



U3A Tauranga Inc.

NEWSLETTER
September 2012



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Results Of Our Recent Survey



Many thanks to all those who responded to our survey.

We had brickbats and bouquets thrown at us, but at least it shows that U3A Tauranga is alive and kicking.

Some interesting things showed up, and one was a lack of knowledge of what the Executive Committee does.

The committee simply attends to the headline issues that an incorporated society is bound to do. In this respect, the main issues are:

- Finance: accounting for subscriptions and applying them to our expenses, such as production and distribution of the handbook and newsletter (\$7000+), costs of holding our general meetings (\$4750) and the usual expenses associated with running any organisation (for example, stationery and postage, insurance, etc.
- Co-ordination of interest and course groups: helping groups start up, directing enquiries from members about vacancies, etc. running new members' meetings, and generally providing help and advice to over 80 group co-ordinators.
- Membership: recording subscription payments, supplying handbooks to members, enrolling new members, keeping membership list up to date for despatch of newsletters, etc.
- Newsletter Editor: publishes and distributes bi-monthly newsletter.
- Publicity: arranging for newspaper articles and other news items about the activities of U3A Tauranga.
- Meetings: organise speakers for monthly general meetings and set up and clean up the hall for meetings.
- Website: maintain an up-to-date website for the benefit of members and the public in general.

Each of these activities involves at least one committee member. The committee meets once a month to review all of these things, and to identify problem areas and find solutions. These are important duties without which the organisation would cease to function.

Nearly 300 members answered the questionnaire. Considering that's nearly 50% of U3A Tauranga, we were very pleased to get such a response.



Here are some of the points you raised:

Most members say they joined U3A Tauranga to join a specific group about which they had prior knowledge, e.g. from a friend. Most of you attend your group(s) regularly. It seems the groups are where there is the most interest and where most activities occur. Less than 20% of you attend monthly meetings regularly, but those who do enjoy the speakers and the chance to socialise over a cup of tea.

About a third of you have said you would be willing to help set up and clean up after meetings. More than 50% are not interested in end of year or mid-year functions. Most new members enjoyed their new member meetings.

A majority of members think that the handbook is excellent and that it is a good way to learn about what is happening in the organisation. A few of you thought that an index in it would be useful. About half of you knew that a colour version of the newsletter could be viewed on the website, and about the same number could receive it by email. In fact, more than half of you would be happy to receive it by email. Less than 7% of you don't have a computer.

About 70% of you use the website www.u3atauranga.org.nz, and more than 75% think it is easy to use.

We would have liked to have had a few more positive comments re helping on the committee as 88% of you said a resounding NO you would not help. It's a disappointing result and hard for us to understand the reluctance to join the executive. It isn't an onerous job; in fact it's very enjoyable. Even if you are only willing to give a year to U3A, it is worth it.

Lots of you made suggestions for speakers; we have noted them down and will be looking through the list to see who would be of interest to you. It's a fine line to tread – what interests some of you, doesn't always interest others.

In conclusion, the committee offers a big thank you to all who made constructive contributions. We will take note of all views and use them to improve both the U3A experience for members and our management of the organisation.

U3A's motto seems to have got lost in the wash recently, but
'Life enrichment through knowledge'
is still as important now as it was when the organisation started.



BUILDINGS AND CITIES GROUP: A Visit to a Bay of Plenty Town.

Earlier this year, after viewing the landmark Rotorua Bath House (see May Newsletter), the group went to Kawerau for a very interesting two-hour discussion with the Mayor, two councillors and its Economic Development Officer.

Three main impressions were:

The purposeful way the council serves its community. It endeavours to achieve the best possible outcomes for the town through close contact with local residents, the main employer (Norske Skog Tasman Pulp and Paper Mill), Kawerau Enterprise Agency (an independent, self-funding agency) and other stakeholders.

The way the council ‘thinks globally and acts locally’. On the one hand it monitors global economic conditions and seeks to harness science and technology to add value to its geothermal energy and wood resources. On the other with new industries being established recently in wood processing and related machinery keep a close eye on ‘grass roots’ needs and conditions.

The way the council is striving to overcome the town’s legacy of social deprivation. This arose from its origins as a single industry town where technology later displaced jobs – unemployment is 2.2% above the New Zealand average, but employment is growing at 2.8% a year. The council is one of the few with no public debt and its good leisure facilities are proving attractive to Auckland retirees. And now Kawerau has gained its very own Olympian, BMX rider Sarah Walker!

Peter Simmons

SCIENCE GROUP NEWS

Peter Long, convener of the science group, and his wife Mary were reluctantly farewelled at the last science meeting in May. They have left New Zealand to travel around Australia for a number of months.

The science group is an interactive one with films, articles, discussion and practical activities covering many aspects of science. If you have a background, some knowledge, interest or understanding of science, feel free to join our busy little group.

Contact the acting convener Don McMillan: Ph: 579 4916 or the group coordinators.

The photo taken at the last meeting shows Robin, Peter, Renate, Seymour, Mary, Don and Noel



HIKERS GROUP:

The Hikers are a group who enjoy spending time in the great outdoors. Our very capable leader, Thelma, has spent a lot of time organizing interesting walks for us.

This year the group has been to Lake Maraetai where we were able to have a trip on the Otuni Paddle boat, then a walk along the Waikato River:

Wairongomai Loop: Maungatautari and Bernetts Bush: Martha Mine at Waihi: Omokoroa: Waikareao Estuary and Katikati.

The weather has not always been favourable and we have had to cancel a few walks, but those we have managed to complete have more than made up for those we have missed.



The highlight of the walks is the peace - no cars, no trucks, no trains, no noise except the birds - wonderful!

Our last walk was along the river bank at Katikati, the reflections were lovely, ducks and swans gliding along the river and the daffodils were out in full bloom. We meet at a central point, pool cars and drive to our destination to commence our walk.

We have stayed reasonably close to home over the winter months, with longer destinations undertaken during spring, summer and autumn. We take our lunch when travelling further afield, which we have after a walk of about 1^{1/2} hours in and the same out. A stop for coffee on the way home is "compulsory."

Most walks are moderate to hard with some hills which could make it difficult for the not-too-fit walker. We are all looking forward to the warmer months to enable more long distance walks to be undertaken.

GROUP NEWS

Group Coordinators

Groups A-F Vivienne Ph: 579 114

Groups G-Z .Jean Ph: 579 1918

There are now 80 active groups but attendance numbers have dropped off for some groups because of illness, or members are overseas. There are vacancies in many groups. Phone the convener of the group or the coordinator if you would like to join.

Conveners only are invited to attend a meeting.

Venue: Wesley Church Hall

Date: 30th October 2012

Time: 10.am.

There will be a short informal meeting followed by a special thank you morning tea.

The following groups are new so are not in the handbook

Café Book Lovers 2 : Convener:

Val Steedman Ph 574 5554

Computer Support C: Convener:

Diana Lusty Ph 544 1420

Ethnic Dining 3 Convener:

Jim Taylor Ph 543 0234

Ethnic Dining 4 Convener:

Beverley Roach Ph 575 3212

Electronic Technology: Convener:

Don McMillan Ph 5794916

French for Travellers: Convener:

Sue Rawson Ph 572 2911

Genealogy 2: Convener:

Lorrie McAlister Ph 544 3083

Luncheon Group 1: Convener:

Janet Ormsby Ph 576 5008

Luncheon Group 2: Convener:

Jean McGuinness Ph 578 7027

Philosophy 3: Convener: TBA

Photoshop: Convener:

Mary Goldfinch Ph 574 4000

Groups that have closed:

Local History, Sequence Dancing and Tramping.

Other News: Apple Mac Support:

A question and answer support group for members with Apple Mac computers and iPads. Everyone welcome. Convener:

Betty Clethero Ph 544 2067

U3A Bucket Group: Next course

(7th) begins 14th Sept., 9.45 – 12.00

Contact Convener:

Janet Ormsby, Ph 576 5008.

janet.L3@xtra.co.nz

Digital Photography Course for Beginners:

The next three week course is September 13th, 20th and 27th. Phone Vivienne 579 1148 to join or put your name on a list.

French 1:

This group is meeting in a new venue. More members are welcome
Tutor: Noelene Taylor
Convener: Louise Konings
Ph 574 9489
Venue: Matua Bowling Club,
Levers Road, Tauranga
Thursday afternoons: 1.30 – 3.00pm

French Conversation:

This group is meeting in a new venue. More members are welcome.
Convener: Marion Arts Ph 577 0799
Venue: Club rooms, Cliff Road, Tga.
Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month: Time: 10.00am - noon

500 Card Game:

New members are most welcome to join this group. Convener: Jill Nutsford Ph 578 0930 Venue: Tauranga Citizens Club, cnr 13th Ave and Cameron Road.

1st and 3rd Fridays in the month.
Time: 1.00pm

Web Development – in recess.

The Web Development has finished the first course. A second course with a content management system will start if there is enough interest. Contact Don McMillan or Jean Garmonsway

Suggested New Groups

Spanish: Needs members and tutors.

Check out the website for updated information under group news www.u3atauranga.org.nz

Vivienne: Ph 579 1148 and
Jean: Ph 579 1918



I have had to resign from producing the U3A newsletter for family reasons.
Margaret Dunton has kindly offered to put this September issue together.
November still has to be arranged but unless someone comes forward to do the job
there may not be a newsletter in this format in 2013.

I ask you all to do some soul searching and come forward so the
U3A newsletter can continue.

I have enjoyed the job over the past year and without the help I have received I could
not have done it. I have made many friends and learnt a lot.

Thank you for the many compliments.

Jane Benson

General Meetings

Held on 3rd Friday of the month at 10.00am in the Wesley Church Hall,
13th Avenue, Tauranga

The next meeting will be on Friday 21st September, 2012

Speaker: Mark Hellyer. Understanding the Variety Club Charity.

Speaker - 19th October, Peter Williams. New Zealand Fisheries.

Speaker - 16th November, Maurice O'Reilly.

A 4 Wheel Drive from China to London.

Facts and Figures to Date

Membership: 620

Groups: 80

The next newsletter is due in November.

All contributions must be in before 24th October 2012, so please note we will not
accept material from groups after this date. They need to be short, up to 200
words.

Editors: In the absence of an editor please send material to Ken Gillan
kenandbronwen@vodafone.co.nz

NB: The editors advise that when necessary all members' written contributions
will be edited.