



PO Box 14453, Tauranga 3143
www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz

Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION

October 2020

1995

U3A Tauranga
 25th Anniversary

2020

Commemorative Chronicle

Message from the President



Jean Garmonsway

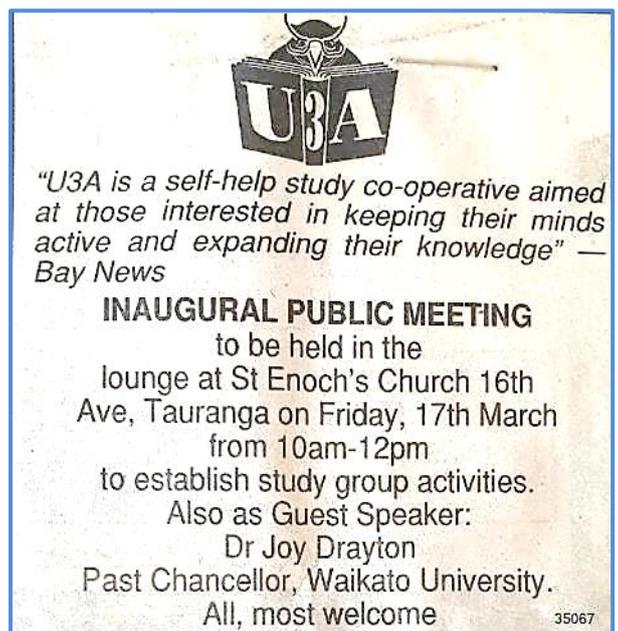
This is a milestone year for U3A Tauranga as it marks 25 years since its inaugural meeting, which was held on 26 May 1995. To mark this auspicious occasion the Executive Committee planned a celebratory event, which was to have been held in May. Unfortunately, this celebration had to be postponed due to the the Covid-19 Lockdown. However, we are now planning for this special occasion to be recognised on Friday 20 November combined with the Election General Meeting.

Fortunately we are still able to secure our original guest speaker, Mike Allsop. Mike is a sought-after quality speaker and he is a noted mountaineer, adventurer, author, fund-raiser and key-note motivational speaker. The event will also include musical entertainment, a brief history of U3A (both in narrative and photographic formats) and a delicious morning tea.

Thanks to the inspiration of some members of our community, an initial meeting to bring people together to introduce a U3A to Tauranga was held on 17 March 1995 at St Enoch's Church. Pam and Roy Hayward advertised the meeting in the Bay of Plenty Times and Dr Joy Drayton, Past Chancellor of Waikato University was the guest speaker.

The first meeting of U3A Tauranga was held on 26 May 1995 and Roy Hayward was the first President. There were 25 members and four groups and the subscription was \$25. It is heartening to know that our subscription is probably one of the few things in life that hasn't increased with inflation!

The following poem was written by Juliet Rice 10 months after the initial meeting and it indicates that by this stage membership had grown



to 63 and there was some disquiet about the “high” subscription. The poem was written for the Creative Writing Group, convened by Jim Carruthers.

U3A December 1995

*It all began 10 months ago,
Roy, Pam and Sylvia had a plan.
They called a meeting at the Trust
For any people fifty plus,
To come and listen and have their say,
Regarding a Tauranga U3A.*

*Twenty people came along
And most of them were very keen.
Sylvia talked about the groups,
Explaining how to set them up.
Roy then called for willing folks
To volunteer to join the team,
To form the first Committee.*

*For several minutes all was quiet,
None were very quick to offer,
And then Marie willingly
Agreed to be the Secretary.
Jean came forward, said she'd held
A few more hands and Roy had found
A team of six,
To get this project off the ground.*

*Then meetings followed at Marie's
With much debate and cups of tea.
Plans were made and problems sorted.
Then U3A was soon reported
To the press and in our leaflets,
We delivered round the district.*

*Time arrived for public meeting.
We had booked St Enoch's Hall.
All Committee were there early.
Such excitement for us all.
So organised we were that day*

*And warm sun shone throughout the Bay.
The hall soon filled with curious people
Come to hear of U3A.*

*Mrs Drayton was our speaker.
She encouraged and explained
That U3A would keep the mind
More active for a longer time,
And then the argumentative paid
Upset the apple cart somewhat
They said subscription fees were steep,
And ranted on in quite a state.*

*Several people left the hall,
Said they did not come for discord.
We felt bad but were resigned
To setbacks happening at times.
When meeting over we relaxed.
Many gave us their support.
So, we decided come what may,
We would establish U3A.*

*Just ten months on we're satisfied.
Many groups are much enjoyed.
Similar interests bring together,
People glad to meet each other,
Yoga, music, history, walking,
The groups are most accommodating.*

*Now members number sixty-three,
We need more help on the Committee.
Simple tasks, two hours a month.
A few ideas, you won't get paid,
Just great enjoyment all the way.
Please come and help your U3A.*

***By Juliet Rice
Foundation Member***

Two newspaper articles displayed on the following page show the rapid rise in membership. The first was written just over one year since the inaugural meeting and by this time membership had grown to 103, with “Chairman” Roy Hayward predicting that the membership would double over the next 12 months. The second article as written just before the 3rd birthday and shows that membership had grown to 134 with 17 “study” groups. Subscriptions had decreased to \$20 with \$30 for couples! Today we have approximately 950 members and 100 groups, which cater for a wide variety of interests.

Mental stimulation for region's seniors

BY CHRIS KENNY

THE chairman of the Tauranga branch of U3A (University of the Third Age), Roy Hayward, predicts that membership of the informal university for seniors will double in the next 12 months.

The university set up in Tauranga just over 12 months ago and now has a financial membership of 103.

"At the present rate of growth, I predict the membership will double in the next 12 months," he says.

Commenting on the number of Probus clubs in the Tauranga district, the 60+ continuing education programme and the growing membership of U3A, Mr Hayward says the success of all these organisations reinforces the fact that there is a demand by people in this age group for mental stimulation.

"There is an exceptional demand in this area because of the high retirement population," he says.

U3A is a self-help "university" run by members for members. "Classes" are set up in response to the interests of members with the members themselves acting as both tutors and students. At present, 15 different interest groups are either operating or ready to go, Mr Hayward says.

"The Travel/Our World group is



U3A Tauranga U3A branch chairman Roy Hayward: strong growth coming. CR277-15

the largest with 30 members. It is so large it will either have to find larger premises or split into two and they don't really want to do that."

The walking and the history groups are also popular, Mr Hayward says, with a second history group concentrating on local history about to be formed.

Interest groups usually meet in private homes, but monthly all members come together to listen

to a guest speaker or for a purely social gathering.

"We've had some remarkable guest speakers over the last 12 months and good turnouts to these meetings," Mr Hayward says.

These general meetings are open to the public.

"We encourage people to come along," he says.

"They can attend the general meeting twice and then they are expected to become members."

U3A in Tauranga was originally dominated by women but Mr Hayward says this is now changing, with more men joining up with their partners and more single men coming along.

U3A operates nationwide with each branch working independently. Mr Hayward says the organisation fills a need for many older people.

"Older people are becoming more pro-active in reaching out for what they want," he says.

"They recognise that the state of their physical health is tied up with their mental health and U3A caters to that."

"Older people are now making a life of their own. Some of them are now busier than they have ever been with many of our members wanting to participate in several different interest groups."

"U3A provides the opportunity for people to explore new topics."

People never too old to learn Continuing education for seniors very popular

BY JO FERRIS

LESS than three years ago, a group of senior citizens established a Tauranga branch of U3A (University of the Third Age) — a kind of continuing education programme for people of their generation. They forecasted then that membership would blossom but even they have been overwhelmed with its success. Today, as U3A nears its third birthday, the list of subjects grows as more people sign up.

All U3A needs now are more convenors and tutors — and probably several large houses in which to hold the meetings.

U3A's success here can be attributed to a number of factors, organisers say. It's informal, it's flexible and it's run by the members for the members.

It's also very affordable — a yearly membership is just \$20 for single people or \$30 for a couple — regardless of how many sessions each person tackles.

And so, from a handful of people in those early days, U3A now boasts a membership of 134 people and 17 different study groups, with 27 more waiting in the wings if convenors can be found.

U3A publicity officer Les Bond says most of those attending are from Tauranga, with only a few coming from Te Puke and Papamoa.

He's amazed by the depth of experience

and knowledge offered by its tutors, who include retired teachers, historians, engineers, television and sound technicians.

Others, experienced in such fields as astronomy, astrology, language and travel, are just some of the other diverse topics people can study.

And with 27 requests for subjects such as archaeology, antiques, law and literature, Les says there's no end to where U3A can go. It's simply a matter of finding the tutors and convenors who are willing to tackle the job.

"It's amazing the number of people who come out of the woodwork," he says. "It's usually by word of mouth. People express an interest and someone volunteers."

That sort of success reinforces the message that there is a demand by "older" people for continuing education — simply for the fun of it.

"There is no pressure, no tests or exams. Members can be as active or as passive as they wish," says Les.

Members can even join as many groups as they wish, all for the single fee.

Most groups are hosted in private homes, while monthly meetings alternate between a social event and a more formal session with a guest speaker.

Founded in France in 1972 to improve the quality of life for older people, U3A was driven by a simple philosophy — that an active "third age" can postpone the "fourth

age of dependence."

Modules were pre-packaged courses provided by the universities. Its success soon spread to other countries and in 1975 an international organisation was formed and now has more than 100 member organisations.

The U3A concept was adopted by Britain in 1981 but veered away from the university-based model to one that promoted self-help.

The idea was to create an intellectual democracy with no distinction between teachers and pupils. By having members, it reduced the need for dependence on outside resources.

Tauranga's success speaks for itself. Sessions are held mainly during the day, but each is planned to adapt around individual needs.

The group doesn't discourage anyone from continuing other studies. And while all but one of the Tauranga group is a senior citizen, U3A doesn't stop younger people from joining.

Les says the Tauranga branch has helped others to get started and that, with little effort, more groups could form around the district.

It's just a matter of spreading the word to encourage more people to come forward and show an interest, he says.

"They can even come along to two sessions at no cost, to see if U3A is for them."

For more information, phone 544-2067.

Past Celebrations

In 2002 U3A Tauranga hosted a conference with the theme “Pacific Paradise in the 21st Century”. Dr Alistair Pringle was a guest speaker and his subject was, “Work, Leisure, the Growing Gap between Rich and Poor” and delegates also learned about global warming, moving tectonic plates, disappearing islands and much more. It would be interesting to know what, if anything, has improved in the subsequent 18 years!



Conference 2002 - Pacific Paradise in the 21st Century



A twenty year anniversary celebration was held in 2015 and Sir Ron Avery was the guest speaker. Attendees were also treated to musical items, and a school debate. Founding members, Betty Clethero, Juliet Rice and Marie Frendrup cut the cake.

Sir Ron Avery (left)



Cutting the cake



Scrabble Group



School Debating Team



Lunch

Founding Members

We are extremely fortunate that we still have four founding members with us, Betty Clethero, Marie Frendrup, Juliet Rice and Jim Carruthers were all members of the Steering Committee. All, except Juliet are still very active members of U3A.



Betty Clethero first joined U3A in Australia and when she came to New Zealand in the early 1990s she was aghast to learn that there wasn't a U3A here. So she was delighted when she saw Roy Hayward's notice in the paper when he was initially trying to start up U3A in Katikati. So while there wasn't any interest in Katikati, Betty immediately joined the Steering Committee to get U3A established in Tauranga.

Betty was the first Newsletter Editor and she says it was quite a mission to get the monthly publication typed up, copied, folded into envelopes and mailed out to members. Betty at aged 90 is still an active member of U3A and she is also the Convener of the Apple Mac Group. She says that while in the early days she knew everyone, she is very happy that today there are so many groups to choose from in our now much larger organisation.



Marie Frendrup remembers the fun that was had when the Steering Committee was meeting. Her house was in a central location so the members often met at her place and she remembers there being lots of cups of tea! Once the organisation was set up it was initially a bit slow to get people to attend meetings as there was a similar organisation in Tauranga and many people had preconceived ideas about what the new U3A was about. Marie feels the large size of U3A now has advantages and disadvantages. For example, it is now a little bit more impersonal not knowing everybody by name and there aren't the same

opportunities for exciting events such as dances. However, she enjoys the variety of groups and admires the knowledge of volunteers who offer their homes and act as Conveners.



Juliet Rice was actively involved with U3A right up to the beginning of this year, but as she no longer drives, she finds it too difficult to get out to groups. However, she says that U3A was the most wonderful time of her life and that belonging to such a fun and interesting organisation made her retirement years very enjoyable.

She met lots of people and made many friends. She remembers the weekly meetings the Steering Committee had in order to get U3A established. Sylvia Arcus from Takapuna U3A met with the Committee to explain how the organisation is set up. Initially it was slow to get groups established, but gradually people who were enthusiastic about their pet interest or interests slowly got several groups established. Creative Writing and Walking were two of the first groups.



Jim Carruthers is still an active member of U3A. His memories of the Steering Committee are of the enthusiasm of the members. It was a lot of hard work, but he was thrilled that just a little notice in the local paper was enough to attract enough interest to get the organisation started.

When asked what kept Jim belonging to U3A for 25 years, he replied that it suited his interests and he liked what U3A was all about. Previously he had given talks to various groups such as Probus and he was very excited about the formation of U3A Tauranga. Jim has been the Convener of three groups over the years and he is currently a member of Current Events B. He is delighted that from such small beginnings U3A has become so popular with approximately 900 members today.

25th Anniversary Sub-Committee

I would like to thank the members of the 25th Anniversary Sub-Committee (Anne Withy, Jean Garmonsway, Jan Holden, Elizabeth Reeves, Kit Divehall and Raewyn Gallagher) for the time and effort they have put into organising, not once, but twice, a celebratory event. I would also like to thank Jan Holden for compiling this special edition of the newsletter and Paul and Elizabeth Chapman for proofreading.

I hope you can join us on the day. I look forward to seeing you there. As numbers are limited please RSVP by 6 November to presidentu3atauranga@gmail.com.

Jean Garmonsway
President

Memory Lane



Mid-year function 1997



Mid-year dance 1998



Walking Group Matakana Island 2000



Cinderella Pantomime 1997



Travel Group visit to Napier 1999



Travel Group picnic McLaren Falls 2000



Yoga Group 2003



Café Book Lovers 1 Group 2016



Singing for Joy Group 2018



Science Group 2017

1995

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**A 25th Anniversary Celebration
combined with the Election General Meeting
will be held on**

Friday 20 November 2020

9.45 am to 12.45 pm

at

Tauranga Yacht & Powerboat Club

Sulphur Point, Tauranga

Entry: \$10.00 per person

Entertainment, History, Photographic Display, Morning Tea

Guest Speaker: Mike Allsop (adventurer, author, mountaineer,
fund-raiser, key-note speaker)

As numbers are limited RSVP is essential.

RSVP: by 6 November to presidentu3atauranga@gmail.com



OMG (Oceanside Music Group) formed 2020