



# Marlborough U3A

Marlborough University of the Third Age

## Newsletter

### February–April

### 2020

# Meeting Arrangements



Monthly Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the Month  
at 2.00pm  
in the Salvation Army Citadel, cnr George & Henry Streets

## Speakers

February 10	Adrian Borrie - Buying a PC
March 9	Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley
April 13	Brad Molony - Parks & Reserves, MDC
May 11	To be advised

## Individual Presentations

February 10	Lindsay Moir - Current Issues
March 9	Charles Riley - Photography
April 13	tba
May 11	tba

## Afternoon Tea Roster

February 10	Poetry Appreciation
March 9	Play Reading 1
April 13	Play Reading 2
May 11	Scrabble

## Committee

President	Gwyneth Lowe	578 8878
Vice President/Editor	Helen Hannay	578 1574
Secretary	Rhondda Tannock	579 4916
Treasurer	Angus Welsh	577 9114
Committee	Sandra Bird	578 2152
	Jacqui Buttle	579 4821
	Lyn Coates	578 5273
Speakers	Max Currie	572 4448
Groups Co-ordinator	Ann Moore	927 3754

Honours Board - Life Members  
Doug Stafford, Jacqui Buttle, Charles Riley, Elizabeth Kerr,  
Ann MacDonald, Murray MacDonald.

# Thoughts from our President

## *Kia ora Welcome to U3A 2020*

A new decade - a new outlook perhaps? Remember as a child the feeling that 2020 was a mythical future time - something to fantasise about - well it is here!

With volcanic disaster, fiery infernos and the ongoing political dramas around the world it is a joy to escape to the great outdoors and participate in activities that restore one's outlook on life. My favourite place is the garden.



After some months of benign neglect last year the garden leapt into life and is giving great joy and satisfaction as the seasons progress (have we made it to summer yet?) - both with flowers, vegetables and fruit but also a wild area which has been left to grow and bloom and provide a natural environment for bees, birds, butterflies and bunnies.

It has been great fun trying something new and I would urge U3A members to perhaps have a go at something different this year - how about joining a different group or setting up a new one? It is always interesting to spend time with fellow members in smaller gatherings and this can bring new ideas and friendships.

This year there are new groups forming with fresh topics and some old favourites are being re-visited so do take advantage of these opportunities to bring new experiences to your lives.

New year, new decade, new outlook! Have fun.

*Cheers*

*Gwyneth*



**PS - it would be wonderful if a few members could assist with setting up and putting away equipment at our monthly meetings - please speak to me if you can help.**

## Marlborough U3A Website

The question has been asked if the committee have looked into upgrading the Marlborough U3A web site for our members. This type of question inevitably leads onto a further number of questions which require explanation and resolution. The short answer is “Yes”, we did look into it and resolved to leave matters as they are at the moment, bearing in mind the principal questions are answered both in the newsletter and on the U3A NZ website, ie:

- There is a U3A in Marlborough that meets in Blenheim
- It meets at 2 pm on the second Monday of the month
- The place of the meeting being the Salvation Army Citadel
- The name of our President and contact details

While reviewing the web site a number of other U3A web sites were logged onto, starting with our neighbours in Nelson who have a most comprehensive site. It is well worth the time and effort to investigate what they and others have availed themselves of. There is very little that isn't disclosed about themselves and some went onto post minutes and photographs which raises legal matters in a changing legislative world of privacy and permission to publish.

Over-riding all this is the longevity of those with the ability to keep a web site updated and at what cost to that person and to our members.

For our annual sub of \$10 it is considered that we are well served by our monthly meetings and the 30 plus break-out groups we have, in which members can get to know one another better, enjoy good company and last but not least to continue to expand their knowledge.

It was also felt that the continuation of our newsletter sufficiently advises our members and prospective members of our officers, programmes, groups and contact persons, bearing in mind that 1 in 5 of our members are not on line.

The discussion is not closed but perhaps shelved for the moment. We welcome comments to the Treasurer, [anguswelsh73@gmail.com](mailto:anguswelsh73@gmail.com) who will investigate and keep the matter reviewed on behalf of the committee.

## U3A Websites

**Members may find the following websites of interest in furthering their knowledge and studies.**

### **U3A New Zealand website: [www.u3a.nz](http://www.u3a.nz)**

There are currently 83 U3As in NZ which can be found listed on the New Zealand U3A website.

**U3A Online** is an Australian-based virtual U3A that makes courses available to U3A groups and to individuals. The courses have been developed by Griffiths University. Individuals can join for A\$25 pa for any number of courses or U3A groups can join for A\$15 pa plus A\$20 for each course run each year. The courses are delivered by course notes that are downloaded.

**<http://u3aonline.org.au/>**

**U3A Network Canterbury Education** provides information about Educational Resources for Independent and Small Group Learning. More information about the following providers is available on their website: **<https://www.u3anetcant.nz/educationp.html>**

- **<http://www.coursera.org/>**
- **<http://www.edx.org/>**
- **<http://www.futurelearn.com/>**
- **<http://ocw.mit.edu>**
- **<https://www.udacity.com/>**

**The Royal Society of New Zealand** runs public lectures. Many can be viewed on their website at: **<http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/events/viewing-room/>**

Or they can be viewed in high quality on their vimeo site at: **<http://vimeo.com/channels/royalsocietynz>**

**open.michigan** is a University of Michigan initiative that enables faculty, students, and others to share their educational resources and research with the global learning community. **<http://open.umich.edu/>**

**OpenLearn** is UK's Open University educational website. It has a range of courses, games and other activities. **<http://www.open.edu/openlearn/>**

**Stanford online** provide their courses using the edX platform. **<https://class.stanford.edu/>**

**U3A UK** provides a list of several UK resources **<http://www.u3a.org.uk/useful-weblinks/92-educational-weblinks.html>**

# Course Coordinator's Annual Report

## *Greetings Members*

There are two courses ready to start as soon as possible this year. They are "Great Tours – England, Scotland, Wales", and "Great Ideas of Philosophy". A pleasing number of people signed up to these but some will probably have to withdraw if the day and time does not suit so I will put the sign-on forms out again at the next meeting (Feb10).

It is very important, when new courses are ready to start, that someone offers to convene the course – not an onerous task as almost everyone has email these days. Also, the group has to decide where the presentations can take place

For the two Great Courses a reasonable sized TV and a video player are required. Of course each meeting does not have to be in the same house – sharing this task is a good idea.

Unfortunately only one person has signed up to the Calligraphy course which is a shame as our tutor, Shirley O'Connor, is willing to help attendees learn how to write beautifully and produce decorative handwriting and lettering which will be artistic and personally satisfying. Hopefully more people will sign up at the February meeting.

The Classical Music group is dwindling and it would be good if another couple of people who love this art form joined the group. Guaranteed to bring pleasure!

## *Ann Moore, Courses*

### *Coordinator*

[anncm09@gmail.com](mailto:anncm09@gmail.com)



# Small Group Study Resources

U3A Marlborough has the following resources for our small groups. The DVD courses are usually seen as a series of lectures which can engender much discussion among members. Some are currently being used but others are available for new groups to start up. If you are interested in any please let our Course Coordinator, Ann Moore, know.

- 102 Classical Music DVDs
- European Art History
- Continents on the Move
- Foundations of Eastern Civilization
- Everyday Engineering
- Geological Wonders
- Masterpieces of the Imaginative Mind
- Masterworks of Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature
- Maya to Aztec: Ancient Mesoamerica Revealed
- My Favourite Universe
- Renaissance Italy
- The American Civil War
- The Great ideas of Philosophy
- The Great Tours - From Athens to Istanbul
- The Great Tours – England, Scotland, Wales
- The Iliad – Homer
- The Odyssey of Homer
- The Shakespeare Collection
- Understanding Genetics
- Voyage of Charles Darwin



## What U3A Means to Me

*In this issue of our U3A Marlborough newsletter members have been selected at random and asked to express in a few words what being a member means to them. I hope you enjoy their comments, and that you might think about what U3A membership means to you, and what you can do to contribute to the life of our wonderful organisation.*

**Max says** “To be of use is surely one of the few untaxed pleasures in life. I like the opportunities provided by U3A to contribute to and participate in its programmes. I know the benefits that accrue from life-long learning; I know that by making a commitment to a little structure aids that process. That in turn is supported by the many friendships that have grown as I have become more involved. To state it briefly, U3A gives me more strings to my bow and that gives me pleasure.”

**Murray commented** “We had heard quite a bit about U3A from our fairly near (rural) neighbours, Gavin and Elizabeth Kerr, so when we moved to a smaller property nearer town, joining seemed the obvious thing to do.

Since joining U3A in 2006 I have found that there is never a shortage of activities available to get involved with. In fact my "problem" is to decide what groups I won't join. I could easily attend an interest group morning and afternoon each day of the week, and there are always fascinating topics for new groups coming on stream. At present I convene two groups, which is a pretty easy job, and I'd recommend it to all of you. Our organisation cannot function without members helping in different ways to run it. Stimulation of our grey matter is one of the main aims of U3A, and there are plenty of opportunities for that, and meeting up with like-minded people.”

**Paula's thoughts:** “For some 30 years I had been a member of two organizations focused on fundraising and service. I had taken office at every level even to an International committee. I was then introduced to Probus and served as Secretary and President. Then along came U3A. No fundraising and lots of variety in areas of continued learning - Yeah!



## What U3A Means to Me

I can't remember when exactly when I joined but I know it is well over 10 years ago. I have been for all that time in "Wine Appreciation", "Armchair Travel" and "Current Issues" and learned so much. "Classic Films" also has been a sheer delight - hosted by Ann and Murray MacDonald. The "Famous and Infamous" group with the late Joan Bottom at the helm was certainly memorable.

I convened a group named "Antiques and Collectables" which ran for 35 most interesting sessions. I have also attended several short courses - the most memorable being "Forensic Science". The book swap I suggested really took off. Thank you to the members who set it up at every general meeting. It is certainly well used.

Amazing presidents and committee members and news letter publisher all go to make this a very successful organisation. I feel privileged to belong."

*And finally, Helen writes, "For me, I think joining U3A, when I had reduced my working hours to part time, was one of the best things I could have done. Meeting so many interesting people, making new friends, and being able to take part in so many interesting courses has been a real highlight of my retirement years and has provided me with some welcome short breaks from time spent caring for an unwell husband.*

I have also learnt (and am still learning) a new skill (water colour painting) - thanks to a great tutor; discovered some wonderful gardens and met some amazing gardeners; learnt some more about our Marlborough history; and taken part in a range of studies looking at world history and art. Taking part in the Armchair Travel group has enabled me to add to my own personal travel memories through others' journeys and photos. All great for the old "grey matter"!

One of the best parts of joining U3A and taking part in our small groups is the joy of meeting new friends and enjoying shared interests. A lifetime of learning is a wonderful thing and how lucky we are to have these opportunities!"

# Group Reports and Updates

## **Shakespeare Group**

This group has been going for a little over 2 years and in that time has viewed 25 of the Bard's plays together with a series of lectures on them by a noted Shakespeare expert, Peter Saccio of Dartmouth College in the USA.

The course is based around a Great Courses lecture series, covering 12 of Shakespeare's plays, 4 each in the categories of Histories, Tragedies and Comedies.

It soon became apparent that to get the best use from the lectures we needed to watch the play itself beforehand, this was invariably very enlightening and made the play of the day become much more meaningful. It did mean we had to source the plays on DVD ourselves, which we achieved by accessing DVD's owned by members or from the library.

Once the initial plays were completed it was decided to keep going and through the help of Sandra Parker (librarian at the Blenheim Library), who has all of Shakespeare's plays in DVD form and generously lent them to us, we did just that. A bonus was that Sandra had another series of lectures by Peter Saccio which fitted in with the plays selected to watch.

While the lecture element of our activities has come to an end our intention is to ask members to do some research on each play we watch in the future and share such information with the group once the play of the day has been viewed.

The plays have been viewed in three venues by rotation with great attendances, sometimes a bit of a squeeze but we have coped with that really well. We adjusted our start time to 1.30pm as many of the plays are quite long and with the added lecture a finish at 5.30 was not unusual however most members usually stayed on as on most occasions the lecture was a real insight into the plot and what Shakespeare was trying to convey.

While many of the plays are most complex and it is difficult on occasion to work out who is who, despite circulating a synopsis of

# Groups Reports and Updates

the play beforehand, what shines through is even after over 400 years the language and word pictures used are still as fresh as ever.

The man was a genius!

**Convener: Charles Riley**

## **Everyday Engineering**

This 36 lecture series is drawing to a close and is another excellent DVD course sourced from the Great Courses and now owned by Marlborough U3A for hopefully repeat use as time goes on.

The course is wide ranging and provides examples and explanations of how engineering principals impact on all facets of our daily lives. Just to name a few: House Construction, Water Management - supply and waste, Electricity Provision, Cell Phone, Your Car and Traffic Management.

The lecturer is very knowledgeable and presents the lecture's topic in an understandable way, with working examples, on just how engineering supports everything we do.

The group viewed 3 lectures at a time which worked well especially if the topic had been a bit complicated. We did struggle with the technology surrounding just how a cell phone network works and were more focused on picking one up and pushing a few buttons!

It is strongly recommended that the course is repeated on a reasonably regular basis as it should have wide appeal to members.

**Convener: Charles Riley**

## **The Great Tours - Greece and Turkey, from Athens to Istanbul**

Our small group of seven members is now up to lectures 9 and 10 of this series, having started in September last year with a short break over Christmas. This series has a total of 24 lectures and we see and listen to two each month.

Professor John R Hale, Director of Liberal Studies, University of Louisville, is leading us on our travels through the history of Western

## Groups Reports and Updates

civilization, but in such a way that it is like being there with our very own tour guide.

We are exploring some of the great cities and also some of the lesser known sites and enjoying it so much there is even talk of going to visit these places ourselves! (Talk only at this stage of course!) Buildings and statues are recreated (courtesy modern technology) as we go along, with instructions as to which path to take to best explore each place (almost as if we are there in person). Greek mythology also plays its part and we learn of the heroes of yesteryear and see the landscapes they lived in.

A most enjoyable course which we are thoroughly enjoying. Members are taking turns to provide morning tea nibbles and Barbara is sending out our reminder emails.

**Convener: Helen Hannay**

### **History Group**

The History Group continues to meet monthly and has recently been discussing various aspects of New Zealand history, in particular the growth of settlements and the impact on the development of New Zealand as it has progressed.

Planning the direction of our discussion subjects has also been on the agenda and we look forward to another interesting year.

It is a happy and united group and we have no vacancies at present.

**Conveners: Elizabeth Saville Smith & Margaret Fairhall**

### **Annual Subscriptions**

**Please note that you must be a financial member of U3A Marlborough to take part in our interest groups. Your annual subscription fee is only \$10. If you have forgotten to renew your membership we ask that you make your payment to the Treasurer as soon as possible please.**

## Interest Groups and Contacts

Please get in touch with the listed Group Contact Person if you are interested in joining any of the following groups - they will advise you of any vacancies.

**Acapella Group:** Every Thursday at 9.30am.  
**Contact** is Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.

**Armchair Travel:** 4th Friday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Gavin Bayliss, 573 6565.

**Athens to Istanbul:** 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Helen Hannay, 578 1574.

**Books and Authors Group 1:** 2nd Thursday of each month.  
**Contact** is Jackie Hall, 579 3355.

**Book and Authors Group 2:** 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Wendy Cass, 578 9144. **Vacancies**

**Card Making:** 1st Thursday of the month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Gloria Mitchell, 577 7833.

**Classic Films Group 1:** 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 2.00pm. **Contact** is Bruce Dale, 578 9672.

**Classic Films Group 2:** 3rd Thursday of each month at 1.30pm.  
**Contact** is Murray MacDonald, 579 4844. **Vacancies**

**Current Issues:** 1st Tuesday of each month at 9.45am.  
**Contact** is Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.

**Documentary Films:** 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.

**European Art History:** 3rd Monday of each month at 2.00pm.  
**Contact** is Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.

## Interest Groups and Contacts

**Everyday Engineering:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 2pm.  
**Contact** is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

**Garden Group:** 1st Friday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contacts** are Evelyn Simmons, 579 1934.

**Geological Wonders:** 4th Tuesday afternoon of each month.  
**Contact** is Jan Hannay, 578 2737.

**History:** 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.  
**Contact** is Elizabeth Saville-Smith, 579 1731.

**Life Writing:** 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.  
**Contact** is Lois Henderson, 578 1904.

**Luncheon Plus:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 11.30am.  
**Contact** is Rhondda Tannock, 579 4916.

**Mah-jong Group:** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 2.00pm.  
**Contact** is Evan Wood, 578 2093, [evin42@hotmail.com](mailto:evin42@hotmail.com)

**Marlborough History:** 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Ann Morgan, 578 8861

**Memory Lane Music:** Last Thursday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is John Best, 578 0595

**Music Group:** 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.30pm.  
**Contact** is Ray Waters, 578 4268. **Vacancies**

**Play Reading Group 1:** 4th Monday of each month at 9.30am.  
**Contact** is Margaret Jarman, 578 8805.

**Play Reading Group 2:** 4th Tuesday of each month at 9.30am.  
**Contact** is Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.

**Poetry Appreciation:** 2nd Friday of each month at 2.00pm.  
**Contact** is June Bowen, 577 9035.

## Interest Groups and Contacts

**Photography:** 1st Monday of each month at 1.30pm.  
**Contact** is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

**Science of Natural Healing:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Ann Moore, 927 3754.

**Scrabble:** 1st Monday of each month at 2.00pm.  
**Contact** is Pam Taylor, 578 8816.

**Shakespeare:** 3rd Thursday of each month at 2.00pm.  
**Contact** is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

**Ukulele:** 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 10.00am.  
**Contact** is Lois Henderson, 578 1904.

**Water Colour Painting:** 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 9.30am.  
**Contact** is Gavin Kerr, 572 7238.

**Wine Appreciation 1:** 3rd Friday of the month, usually at 11am.  
**Contact** is Murray MacDonald, 579 4844. **Vacancies**

**Wine Appreciation 2:** Last Friday of each month at 11.30am.  
**Contact** is Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.

**Writing for Grandchildren:** 1st and 3rd Mondays at 9.45am.  
**Contact** is Gladys Sloss, 578 3191.

**From our Constitution:** “Each study group is expected to report back from time to time to regular meetings of U3A members. Such reports will help all members to be aware not only of progress made in the group but also of advantages and disadvantages that may have been encountered in operating the focus group.”

*Many thanks to the groups who do this regularly.*

**Return Address:**

8a Purkiss Street  
Springlands  
Blenheim 7201

