

U3A Christchurch Central

'University of the Third Age'

Annual Report – 2020

Fourth Annual General Meeting, 9 February 2021

Christchurch Art Gallery – Te Puna o Waiwhetū

We are pleased to present the 2020 U3A Christchurch Central Annual Report. This has been a challenging year for us all and the support, advice and work of members of the committee has been crucial as we needed to adjust the programme and our venue in response to alert levels relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. We think that sharing the role of President has been a good experiment, and hope that we have demonstrated that it is an option for the future. Dru will be leaving Christchurch soon for Nelson, but hopes to attend some U3A Christchurch Central meetings during the year. Rosemary will stay on the committee for a year as Past President.

U3A Christchurch Central has continued to have a long waiting list, however, in 2020 we welcomed 24 new members, and 16 new members will join us for Course 1 on 16 February. The Membership Coordinator maintains contact with those on the waitlist and with members who are resigning or suspending their membership.

The cost of membership in 2021 will be \$55. We continue to have surplus funds and will use them to meet the travel costs of speakers from other parts of New Zealand and to reduce the cost of the Spring Lunch. As the Treasurer will indicate in the Financial Report, U3A Christchurch Central has sufficient savings to meet any unexpected costs in the immediate future.

We have appreciated the support and assistance of Lynn Peacock, Functions Coordinator, and other staff at the Christchurch Art Gallery - Te Puna o Waiwhetū. Throughout 2020 David Imlay, our Audio-Visual Technician, has provided excellent support for our speakers.

U3A Canterbury Network

U3A Christchurch Central has been a member of the U3A Canterbury Network for several years. Through this network we receive information about the operation of other U3A groups in the region and connect to U3A New Zealand. This link is important for maintaining our websites on the U3A Canterbury Network and U3A NZ websites.

The annual Curious Minds4 Seminar had to be cancelled in 2020 due to alert level restrictions on gatherings in April. The programme planned for 2020 is being reactivated for 2021.

Meetings of groups in the network were curtailed in 2020, but U3A Christchurch Central shared information via email about the changes we had to make to our programme, and our group was represented at the final U3A Canterbury Network

meeting on 6 November. Relative to other U3A groups, we did well in continuing our programme during this COVID-19 year.

Courses

We began with 'Getting to Know You', a very lively and varied set of presentations by members, coordinated by Sue Allard. Course 2: 'Diverse Pathways for Learning', organised by Lois Daly, began on March 17, but the remaining three presentations were affected by the move to Alert Level 3 on 23 March, closure of the Christchurch Art Gallery, and the move to Alert Level 4 from midnight on 25 March. Fortunately, the second presenter agreed to have information about her presentation uploaded on the U3A Christchurch Central website and the final presenter agreed to speak in the potpourri course at the end of the year. Course 3 was postponed until further notice.

The Committee resumed meeting in May and decided to cancel the course on 'Science and Technology', scheduled for June. Members received information in June about the revision and rescheduling of a new Course 3, titled 'Here and There: New Zealand and International Politics', organised by Rosemary Du Plessis. This course, which began on 21 July, combined presentations originally planned for Courses 3 and 5. The move to Alert Level 2 on 12 August meant that the last presentation in this course on politics had to be postponed until November.

Under Alert Level 2, indoor gatherings could not include more than 100 people, and they had to be socially distanced. This posed a challenge for the delivery of Course 4: 'Ngāi Tahu: History, struggles, plans and hopes' organised by Rosemary Smart. The first presentation in this course was postponed for one week until 8 September, and an alternative venue, the Aldersgate Centre in Durham Street, was found. Members had to contact the Membership Coordinator to book their place in this course each week because of restrictions on numbers. We returned to the Phillip Carter Family Auditorium later in September for the last two presentations in this very interesting course.

A hiko on 27 October for U3A Christchurch Central members with James Hullen, Senior Whakapapa Registration Advisor at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was organised by Rosemary Smart as a follow-up to Course 4. It provided an opportunity to access further information about Ngāi Tahu history and also about the input of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu into the regeneration of the CBD.

The programme concluded with Course 5 – a potpourri course organised by Sue Allard, Kristi Gray and Dru Mason that began on 20 October and included some presentations that had to be postponed earlier in the year. The final meeting was an amazing presentation using a variety of media by Tom Rainey, jazz musician and music educator, who talked about recording a CD during lockdown in collaboration with musicians in the UK and Christchurch.

Social

Many thanks to Yvonne Ekdahl for organising morning tea/coffee before meetings and all those who volunteered during 2020. The Spring Lunch, organised by Dru

Mason with the committee, was held on 22 September at Universo. The venue needed to be changed from the Garden Court Brasserie, when the Chateau on the Park became a COVID-19 quarantine facility. Several venues were considered, but Universo was chosen because of the menu they offered and its location in the Gallery. The event was well attended.

At the final meeting, members contributed to a wonderful potluck lunch in the foyer of Te Puna O Waiwhetu. The left-over food was gratefully received by the art gallery staff.

Interest groups

The Walking Group and the Art Interest Group have been active in 2020. Many thanks to Judy Deans for convening the Walking Group for a number of years. Sue Allard will be the convenor of this group in 2021. Plans are in place for walks in some other parts of the city as well as around Hagley Park. The Art Interest Group, convened by Dru Mason since 2018, has continued to meet, despite the disruptions of 2020. Unfortunately, a new organiser(s) has not been found, to date, to convene this group in 2021.

Committee membership

Sue Allard (Secretary), Maxine Macaulay (Treasurer), Joan Hazlehurst (Membership Coordinator) all engaged in vital work without which this U3A could not function. Other members of the committee, Josie Laing, Kristi Gray, Yvonne Ekdahl, Rosemary Smart and Shona Anderson, coordinated courses, organised morning tea/coffee volunteers, assisted on the membership desk, and were involved in planning for 2021.

We want to express our special thanks to outgoing committee members Kristi Gray and Josie Laing for their significant service to U3A. We are delighted that Sue Allard, Joan Hazlehurst and Maxine Macaulay have accepted nominations for President, Membership Coordinator and Treasurer 2021, respectively, and that Shona Anderson, Yvonne Ekdahl and Rosemary Smart are still available to serve on the committee. We welcome the prospective new members of the committee.

Rosemary Du Plessis and Dru Mason,
Co-Presidents, U3A Christchurch Central