A Message from the President of U3A Wellington City

Kia Ora,

Welcome to 2012 and the summer that has not yet quite arrived. However, it has given us time to read and enjoy the facilities that this city has. We are so lucky. They do not stop. I am sure your diaries are filling fast with the Festival offerings. Our special interest groups are already underway for the year and the programme group have been filling the U3A diary with the lecture programme beginning on March 20th. Details are in this Newsletter. It looks very interesting and challenging again. There will be 50 lectures this year interspersed with the school holidays. There will be no events programme in April as it is too soon after the festival but keep an eye out for the July visits.

As you are aware no doubt, U3A is a participatory organization with an educational focus. Between now and the end of the year we will be asking members to indicate in what capacity they might be interested in assisting the committee to do the many tasks that keep us functioning. Of course, many members have already offered their time to previous committees, special interest groups, front of house and various planning groups, but, as always, there are opportunities for others to contribute. Your positive responses will enable us to maintain our activities.

Our membership remains at 875 with a small waiting list of potential members. They can only join if there are vacancies. So, if you are leaving Wellington permanently or are aware of the death of a member could you please let the Membership secretary (or any committee member) know so that we can invite a new member to join us.

I am not sure how many of you regularly look at the U3A website.  (www.u3awellingtoncity.org.nz) It is a mine of information. Just to mention a few items such as the U3A tour of France this year in association with Alliance Francaise; the GEMS that come from the Griffiths University, Queensland, full of information about the social and health issues of the less young; and the U3A Online courses. Just follow the Links page on the website. Our thanks go to Rodger Sparks who keeps us up to date.

Thank you to the members who have written to us. Feedback and ideas are always welcome. The committee met at the end of January to ensure that we are ready for 2012. We are. It will be great to have the stimulation of our speakers again and to enjoy one other’s company.

Karen Palmer, President.
U3A Lecture Programme

Tuesdays March – June 2012

Tuesday March 20

Dr. Kirdan Lees

How globalization drives New Zealand’s transformation: trading goods, ideas and labour

Formerly with the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Dr Lees is currently Senior Economist and Head of Public Good Research, NZ Institute of Economic Research. His talk explains the major features of globalization that matter for New Zealand. How does globalization shift the opportunities for New Zealand’s firms and households? How is globalization affecting the technology, investment and migration decisions that are critical for New Zealand’s future growth prospects? What are the forces that underpin New Zealand current and future export opportunities?

Tuesday March 27

Dennis Rose

The Global Financial System – Reflections on the current crisis

Developments since the 2008 collapse of Lehman Brothers have starkly highlighted the linkages between the financial system and the real economy. In the USA and Europe output fell in 2009 and unemployment rose sharply. The IMF now warns of an economic spiral reminiscent of the 1930s unless action is taken on the eurozone crisis. What led to the crisis, how has it developed and what do governments need to do? The talk will focus on the debate around governmental responses. What should governments do and what should they avoid doing? How does all this affect New Zealand? Dennis Rose is a research economist working in retirement.

EVENTS PROGRAMME

Because there is such a short time between U3A starting on March 20 and Easter/Term Holidays and because Rosemary Ralston is away for all of that time, there will be no Events programme for the April Holidays.

Mid Winter Lunch

The Mid Winter Lunch will be held in the Wellesley Boutique Hotel at 12 noon on Tuesday 26 June 2012 so please mark your diaries now. Further details will be in the May Newsletter.
Tuesday April 3

Christiane Mortelier

Revisiting what the French call "Le Grand Siècle"

Both lectures will concentrate on the second half of the XVIIth century which saw a remarkable flowering of Arts and Sciences in France under the reign of Louis XIV. The first lecture will concentrate on the château and gardens of Vaux-le-Vicomte, built between 1656-1661 for Nicolas Fouquet, the King's Superintendent of Finance by the architect Louis Le Vau, the interior decorator Charles Lebrun and André Le Nôtre, the famous garden designer of "jardins à la française". The life and some of the work of Le Nôtre will be evoked leading to the 2nd lecture entitled "Versailles, the temple of Absolutism". Particular attention will be given to the gardens of the palace of Versailles, underlining Le Nôtre's use of "decelerated perspective", and the statues displayed throughout the park.

(EASTER BREAK)

Tuesday April 24

Christiane Mortelier

Revisiting what the French call "Le Grand Siècle"
(Part 2)

Tuesdays May 1 + May 8 + May 15

Matthew Trundle

The Hellenistic Age 323-30 BC.

This series of lectures will examine the Hellenistic Age, the world forged by the conquests of Alexander the Great that saw Greek culture spread from the Mediterranean to India. We shall discuss the kings and kingdoms that emerged after Alexander's death, like Ptolemaic Egypt, Seleucid Asia and the shadowy rulers of distant Afghanistan. A global cosmopolitan culture – the oikoumene – became a reality. Greek cities dotted the earth with their agorai, theatres, wrestling-grounds and gymnasia. Greek was a common (koine) tongue. Literature and philosophy thrived. Schools spread and preserved Greek culture, literature was taught and books were valuable possessions. Scientific enquiry flourished. Knowledge of medicine, mathematics, and astronomy made giant leaps and intricate machines utilized the power of water and air. This age has been described as that most like our own in its scientific and cultural achievement.
Tuesday May 22

Negar Partow

Religion of Islam

Negar is Iranian, an Arabic speaker who has completed a PhD in New Zealand and this year is taking up a lectureship at Massey University. This lecture explores the main tenets of Islam, with particular reference to the two main sects Shi’a and Sunnis. These are considered from two distinct viewpoints looking at their theological differences and the ways through which these differences shape their understanding of politics.

Tuesday May 29

Alex Maxwell

The Arab Spring

Dr Maxwell is a senior lecturer in the History Department, Victoria University, where he teaches Global History, Soviet History, and German History. He taught a course on “Understanding the Arab Revolutions of 2011” last fall. He is an expert on Eastern Europe and the Balkans, is the author of Choosing Slovakia. He has also edited The East-West Discourse: Symbolic Geography and its Consequences and The Comparative Approach to National Movements.

Tuesday June 5

David Norton

The Bible and Literature

Professor David Norton of the School of English, Film, Theatre and Media Studies at Victoria University will discuss some of the ways the Bible and literature interact and illuminate each other. Writers he might discuss include William Blake, Charlotte Bronte and D.H. Lawrence.

Tuesday June 12

Shonagh Kenderdine

Standing Firm on Heritage: Building Resilience in the Face of Change

Shonagh, first woman Planning Tribunal Judge/Environment Court Judge (1990-2006) and is currently Chair of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, will talk about Earthquakes: Lessons from Turkey and Italy (PowerPoint); impending legislation issues; new role for regional committees; insurance issues; community buy-in.
Tuesday June 19

Paul Hamer

Maori in Australia: a history of risk and opportunity.

Paul Hamer is an historian who has worked most of the past two decades at the Waitangi Tribunal, and is currently employed there as a contract writer. In 2006 he was a visiting fellow at Griffith University in Brisbane, where he researched and wrote a substantial report for Te Puni Kōkiri on Maori in Australia. The report was released in 2007 and since then Paul has continued to research and publish on the same subject. He is an associate of the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University and is shortly transferring this affiliation to the Māori Studies department. He is also currently embarking on a PhD in history at Monash University in Melbourne, which will focus on the history of Māori migration to and settlement in Australia.

U3A Lecture Programme

Fridays

March – June 2012

Friday 23 March

Dr. Geoff Chambers

Genetics and the Origin of Polynesians

Geoff, a Senior Research and Teaching Fellow from the School of Biological Sciences, VUW, will show how evidence from different academic disciplines builds to provide a compelling picture of the history of settlement voyaging. The emerging story involves Austronesian-speaking Mongoloid people from Taiwan who sailed south and east to new lands. Along the way they intermarried with the Papuan-speaking Australoids living in coastal Papua New Guinea and its offshore islands. Their descendants, the Polynesians, travelled widely across the Pacific basin reaching Aotearoa about 650 ybp in a well-planned exercise. Geoff will draw on many years of genetic research data to show how the new DNA evidence supports the work of colleagues in other areas and the oral histories of the people themselves.

Friday 30 March

David Bowden

Antarctic marine benthos.

David, a Benthos ecologist at NIWA, will talk about Antarctic marine ecosystems: life in the world’s coldest waters. He is a marine ecologist at the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) in Wellington. David lived and worked in Antarctica as a scientist with the British Antarctic Survey. He is currently involved with research projects investigating the marine ecosystems of the Ross Sea and the seamounts, canyons, and chemosynthetic habitats around New Zealand.

(EASTER BREAK)

Friday 27 April

Professor Lloyd Geering

What We Owe to Ancient Iraq

Lloyd’s talk about Ancient Iraq will include links to our western cultural heritage.
Friday 4 MAY

Murray Bartle
Fukushima & Nuclear Power

Murray is a nuclear physicist and was a Principal Scientist at the National Isotope Laboratory at GNS Science until 2010. Murray’s aim is to talk briefly about the problems with the reactors at Fukushima triggered by tsunami and their current status. He will discuss the environmental impact. Also more generally he will summarise the status of nuclear energy and the types and features of nuclear reactors as they have evolved from the earlier days of manufacture (e.g. the GE boiling-water reactors of the 1970's used at Fukushima) to modern pressurised water reactors. Fuel requirements and waste management issues for nuclear and coal burning power plants will be compared. Finally he will briefly discuss the impact of the Fukushima accident on the nuclear industry as perceived in feedback summaries from various countries.

Friday 11 MAY

Bob Stephens
The Measurement of Poverty

Bob Stephens recently retired as Associate Professor of Public Policy in the School of Government at VUW. The media continually states that 20% of children are poor and very few are elderly. But what is the basis for these claims? What constitutes poverty? How do we define and measure poverty? What data do we use to determine who is poor? The talk will explore these issues that underlie the measurement of poverty, while providing some information on who is poor, the severity of their poverty and trends in the incidence of poverty.

Friday 18 May

Dr. Mike Joy
New Zealand's 100% pure delusion; the inconvenient reality

Mike Joy is a Senior Lecturer in Ecology and Environmental Science at the Ecology group-Institute of Natural Resources Massey University Palmerston North. He researches and teaches freshwater ecology, especially freshwater fish ecology and distribution, ecological modeling bioassessment and environmental science. Mike is an outspoken advocate for environmental protection in New Zealand and has received a number of awards including “ecologist of the year” from the NZ ecological Society, and an “old blue” award from the Royal Forest and Bird protection Society.

Friday 25 May

Nigel Isaacs
Bring light and cleanliness to the masses – a brief history of lighting and hot water in New Zealand

Nigel is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Architecture VUW & Principal Energy & Environmental Scientist at BRANZ Ltd. His research concerns the development of building technology in NZ; he also led the Household Energy End-use Project from 1998 to its completion in 2007. He has published widely in NZ and internationally on both energy demand and the history of building technology. Nigel's talk will bring together
his various research interests, exploring how we have used energy over time to improve our cities at night and our bodies in the morning.

Friday 1 June

Dr. Art Beuhler

Introduction to Sufism and Rumi

Dr Beuhler will discuss sufism and sufis from a perspective of historical development and contemplative practice. Then he will discuss Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 1273) and his poetry. Dr Art Buehler is a senior lecturer in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies at Victoria University. He is a scholar of trans-regional Sufi networks and the transmission of Islamic Revivalist ideas. The senior editor of the Journal of the History of Sufism, he has taught Arabic in Yemen for the British Council, and after five years in the Arab world, he entered the History of Religions Programme at Harvard University.

Friday 8 June

Rose Gibson

Changes to Sleep with Ageing, Dementia and Caregiving

Sleep problems tend to increase as we get older. Trouble getting to sleep, daytime sleepiness, and disturbances in the night all become more frequent for a variety of reasons. Pre-existing medical conditions and medications can affect our sleep, and the chances of having a clinical sleep disorder also greatly increase with age. Rosie will also introduce her doctoral research, which involves trailing non-pharmaceutical interventions to improve the sleep of older people with dementia.

Friday 15 June

James McLean

Telling Stories in Spaces

James, one of the founding partners of Story Inc., a Wellington-based exhibition design company that creates ‘visitor experiences’ both in New Zealand and around the world, will talk about the inspirations and challenges of making narrative environments - spaces that tell stories. Since 1988 he has worked on dozens of projects in many countries, including museum exhibitions, visitor centres, public art installations and theme park attractions.

Friday 22 June

Tom Williamson

Department of Conservation - Works

It is a little known fact that the Department of Conservation looks after the largest historical estate of any organization in the country - much larger and in many ways much more difficult or inaccessible than that administered by any other organization. The range of human activities covered is wide, and the nature of the ‘built’ heritage astonishing.

Over the past dozen or so years, Tom Williamson has been making video records of some of the work involved in preserving this heritage for future generations. Back in 2005 U3A saw some clips from this work, and now, in another of his magic video-lantern shows he will transport us again to remote corners of the country, and show us some more clips of recent difficult and often dangerous tasks that the department has conducted so that we and those that follow may remember who once we were.
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS 2012

Two new groups are proposed for this year: a Scrabble Group and a Mid-week Film Group. Also the Writing Group will continue in 2012 with places available for several new members. And there has been a change of day for the Current Issues meetings. Details below.

These Special Interest Groups provide the opportunity for members to widen their knowledge in specific areas and form friendships with others in our organization. **All must be current members of U3A Wellington City.** For further information, contact the group convenor or committee member, Gaynor Stewart, phone 494 0102 or at gaynorstewart@hotmail.com

Taking Scrabble Seriously
This is a call to all those wordsmiths among our members who may be interested in forming a Scrabble Group of a reasonably serious kind i.e. using the Scrabble dictionary as reference and playing according to NZSA rules. Frequency, times and venues could be decided by agreement.

If you are interested, contact Gaynor Stewart, phone 494 0102 or at gaynorstewart@hotmail.com

Mid-Week Film Group
A keen film fan member who is not available to take part in the Saturday viewing of our two established film groups has proposed a mid-week group which she is willing to convene. She suggests either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoon sessions (particularly in the winter months) taking advantage of the new boutique cinemas at the Embassy or at old favourites like the Paramount and the Penthouse, all of which have cafes suitable for post-viewing discussion. Contact Gaynor Stewart if you would like to join.

Writing Group
This year John Bonallack will continue with the U3A writing group for members who want to develop their writing skills and write their memoirs for friends and family. The group is open to those 2011 members who want to continue, and to new writers. It will be limited to 12 members in total. Meeting times will be chosen to suit the majority; probably monthly on a Thursday afternoon. It will be held at John Bonallack's place (66 Bould St, Johnsonville), 1.30 to about 4.00 or 4.30. There is no charge for the group itself but members must be current U3A Wellington City members. Members will need a computer to write their stories on – preferably using MS Word. John will probably have one or two sessions with the new members to go over instructional bits the 2011 members have already covered, then previous and new members will combine as a single group. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact committee member, Gaynor Stewart, at gaynorstewart@hotmail.com or phone 494 0102 with your details.

Art History Group: Meets on alternate Thursdays from 10.30 to 12 noon at The Lounge at St Ninian’s Uniting Parish in Karori Road, Karori. If you are interested in having your name added to the waiting list for this popular group please contact Janice Huddleston, 972-0404 or janhud@paradise.net.nz

Book Group 1: Meets on the first Wednesday of each month at the Sharella Motor Inn. This group has space for one new member. Convenor: Jan Watchman, 479-3619 or janke@xtra.co.nz

Book Group 2: Meets on the first Thursday of each month at members’ homes. There are no vacancies at present. Convenor: Dianne Hill, 473-5560 or diwhill@xtra.co.nz

Current Issues: There has been a change of day for the meetings of this group. They are now held on the second Tuesday of the month, not the second Thursday as previously. Convenor, Vincent Gray, is keen to recruit new members and to involve them in suggesting topics for discussion. Venue is the Gray’s home, 75 Silverstream Road, Crofton Downs. Vincent Gray, 973-5939 or vinmary.gray@paradise.net.nz

Film Group 1: Meets on the second Saturday of each month at the cinema of choice, with the film followed by a discussion at a cafe. New members welcome. Convenor: Jill Waddington 476-0620 or jilwad@xtra.co.nz

Film Group 2: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the cinema of choice. New members welcome. Convenor: Christabel Gibson, 472-7569 or christabel.gibson@xtra.co.nz

German Conversation: Meets on alternate Mondays from 10am in members’ homes. New members are welcome. Convenor: Diana Barnes, 479-2947 or dgbarnes@xtra.co.nz

Literature Club: Meets on the last Friday of the month at 2pm in members’ homes. New members welcome. Convenor: Jenny Lane, 499-2259 or jenny@paradise.net.nz

Music Group: Meets on alternate Thursdays from 10am until 12 noon at The Lounge at St.Ninian’s Uniting Parish, Karori Road in Karori. New members are welcome. Convenor: Barbara Hammond, 476-7300 or bhammond@clear.net.nz

Play Reading Group: Meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 1.30pm at 378A Karori Road, Karori. New members are welcome. Convenor: Margaret Bowater, 938-9149 or bowater@paradise.net.nz

Poetry Studies: Meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm in members’ homes. This group is keen to have new members join it and enjoy sharing the pleasures of poetry. Convenor: Joan Jarden, 384-5119 or joanj@xtra.co.nz

Shakespeare Studies: Meets on alternate Wednesdays at 10.30 am until 12 noon. The group is full at present. Convenor: Laurie Atkinson, 568-5883 or westhill@globe.net.nz
Welcome to the following new members of Wellington U3A

Prue Densem
Gayle Cullwick
Muriel Mulliner
Janet McMenamin
Jenny Fellows
Diana du Toit
Janice Fraser
Des Moss & Meryn Hickman
Joanna Gowans
Peter & Jeannie Buxton
Gus & Beverley Van de Roer
Carol Anderson
John & Margaret Hunn
Sheina Burns
Steven & Lee Blair
Toni Finkle
June Orr
Catherine Lytte
Gay Williamson

Des Moss
Meryn Hickman
Gayle Cullwick
Muriel Mulliner
Janet McMenamin
Jenny Fellows
Diana du Toit
Janice Fraser
Prue Densem
Gayle Cullwick
Muriel Mulliner
Janet McMenamin
Jenny Fellows
Diana du Toit
Janice Fraser

Bernadette Rundle
Ian Breeze
Helen Mills
David McCrone
Richard Stone
Annette Cumming

Karen Palmer
Val Fergusson
Shona Spencer
Gavin Mickell
Laurie Atkinson
Allison Cattanach
Rosemary Ralston
Gaynor Stewart
Blair Treadwell
Sheila Williams

176 Barnard Street    Wadestown 6012
18 Upland Road
2/11 Upland Road
29 Naughton Tce
9 Westhill Road
174 Mitchell Street
15 Homebush Road
196B The Terrace
9 Tui Road
6/25 Madras Street
4991381
4757424
9708170
3873402
5685883
3843150
4796500
4940102
5627410
4792226

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U3A WELLINGTON CITY INC

Committee Members 2011/12