

Marlborough U3A

Newsletter No 2: May 2023

Marlborough U3A is an Incorporated society affiliated with, but independent of, U3A NZ. It is managed by an elected committee.

Committee

President	Helen Hannay	578 1574
Vice President	Jackie Hall	579 3355
Secretary	Paul Stanley	021 663 518
Treasurer	Angus Welsh	577 9114
Course Coordinator	Ann Moore	927 3754
Catering	Marilyn Cowe	022 648 8692
Publicity	Ann Turnbull	578 4200
Speakers	Ann Anderson	579 4955

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Monthly Meetings

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, except January, at 2 PM. The Venue is Cloudy Bay Funeral Services, 15 Boyce St, Blenheim.

Date	Speaker	Afternoon Tea
14 May	Lee Harper - Omaka Observatory Trust	Celtic Group
11 June	Kelvin Watt – Dingle Foundation	Classic Films 1&2
10 July	Sarah Mclees – M. C. Development.	Current Issues
14 Aug	Civil Defence spokesperson	Doc Films

As of now, only financial members of the society are receiving the newsletter – the recent drive for subscriptions proved very effective in getting members paid-up. Some people proved over-enthusiastic and have paid twice for this financial year! Their over-payments will be credited to next year's subs, and those member will be individually informed when the subs become due again - after the AGM

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From the Editor

While I am reminding you our newsletters are published quarterly (February, May, August, November) there are items that sometimes need to be shared with this community - outside the publication times. This is when our secretary Paul can use his platform to keep you informed. Hence the information you received re the 'Barbie Bill'.

Paul's excellent accounts of our monthly meetings go out to members shortly after the meeting, such is his efficiency. Therefore you will not see these accounts in this kind of newsletter either.

Do you realise the calibre of the members who serve you on the U3A committee? Each person plays a role and we have another intake of excellent committee volunteers, very dedicated to serve the needs of this organisation here. It is such a pleasure to belong in such a group, and as time goes by, there will be people replacing members who will also be able to savour this very worthwhile community role.

Again, thank you to all the members who so willingly take their turn serving fellow members at afternoon tea. We have an excellent venue for this, and it is most appreciated that people are so cheery in this work, willing to 'give back'. The biscuit variety is much improved and we are always working to make things run as smoothly as possible in order to serve you best.

Jackie Hall

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings Fellow Members

As I write this the rain is coming down nicely to provide a much needed drink for my garden – although the temperature has dropped considerably since yesterday and I've had to dig out my warmer clothes again! Our weather continues to provide us with a bit of a challenge – hot one day, winter-like the next, not enough rain to keep the garden growing, but enough to keep the lawn growing! And I don't know why dandelions have to send up flower stalks the day after I have mowed them down! Perhaps I need to have a weed-free lawn after all, or have a pet animal or bird that likes consuming weeds, not just bugs and beetles.

May I say how wonderful it is to see so many of you at our monthly meetings and to welcome our newest members and guests. We have had some most interesting speakers address us – I think they provide us with a real insight as to what is happening in our community and the great work so many organisations are doing. Where would we be without these people, both paid staff and volunteers? I also enjoy hearing about the different aspects of people's lives, the adventures they have experienced and the sights they have seen – all so very inspiring.

We were able to take part in the recent Seniors Expo which was voted a great success. We had many enquiries from folks keen to find out what we do and several new members join us. So often people ask, "What is U3A?" and it was a great opportunity to share what we have to offer with them.

Your committee is working hard at keeping our meetings interesting and all are doing a splendid job in their individual roles. Please don't hesitate to speak to any one of us if you have any suggestions regarding interest groups or potential speakers, either for the before afternoon tea period or as our main speaker. Ann Anderson already has a very interesting line up of speakers but I'm sure she would welcome your thoughts.

We are planning on asking a representative from each of our interest groups to give a short verbal report of their activities at upcoming meetings – you will be contacted in turn. As there are around 40 different groups you won't be called on very often! These updates do not need to be long (5-6 minutes only) – but I'm sure everyone would be most interested to hear how things are going for you, and how you have found the DVD lecture series we are providing.

Closing thoughts – the weather has changed again – it’s now sunny and the garden is calling me back out to tackle the plants that are growing in the wrong places (most people call them weeds). However I do find the garden a consoling place to be so I don’t mind too much. I consider myself very fortunate to have a garden to grow my vegetables and flowers to feed the body as well as the soul.

Good health and best wishes to you all – and if you have been ill I hope you have a speedy recovery.

Helen

“May every sunrise bring you hope, may every sunset bring you peace.”



U3A COURSES REPORT

Courses that are ongoing seem to be working well. However, I have significant problems with the new courses. There are four of them – Van Gogh, English Words and their History, Heroes and Legends and Everyday Physics. So far, I have found a day and place for **Heroes and Legends** to commence showing, on every first Tuesday afternoon of each month

However, I’ve not had the same luck with two of the other three courses. Both **Van Gogh** and **English Words** have been eagerly signed up for but everyone has said they cannot host due to lack of space. Perhaps it is now time to look at restricting course numbers to 8 maximum. In that way members with smaller living rooms may be able to host.

And the **Everyday Physics** course had no one sign up for it – that’s never happened before!

I would really appreciate any other options for venues that people can come up with. Spaces would need to be roomy enough to take up to 12+ people and also have access to a large screen TV and a DVD player.

It would be a real shame if we can no longer offer DVD courses as we have so many and they offer great variety and interest to all who participate.

The American Civil War and Abraham Lincoln course is now finished and available to start again with new people signing up – please read Peter Yeoman’s review in this newsletter.

The Celtic World will be reaching its end very soon as well, so will be available for a new group. That’s of course, if we can access rooms spacious enough to host!

I would welcome input from you all about how we address our current problems. Also, I’d like to encourage those of you unable to attend the monthly general meeting at Cloudy Bay to look over the list of available courses itemised in this newsletter. If you see something you could be interested in pursuing, please get in touch with me so I can create a new group.

Thank you - **Ann Moore**

GENERAL COURSE REPORTS

Digital & Technology Support in Marlborough

REAP Marlborough has published a pamphlet promoting opportunities for local community groups and individuals, to help you learn new technology skills. In many cases this help is free of charge, and it does not matter which level you are at. You can obtain the pamphlet yourself from REAP and you can contact Kate Horrey (035787848) or on line kate@reapmarlborough.co.nz to obtain your own copy.

However, here is a summary of the most pertinent resources which might be suitable for you:

Marlborough Libraries run Stepping Up workshops in Picton and Blenheim. Courses include Intro to smartphones, Google photos using e mails (FREE)

REAP Marlborough offers training in Social Media later in year (Fee may apply) They also offer a course of Better Digital Futures for Seniors, bring your own device, book a 1-hour one-on-one session with Shona on Wednesdays. Bookings essential (Free)

Wendy Reynolds offers private tutoring teaching technology to groups (start for group tuition -\$5)

Senior Net Marlborough Sounds is for sounds based seniors who'd like to learn technology (Membership \$20/\$30 for double)

Enliven Totara Club is a warm friendly social club which includes helping members with technology in everyday life,(Free)

There is help too, for individuals mentioned in the pamphlet, from the Citizens Advice Bureau, Marlborough Libraries, REAP Wendy Reynolds - and Not Tech Savvy which is a local business designed to help eliminate the little computer problems people face. Use the information re contact above to follow through if you would like this pamphlet

TED TALKS

We run them at the Picton Library at 10 am, on the first Wednesday of each month. Our talks are selected from a wide range of topics and we discuss one or two depending how much participants want to spend on discussion. We provide tea or coffee.

Rosemary Jorgenson

(Editors note: TED talks are run independently of U3A)

GREAT IDEAS OF PHILOSOPHY

It's been a long haul! We started our 60 lecture series February 2020, just in time for a lock-down hiatus, and after a couple of summer breaks we are due to finish around July.

With a very traditional style Oxford Don as the lecturer, and lots of unfamiliar words (metaphysics, epistemology) to grapple with on then way through, it wasn't possible to manage more than two lectures a session. Seven "survivors" will see the course through to the end. Our remaining topics include 'Medicine and the Value of Life', 'The Nature of Law', 'Justice and Just Wars', 'Aesthetics', and finally 'God-Really?' Should be an interesting finale!"

Paul Stanley

CURRENT ISSUES DISCUSSION GROUP

The group continues to meet monthly at the Springlands Lifestyle Village with good attendances. It has quite a large membership so there is no room for new members at this time. Our April guest speaker was Deborah Dalliessi , a first time Marlborough District Councillor. She gave an excellent insight to her work at Council and her own ambitions for change. The group hopes to have its May meeting in Picton to hear from local speakers about the 'state' of the town and hopes for the future. Invitations have been sent to business , tourism , conservation and Iwi. A spokesman for Port Marlborough will also speak later in the meeting. We look forward to hearing about the port development.

Lindsay Moir

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN COURSES

All of the group members were very positive about both series.

The Abraham Lincoln course is a series of lectures by an individual academic in a pretty static environment. There is occasional use of visual aids, however it is predominantly a series of straight lectures by a lecturer who, while extremely knowledgeable, has little in the way of camera skills. He talks to an unseen audience, avoiding the camera! That said however we all enjoyed the series and found it to be very informative.

The Civil War Series was a real contrast. There was no visible lecturer, just a voice-over presenting amazing contemporary photographs of the huge array of often horrific scenes and the war was presented in remarkable detail. Again, we all found it invaluable and informative making real the horror and at times incompetence of a war fought as weapons and strategies were evolving. It gave a profound basis for understanding some aspects of current US politics, conflict and values.

I think the consensus was that we probably watched the two series in the right order, that is, The Civil War first, followed by the short Abraham Lincoln one. However, I don't think it matters greatly which you watch first. Anyone who watches this series will learn a lot about the American Civil War

Peter Yeoman

Interest Groups and Contacts

Each of our groups meets on a specific day and week of each month. Please contact the group coordinator direct if you are interested in joining any of the groups.

- **Ambles and Afters:** 2nd Fri at 9.30am. **Contact:** Mary Wightwick, 578 8747 / 027 440 2047.
- **The Decisive Battles of World History, and History's Great Military Blunders and the Lessons They Teach:** 4th Thurs at 10.0am. **Contact:** Angus Welsh, 577 9114.
- **Barbarians of the Steppes:** TBA – 3 or 4th Fri. **Contact:** Charles Riley 5780109 (Co Host)
- **Books and Authors Group 1:** 2nd Thurs at 2pm. **Contact:** Jackie Hall, 579 3355.
- **Book and Authors Group 2:** 3rd Tues at 10am. **Contact:** Wendy Cass, 578 9144.
- **Card Making:** 1st Thurs at 10am. **Contact:** Gloria Mitchell, 577 7833.
- **Celtic World:** 2nd Wed at 1.30pm. **Contact:** Ann Turnbull 578 4200.
- **Classic Films Group 1:** 4th Thurs at 1 30pm. **Contact:** Bruce Dale, 578 9672.
- **Classic Films Group 2:** 3rd Thurs at 1.30pm. **Contact:** Murray MacDonald, 579 4844.
- **Classical Music:** 1st Mon , at 10am. **Contact:** Ann Moore, 9273754.
- **Current Issues:** 1st Tues at 9.45am. **Contact:** Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.
- **Documentary Films:** 3rd Wed at 10am. **Contact:** Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.
- **Essential Italy:** 3rd Wednesday at 2pm. **Contact:** Ann Moore 927 3754
- **Foundations of Eastern Civilisation:** 3rd Thurs at 2pm. **Contact:** Lyn Coates, 578 5273.
- **Garden Group:** 1st Fri at 10am. **Contact:** Jan Richardson, 578 0989.
- **Geological Wonders:** 3rd Thurs at 10.30am. **Contact:** Trish Johnson, 027 241 7021.
- **History:** 3rd Tues at 1.30pm. **Contact:** Margaret Fairhall, 578 2507.
- **How Winston Churchill Changed the World:** 2nd Tues 2pm. **Contact:** Mike Mitchell, 577 7833
- **Leonardo Da Vinci and the Italian Renaissance:** 3rd Wed at 2pm. **Contact:** Dorothy Hasseldine, 578 1769.
- **Life Writing:** 1st and 3rd Tues at 1.30pm. **Contact:** Lis Davys, 579 3167.
- **London: Group 1** 1st Friday morning from 10am. **Contact:** Jackie Hall, 5793355
- **London: Group 2** 2nd Friday afternoon at 2pm. **Contact:** Murray McDonald 579 4844
- **Luncheon Plus:** 2nd Thurs at 11.30am. **Contact:** Lyn Coates, 578 5273.
- **Mah-jong:** 1st and 3rd Weds at 2pm. **Contact:** Evan Wood, 578 2093, evin42@hotmail.com
- **Memory Lane Music:** Last Thurs at 10am. **Contact:** John Best, 578 0595.
- **Monet to van Gogh:** 3rd Tues at 10am. **Contact:** Helen Hannay, 578 1574.
- **My Favourite Universe:** 3rd Mon at 2pm. **Contact:** Mike Mitchell, 577 7833
- **Play Reading Group 1:** 4th Mon at 9.30am. **Contact:** Margaret Jarman, 578 8805. (Vacancies)
- **Play Reading Group 2:** 4th Tues at 9.30am. **Contact:** Juliet Kirke, 578 0692. (Vacancies)
- **Poetry Appreciation:** 2nd Fri at 2pm. **Contact:** Jan Poswillo, 578 9834 or 021 142 6931.
- **Photography:** 1st Mon at 1.30pm. **Contact:** Charles Riley, 578 0109.
- **Scrabble One:** 1st Mon at 2pm. **Contact:** Jackie Hall, 5793355.
- **Scrabble Two:** 3rd Thurs at 1 30pm. **Contact:** Lynne Blacker, 9723739.
- **Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense:** 3rd Wed at 10am. **Contact:** Jenni Walker 021 133 0582.
- **The Great Tours - France Through the Ages:** 3rd Thurs at 2pm. **Contact:** Kathryn Nicholls, 021 1438 423
- **The Wonders of Weather and Science of Extreme Weather:** 1st Thurs at 10am – starting in October **Contact:** Paul Stanley, 579 2521.
- **Ukulele:** 2nd and 4th Wed at 10am. **Contact:** Neville Lawson, 021 480 073.
- **Water Colour Painting:** 1st & 3rd Mon at 9.30am. **Contact:** Gavin Kerr, 572 7238.
- **Wine Appreciation 1:** 3rd Fri of the month, at 11am. **Contact:** Murray MacDonald, 579 4844.
- **Wine Appreciation 2:** Last Fri at 11.30am. **Contact:** Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.
- **Writing for Grandchildren:** 1st and 3rd Mon at 9.45am. **Contact:** Gladys Sloss, 578 3191.