

Marlborough University of the Third Age

# Newsletter January-March 2021



### **Meeting Arrangements**



Monthly Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the Month at 2.00pm

at Cloudy Bay Funeral Services, Boyce Street, Blenheim Please enter through the main doors from the carpark, not off Boyce Street.

#### **Meeting Dates**

- February 8
- March 8
- April 12

#### **Group Presentations**

February 8 Classic Films Group 2

March 8 Current Issues

April 12 Documentary Films

#### Afternoon Tea Roster

February 8 Life WritingMarch 8 Mah-Jong

April 12 Memory Lane Music

#### Committee

President	Gwyneth Lowe	578 8878
Vice President/Editor	Helen Hannay	578 1574
Secretary	Paul Stanley	579 2521
Treasurer	Angus Welsh	577 9114
Catering	Jackie Hall	579 3355
Historian	Jacqui Buttle	579 4821
New Members	Lyn Coates	578 5273
Speakers	John Craighead	578 7359
Groups Co-ordinator	Ann Moore	927 3754

Honours Board - Life Members Doug Stafford, Jacqui Buttle, Charles Riley, Ann MacDonald, Murray MacDonald, Lindsay Moir

### **President's Report**

#### Kia ora

Welcome to a new year, new premises and hopefully a full programme of meetings!

My last report mentioned a potential new venue as our increasing membership was putting pressure on the facilities at the Salvation Army. What seemed like a minor crisis when we were double-booked in November and again in December, has led to us being given the use of the lovely premises at Cloudy Bay Funeral Services - and at no cost. This is a hugely generous offer from David Buckley and his team and we thank them sincerely as we look forward to the year ahead.

Your committee have started early with planning for 2021 and we have two new members to fill vacant positions; Jackie Hall to Afternoon Tea Coordinator and John Craighead to Speakers. Marlborough U3A will celebrate 20 years of activity in July and we hope to mark the occasion with a suitable event.

New courses are starting but a new Convener is needed for the Marlborough History Group. Ann will have more information in her report.

We would like to remind members to ensure their contact details are up to date and accurate - especially email details. Our email address to notify any changes is u3a.marlborough@gmail.com or you can ring Paul Stanley (Secretary) on 579 2521.

Please also note that some meetings will come early in the month ie our February meeting on the 8th is on Waitangi Day holiday. These events occur from time to time but changing dates is too complicated so keep an eye on your calendars and mark the second Monday of each month from February through December.

I hope to see as many of you as possible on the 8th as we look forward to a happy, healthy year ahead.

Best wishes Gwyneth

# **Club Notes**

Subscriptions for the 2020/2021 financial year are due now. Many thanks to those of you who have already paid.

If you wish to pay by direct credit the bank deposit number is: ANZ 010 598 0033084 01 or contact our Treasurer, Angus Welsh on 577 9114 to make your payment.



Please ensure you include your name when making payments by internet banking.



Participation in our Interest Groups is only open to Financial Members of Marlborough U3A.

Words will not wipe away your tears and hugs may not ease the pain, but hold onto your memories because forever they will remain.

Our deepest sympathy to members who have lost dear ones during the year.

Get well wishes to all our members who are not feeling well or are in hospital. We hope you will soon be feeling better and back with us again before very long.



# **Club Notes**

#### **New venue for Monthly Meetings**

With the move to Cloudy Bay Funeral Services premises for our monthly meetings we would like to acknowledge the kindness and generosity of the owners, David and Ann Buckley along with Alan and Liz Walker, who say, "We wish to extend a warm welcome to all U3A members for the 2021 season. We love the thought that our facilities are enjoyed for more than just their intended purpose and can accommodate your activities."

To date we have held two meetings here and members have enjoyed the move and found the facilities to be excellent. One of our members was heard to remark, even though he had forgotten his hearing aids, that he was able to hear our speakers clearly - a great improvement!

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Salvation Army for accommodating us for many years and wish them well in the future. The committee looks forward to seeing all our members at the monthly meetings - there is plenty of room and those of you who don't regularly attend may find coming along well worth while. It's a lovely way to meet others you don't normally see, hear our interesting speakers and to stay up to date with Marlborough U3A happenings.

#### **Interest Group Vacancies**

While your Groups/Courses Coordinator, Ann Moore, does her very best to provide a wide variety of interest groups for members, there are occasionally folks who say they can't get into a group they are interested in. If you officially belong to a group but no longer attend would you please be kind enough to let your group organiser know so they can advise any vacancies.

Another gentle request is that members, where possible, step up and take a turn with running either the group they are in, or offer to do this for new groups they register with. Please don't leave this to a few stalwarts who do more than their share.

### **December 2020 Meeting Report**

The meeting was attended by 84 of us (including 3 visitors who were warmly welcomed.)

Gwyneth started by commenting how this was only our seventh meeting of the year, and the second time in succession that the Salvation Army had double-booked our meeting and caused a last minute change of venue, which not all members might have been aware of. However, the subsequent announcement about this becoming our new permanent venue, pointing out the many advantages such as venue quality and facilities, parking, etc - coupled with the very generous provision of the facility free of charge by CBFS - was enthusiastically received by members.

Max Currie and Sandra Bird were thanked for their services to the committee following their recent resignations, and an appeal was made for volunteers to replace them.

The 'Young at Heart' Barbers Shop Quartet (the reigning NZ Senior Champions, two of them members of our group) were introduced and entertained us with five vocals sung in unaccompanied four-part harmony: 'Sweet Adeline', 'Lullaby Ragtime', 'Sentimental Journey', 'Lullaby' by Billy Joel, and Elvis Presley's 'Love Me'. Despite the lullabies, no-one fell asleep and group received warm applause

**Guest Speaker:** Karyn Delves, a Marlborough native who had been overseas for many years was lured back to Blenheim from Melbourne to become the General Manager of the Civic Theatre Trust. She had been a keen performer since her days at Fairhall School but on realising that a professional career in the performing arts was not a practical proposition for her, she worked in management roles in various industry and public service positions.

She started with the Trust in early February, only for lock-down to strike almost immediately, with cancelled shows and staff all working from home; she reflected on how that gave her an opportunity to delve deep into the books and explore ways to improve the operations of and finances of the theatre. As lock-down eased but potential audiences remained wary of mass-gatherings, the theatre worked with the Marlborough Civic Orchestra and the Marlborough

### **December 2020 Meeting Report**

Brass Band to enable them to perform their concerts anyway while maintaining social-distancing among the audiences - it involved extra performances and considerable juggling of bookings but proved well worth the effort.

She talked about the history of the Civic Theatre Trust since its inception in the 1970s when 'His Majesty's Theatre' was demolished due to earthquake risks, the interim period (31 years!) with the old Civic Theatre, through the redesign issues during construction because of the Christchurch earthquake (resulting in the most earthquake resistant building in Marlborough) to the marvellous new building. She described some of the less obvious facilities - such as the 18 m fly tower (though it's certainly obvious from the outside!), the 'pit lift' with its ten tonne capacity, the Piano Room below the stage which stores the Steinway Concert Grand so kindly donated on condition of anonymity.

Finally Karyn described how by 'pivoting' to a 'hybrid capability' the theatre had been able to retain all its full time staff, including those with 'Marlborough Light and Sound'. The theatre has acted as a venue for Council's socially-distanced planning meetings, while outside activities included using Horton Park for drive-in movies. The theatre are also conducting skill training in operating theatre equipment.

The booking system for shows has been brought in-house to replace the former agency system, which proved inflexible in dealing with the many cancellations during the year. Better customer service is the main aim but there will also be cost savings.

In response to questions, we were also told about upcoming shows and the special arrangements which are in place to assist less physically-able customers to attend and enjoy shows. For example, the NZSO will be putting on a concert in a very different format, with auditorium lights on and doors open for patrons to come and go as they wish during the performance! Overall, the aim is to open up the theatre and concert experience to people who might not feel comfortable with more formal traditional formats

#### Paul Stanley

### **Brain Exercises to Try**

**Test your recall.** Make a list of grocery items, things to do, or anything else that comes to mind and memorize it. An hour or so later, see how many items you can recall. Make items on the list as challenging as possible for the greatest mental stimulation.

**Let the music play.** Learn to play a musical instrument or join a choir. Studies show that learning something new and complex over a longer period of time is ideal for the aging mind.

**Do maths in your head.** Figure out problems without the aid of pencil, paper, or computer; you can make this more difficult and athletic by walking at the same time.

**Take a cooking class.** Learn how to cook a new cuisine. Cooking uses a number of senses: smell, touch, sight, and taste, which all involve different parts of the brain.

**Learn a foreign language.** The listening and hearing involved stimulates the brain. What's more, a rich vocabulary has been linked to a reduced risk for cognitive decline.

**Create word pictures.** Visualize the spelling of a word in your head, then try and think of any other words that begin (or end) with the same two letters.

**Draw a map from memory.** After returning home from visiting a new place, try to draw a map of the area; repeat this exercise each time you visit a new location.

**Challenge your taste buds.** When eating, try to identify individual ingredients in your meal, including subtle herbs and spices.

**Refine your hand-eye abilities.** Take up a new hobby that involves fine-motor skills, such as knitting, drawing, painting, assembling a puzzle, etc.

### **Course Coordinator's Report**

Ngā mihi mahana kia koutou katoa (Warm greetings to you all), Well, it's been a most challenging time recently for all of us. I hope 2021 will be much better. There are some great new courses to help everyone feel more positive and engaged with their learning.

Firstly, there is **The Celtic World**, where you will discover the incredible story of the Celtic-speaking peoples, whose art, language, and culture has spread around the world.

The next new course is **Museum Masterpieces** Of all the world's great art museums, the National Gallery, London is the only place where you can truly grasp the breath-taking scope of European painting between 1200 and 1900. You will take a virtual tour of this world-class collection through the museum In 24 fascinating lectures.

Another new course is **From Monet to van Gogh**. This series of lectures will introduce you to the style, subject, and function of Impressionist painting by artists including Monet, Renoir, Cassatt, Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec, and van Gogh.

Then there is **The Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense** - writers who have created some of the most unforgettable stories in all of literature. In the 36 lectures of you will learn about the many different varieties of the genre.

Finally, of the new courses, we have **Winston Churchill.** Few individuals personify the tumultuous story of the 20th century more than Winston Churchill. Great Britain's most celebrated statesman, Churchill didn't just live history - he made it!

While all these new courses are fully subscribed it is pleasing to note that we do own the DVDs so we can organise re-runs of these courses in the future. But don't forget all the other courses that are still going. Please read this newsletter to see where there are vacancies and get in touch with the conveners as soon as you can.

Ngā mihi o te tau hou (greetings for the new year) **Ann Moore Courses Coordinator** 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
- The Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense Fiction
- How Winston Churchill Changed the World
- Museum Masterpieces
- Monet to Van Gogh
- The Celtic World





#### Life Writing Group

We survived lockdown, some better than others. Once we returned to Level 2 it was decided to resume meetings for those that wished to join in. As some of our members had been in lockdown alone the chance to be with other people was greeted with pleasure.



While phone calls and zoom meetings were welcome, they didn't quite cut it the same as physically being with family or friends. Many had been disappointed when family special occasions had been cancelled because of Covid 19!

The first couple of meetings we had small numbers and social distancing. The return to level one built our numbers up to our usual 5-7 members out of a total of 10 members.

Topics are provided by members and someone at the meeting will draw our next title. Many topics challenge us but the variety around the given theme are always interesting. A couple of members resort to poetry when all else fails!



At the end of our story reading a welcome cuppa is shared and the conversations are thought provoking and wide ranging. It has been a strange year, but we are currently enjoying the freedoms our team of five million have given us; long may our freedom to mix, mingle and travel in New Zealand last!

We concluded the year with our usual shared lunch. This year sadly when the talk turned to where and with whom we would share Christmas, those with family living overseas feel thwarted by not being able to visit or be visited by far flung family members. We parted company for 2020 but will be back in 2021 pens and paper in hands ready for more writing challenges.

Contributed by Lis Davys

Start writing, no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on.

- Louis L'Amour

#### Writing for Grandchildren

We take turns to meet in someone's house twice a month on a Monday morning. What those with husbands do with them while we're there I have no idea but they keep well out of the way. We usually arrive a little before ten, as we enjoy some light refreshments and have a catch up. The meeting starts with ten minutes to write a quick story. The subject is chosen by whoever's hosting that day. Very rarely are two stories alike and often the connection to the title is hard to find. All good fun and usually a laugh or two.

Then one by one we read what we've written to those present. Some stories are personal, some about previous experiences. We have some very well travelled members. It's often about something that a member wants to comment on. Most of us have written about our experience during the COVID-19 lockdown. There are family histories, poems, children's stories, really what ever takes our attention. Through them all is our personal journey through life.

Will our children or grandchildren appreciate our efforts? Or will they end up in a skip; who would know. I'm sure I can speak for everyone in the group, and on the whole say it's been fun to record it all and sometimes it feels a bit like homework.

#### **Gladys Sloss**

The following delightful story, by Brenda Mason, Writing for Grandchildren Group Member, is an example of the stories written by this group.

#### The Elephant

This is my husband Jim's story:

Jim's family lived at the end of a fairly long country lane. The usual lane, two wheel tracks down the middle, grass on either side. Jim was

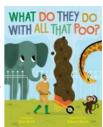
the youngest of five children and I am sure the apple of his mother's eye. When he was quite small he rushed inside to his mother and said 'Mummy, Mummy come out quickly, there is an elephant up the lane." "Yes dear," replied his mother, "that is nice, now go back outside and play." A few minutes later in he came again "Mummy,

Mummy it is getting closer." Same story. "How lovely dear, now back outside." By now his mother was probably thinking, what a weird imagination that boy has. Jim dashed in again "Come, come it is at our gate." This went on and on until in desperation to stop this nonsense, his mother did go outside with him.

Lo and behold, there, happily tearing up grass with its trunk and even more happily eating it was a huge elephant.

Now it turned out that a circus was travelling through the area and the keeper had taken the elephant out for a little light rest and recreation down the lane. The keeper was evidently accommodating to the small boy and Jim even got to touch it. What a thrill it must have been for him.

Jim told the rest of the tale. He watched fascinated and with enjoyment as the elephant did a seemingly never-ending poo. Horrible little boy. He said the pile was about as high as he was. I think that poo was the highlight of his day. The poo was evidently there for months as a reminder of a memorable and eventful day in a small boy's life. He never forgot that poo.





Now the moral of this story is, if your children/ grandchildren come in a tell you there is a unicorn in the garden. Go and have a look!

#### Garden Group

We are pleased to report that our U3A Garden Group continues to grow with new members joining us over recent months. Welcome to you all! We have once again had the good fortune to have been invited to visit some lovely gardens - one with 500 roses, lots of trees and other perennials too plus a very healthy looking vegetable garden - a beautiful old garden handed down through the family. Another month saw us visit three gardens in one morning, at one

of which we were privileged to see and admire one of our local artist's paintings - a real treat.

Our hostesses (and sometimes hosts) have all been most gracious and welcoming and we have enjoyed sharing a delicious morning tea as part of our visits.

After several years at the helm Evelyn and Helen have retired as coordinators and Jan and Mary have taken over their duties. Thanks go to them and to our members who each take a turn to find a garden for us



to visit. This lightens the load and makes it fun for all of us - part of being a U3A members is sharing our talents and time.

We finished our year with a shared picnic lunch in Gwyneth's lovely garden under a beautiful shady tree, and are now looking forward to another year of pleasure and inspiration.

**Helen Hannay** 

#### Classic Films 2

We meet on the third Thursday of the month, usually at 1.30pm, from February to November.

The movies we watch cover many genres, and have ranged from early silent movies to ones we have missed first time round or would love to see again up to the

2000s, mostly in English, but some with sub-titles. Afterwards we have a round-table discussion - or just a chinwag - over our tea and coffee.

**We would be happy to have some new members in our group. Murray MacDonald** Ph 579 4844

Wine Appreciation 1

Our Wine Appreciation group meets on the third Friday of the month, usually at 11am. It is usually at a winery where we have a tasting of some of their wines, together with a talk from a knowledgeable member of their team

(often the winemaker). Despite some of us having been doing this for a good ten years, we find that we learn new things every month - and we're pretty sure it is not that we've forgotten them!

After the tasting we go to a cafe or restaurant for lunch, or take a picnic to eat in the winery grounds. The wineries will sometimes give us quite a good deal on their wines.

We are open to having some new members.

Murray MacDonald Ph 579 4844

#### **Luncheon Plus**



Our Luncheon Plus group has been going for over two years now and I think that it is safe to say that everyone really enjoys it. We meet in one of our homes and everyone brings something to share and eat. We have consumed some really splendid food over the months.

We no longer have a specified topic for discussion but just see what comes up. We never seem to run out of things to talk about and I think that this less structured format works well.

The group needs to be quite small so that everyone can fit around the table and I would

recommend that anyone who is thinking of joining or starting a group follows these guidelines for success.

#### **Rhondda Tannock**



#### **Photography Group**

This group, which grew from a Seniornet group some years ago and was subsequently brought under the U3A umbrella, continues to meet regularly on the first Monday of the month at 1.30pm.

With Marlborough U3A's successful move to DVD based group activity it remains as one of the more hands on activity contributed to by its members.

While not a large group numerically the majority have been members since inception. A successful move to meeting in member's homes and viewing images on today's larger screen TV's with their excellent resolution has made a big difference to the picture quality of the member contributions at our monthly gatherings.

Each month a subject is set and members gather images and bring a selection along to the following meeting to be viewed, enjoyed and modestly critiqued. Subsequently a couple of each member's images are chosen and uploaded to the Marlborough U3A Photography group Facebook page where they are available for viewing. Usually there are discussions on how to make better images and over time quality continues to improve.

It is not necessary to have upmarket camera equipment as members have cameras ranging from DSLR, and Mirrorless to more basic compact models even on occasion a phone camera!



If you have an interest in photography and would like to make not take better photographs a few vacancies exist.

#### **Charles Riley**

#### Some Hints for Running a Successful Group

- Firstly, it isn't a difficult job
- Share the organisation one person could send out reminders, someone else can find your speaker/pick your subject/decide on the venue (whichever applies)
- Take turns to provide the morning/afternoon teas
- Volunteer to turn up early and help shift furniture if needed
- Provide the venue it doesn't have to be the Convener doing this. You can also take a turn to host if you have room
- Offer to help clean up afterwards
- Remember, it's your group too don't think it's too hard to take on the convener role - if everyone plays a part it's much easier and more enjoyable for all.
- Above all, have fun, learn lots and enjoy yourselves

### **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.

**Armchair Travel:** 4th Friday of each month at 10.00am. **Temporary 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. **Vacancies** 

**Classic Films Group 1:** 1st Thursday 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

Classical Music: 1st Monday of each month, at 10 a.m. Contact is Ann Moore, 9273754. Vacancies (2)

**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. **Vacancies** 

**From Monet to Van Gogh:** 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2 pm. **Contact** is Marilyn Cowe, 022 648 8692.

**Garden Group:** 1st Friday of each month at 10.00am. **Contact** is Jan Richardson 578 0989.

**Great Tours - England, Scotland & Wales:** 2nd Wednesday of each month at 2pm. **Contact** is Gill Buttle, 578 4821.

# **Interest Groups and Contacts**

**Great Ideas of Philosophy:** 4th Thursday of each month at 2.pm. **Contact** is Paul Stanley, 579 2521. **Vacancies** 

**History:** 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Margaret Fairhall, 578 2570.

**Life Writing:** 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Lis Davys, 579 3167.

**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

**Marlborough History:** 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10.00am. In Recess - a new Coordinator is required please.

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

**Museum Masterpieces:** 3rd Monday of each month at 2pm. **Contact** is Wendy Cannan, 579 4946.

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 Lyndsay Moir, 578 5262.

Photography: 1st Monday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

Scrabble: 1st Monday of each month at 2.00pm.

Contact is Pam Taylor, 578 8816.

### **Interest Groups and Contacts**

**Scrabble Two:** Please contact **Ann Moore**, **927 3754** if you are interested in joining this group. Date and time to be arranged.

**Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense:** 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10 am.

Contact is Jenni Walker 021 133 0582.

**Shakespeare:** 3rd Thursday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

The Celtic World: 1st Thursday of each month at 2pm.

Contact is Gloria Mitchell 577 7833.

**The Iliad:** 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Helen Hannay, 578 1574.

Winston Churchill: 1st Friday of each month at 10am.

Contact is Ann Moore 927 3754.

Ukulele: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Neville Lawson, 021 480 073.

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.

#### Return Address:

8a Purkiss Street Springlands Blenheim 7201

