a month with other people who are working on the same objective, to provide support and share progress. From time to time we could also invite a native speaker to join a session.

A number of years ago I spent a few months studying Mandarin, and then lived in China for a year. During that time I was working in an English language context, but I did keep working on the language, so I do have some basic knowledge that I can offer to help others to get started. However, I am certainly not able to teach anyone else the language.

If you are interested please contact me at tontine.smith@gmail.com

Tony Smith

Conversational French

We meet on Friday mornings from 1000 to 1100 when participants of varying levels attempt to relate what they have been doing during the previous week before taking it in turns to choose a subject, provide some documentation to read and translate, usually triggering some conversation/discussion. We have space for two or three new members and the accent is on having fun talking everyday French rather than being perfectionists. And, yes, we sometimes lapse into English!

Convenor: **Franki James**

frankijbj@gmail.com or 06 843 59 26

... a few laughs from???

A Penny for your Thoughts

A young Scottish couple sat on a low stone wall, holding hands, gazing out over the loch. For several minutes they sat in silence.

Finally, the lass looked at the lad and said, "A penny for your thoughts, Angus."

"Well, uh, I was thinkin'... perhaps it's about time for a wee kiss."

The lass blushed, then leaned over and kissed him lightly on the cheek.

He blushed.

The two turned to gaze out over the loch again.

Time passed and the lass spoke again, "Another penny for your thoughts, Angus."

"Well, uh, I was thinkin' perhaps it's about time for a wee cuddle."

The lass blushed, then leaned over and cuddled him for a few seconds.

He blushed again.

Once again, the two turned to gaze out over the loch.

After a while, she again said, "Another penny for your thoughts, Angus."

"Well, uh, I was thinkin' perhaps it's about time you let me put my hand on your knee."

The lass blushed, then took his hand and put it on her knee.

He blushed yet again.

The two turned once more to gaze out over the loch before the lass spoke again.

"Another penny for your thoughts, Angus."

The young man glanced down with a furled brow.

"Well, noo," he said, "my thoughts are a wee bit more serious this time."

"Really?" said the lass in a whisper, filled with anticipation.

"Aye," said the lad, nodding.

The lass looked away, overcome with emotion and began to blush, biting her lip in anticipation of the ultimate request.

Then he said, "Dae ye nae think it's about time ye paid me the first three pennies?"

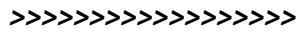
(are we beginning to have a Scottish influence here?)

And then from.....?

I accidentally swallowed some Scrabble tiles and now I am experiencing constant vowel movements. The next trip to the bathroom could spell disaster!

Old age comes at a bad time! When you finally know everything, you start to forget everything you know!

And stating the obvious??



Thank you once again, Chris Geddis!



From the Committee....

Spread the Word!

We are looking for ways and means of promoting *Taradale U3A* and increasing our membership. Word of mouth is usually the most effective form of advertising. Committee members will have leaflets and posters to distribute if you happen to have any suggestions for placement of these or if you would like to help distribute them.

Ideas for New Groups

If members have any ideas for new groups, please do not hesitate to suggest them to one of the Committee – even if you yourself don't feel up to being the Convenor. After all, someone else might also be interested in embroidery, quilting, mosaics, learning a new language, doing yoga or whatever!

Fancy an Outing?

Your Committee is considering expanding the U3A's activities to include outings that will either be free of cost or subsidised for financial members. Do you have any requests or ideas for this eventuality? For example, in October, a possible trip to ***Cape Kidnappers Sanctuary*** - one of New Zealand's largest privately-owned and managed wildlife sanctuaries - which is right on our own doorstep!

Outstanding Subs

Thanks to members who took up the \$5 discount offer and paid their subs by the end of February this year. Unfortunately, there are still many unpaid subscriptions for 2022. The preference is for members to pay their dues of \$15 into the U3A bank account number **03 0631 0175173 00**, either on-line or at a bank. Please ensure that you include your name. If you are having any difficulty in paying your subs or if you

have any queries concerning this, please talk to your Convenor or contact Christine Smith who remains our Treasurer.

Chrismsmith999@gmail.com or on **834 1300**

Update of Personal Details

Any change of address, phone number or email address should be given to **Janet Turvey**, our new Registrar, at janet.turvey51@gmail.com or on **027 367 9120**

Almoner

Our thanks to **Jenny Pyatt** who has done an excellent job in the past.

Please contact our new Almoner, **Erin Mahony**, at etmahony@gmail.com or on **027 244 3450** if you know of any member you would like a card sent to on behalf of the U3A in case of illness or bereavement.

U3a Committee 2022			
Peter Green	Past President	pandagreen@xtra.co.nz	027 4795403
Margaret Butterfield	Secretary	margaretb@xtra.co.nz	835 3788
Christine Smith	Treasurer	chrismsmith999@gmail.com	
Erin Mahony	Almoner	etmahony@gmail.com	844 3833
Janet Turvey	Registrar	janet.turvey51@gmail.com	027 3679120
Jeanette Elgie	Convenor Coordinator	jeaj2010@hotmail.com	8444537/ 0272217919
Keith Rowe		kkrowe@xtra.co.nz	021 2585298
Geoff Tilyard		gbtilyard@gmail.com	028 09013
Yvonne Huckson		yhuckson@gmail.com	843 9911

...and now a little info on Ukraine

What's so special about Ukraine and why it matters (data source unverified)

How the nation of Ukraine ranks

- 1st in Europe in proven recoverable reserves of uranium ores
- 2nd place in Europe and 10th place in the world in terms of titanium ore reserves
- 2nd place in the world in terms of explored reserves of manganese ores (2.3 billion tons or 12% of the world's reserves)
- 2nd largest iron ore reserves in the world (30 billion tons)
- 2nd place in Europe in terms of mercury ore reserves
- 3rd place in Europe (13th place in the world in shale gas reserves (22 trillion cubic meters)
- 4th in the world by the total value of natural resources
- 7th place in the world in coal reserves (33.9 billion tons)

Ukraine is an agricultural country

- 1st in Europe in terms of arable land area
- 3rd place in the world by the area of black soil (25% of world's volume)
- 1st place in the world in exports of sunflower and sunflower oil
- 2nd place in the world in barley production and 4th place in barley exports
- 3rd largest producer and 4th largest exporter of corn in the world
- 4th largest producer of potatoes in the world
- 5th largest rye producer in the world
- 5th place in the world in bee production (75,000 tons)
- 8th place in the world in wheat exports
- 9th place in the world in the production of chicken eggs
- 16th place in the world in cheese exports

So, Ukraine can meet the food needs of 600 million people

Ukraine is an Industrial Country

- 1st in Europe in ammonia production
- 2nd in Europe and 4th largest natural gas pipeline system in the world (142.5 billion cubic meters) of gas throughput capacity
- 3rd largest in Europe and 8th largest in the world in terms of installed capacity of nuclear power plants
- 3rd place in Europe and 11th in the world in terms of rail network length (21,700 km)
- 3rd place in the world (after the U.S. and France) in production of locators and locating equipment
- 3rd largest iron exporter in the world
- 4th largest exporter of turbines for nuclear power plants in the world
- 4th world's largest manufacturer of rocket launchers
- 4th place in the world in clay exports
- 4th place in the world in titanium exports
- 8th place in the world in exports of ores and concentrates
- 9th place in the world in exports of defence industry products
- 10th largest steel producer in the world (32.4 million tons)

All of which perhaps shows why Putin is so keen to get his hands on the Ukraine!