

From the President: Keeping up the good work

U3A Wellington City is in good heart. This is thanks to the sterling job being done by your committee. The lectures this term have been varied, informative, challenging and interesting. Numbers attending confirm this.

We are fortunate to have so many talented presenters in our city. In turn many of these speakers tell me how much they enjoy your company and the standard and depth of the questions asked. To the Programme Team we say “thank you” and please keep up the good work.

Bring a Friend for Free Days have been a great success. We welcomed 56 visitors to hear Peter Boshier, the ex-Ombudsman. They were treated to one of the finest lectures heard this year or at any time. Would he not make a great Governor General?

The list goes on: Simon Louisson arranged new advertising flyers at a competitive rate. Facilitator Demetra Kennedy, with boundless energy, ensures that Special Interest Groups (SIGs) grow and thrive. John Marwick reports that subscriptions are being renewed at the same rate despite the increase to \$50. Equally pleasing is the calibre and enthusiasm of the volunteers who come forward to support our activities in various ways, from joining the committee to coordinating groups and running lecture day activities smoothly.

Our thanks and appreciation to those whose time with the committee is ending. Faith Atkins, Jeannie Buxton, John Rutherford and Gill Sutherland have brought their life experience and contacts to benefit the membership, sharing their skills and improving systems. All have helped build the reputation that has seen our membership grow by 50 percent in three years, to the record of 1504.

On Tuesday 9 September we will hold our 32nd AGM. As usual, relevant reading material will be distributed ahead of the time so the business of the day can be completed quickly. That business will I hope include the sign-off of the new constitution of U3A Wellington City Incorporated. This has presented some unique challenges and consumed much time, including the greatly appreciated and unstinting expertise given by two lawyers.

As we start our 33rd year there is much to look forward to. Enjoy the intellectual, physical and social activities that your U3A is offering to enhance your wellbeing.

Bruce Levick,

President: president@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz



Bruce Levick confers with Treasurer John Rutherford (photo Gwen Levick)

Arrive early for 9 September AGM

The AGM will start promptly at 10 am on **Tuesday 9 September**, aiming to conclude business by 10.30 am before Rebecca Macfie speaks on Hardship and Hope.

On **Tuesday 12 August**, all members will be emailed the relevant paperwork to read ahead of the meeting: the Agenda, the proposed Constitution, the Financial Statements and the Committee report.

In the new Constitution, the Committee consists of three Officers – the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer – and not more than nine other members, who are assigned a range of roles and often represent significant volunteer groups. Each person wanting to be a member of the committee, whether an existing member or someone new, must be nominated by two current U3A members, and an election will be held if more than the required number of names are received by the deadline of **Tuesday 2 September**. Beverley Dixon (secretary@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz) can provide nomination forms.

AGM countdown

Friday 8 August: Final Committee meeting before AGM

Tuesday 12 August: Agenda, proposed Constitution, Financial Statements and Committee report sent to all members.

Tuesday 2 September: Deadline for committee nominations.

Tuesday 9 September: 10 am – 10.30 am at The Embassy 32nd AGM of U3A Wellington City

Tuesday 9 September: 10.30am- 11.45 am: Hardship & Hope, Rebecca Macfie.

Programming the future

There will be a new Lead Programme Coordinator after the AGM when Gill Sutherland steps down. We have four people who have shown interest in continuing to be part of the Lecture Programme Team.

The new team will start the process of identifying speakers for 2026, with the aim of having a list to share with the full U3A committee later this year. Speakers are chosen to ensure a spread across 12 different categories, with a balance of male and female presenters. Possible speakers include the long list of suggestions from the survey of members in 2024. The team is always happy to have new speaker ideas (programmes@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz), ideally with contact details and knowledge that the nominated person is a good speaker.



SIGs in full sing

The **Singing for Fun** group (singing@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz) met for their first singalong on Tuesday 15 July. They are a determined and creative group, persevering with their objective to have fun while still looking for a guitar or piano player to join them. Photo: Maria MacKay, Coordinator.

The **Smart Phone Photography** group has a new coordinator, **Mike Drain** (photography@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz). The group meets weekly on Fridays between 12 noon and 1:00 pm, both during and between U3A terms.

Term 3 lectures take a break for Film Festival

Dates and subjects are correct at the first week of August. Note there will be a two-week break in lectures to make way for the International Film Festival at the Embassy.

Term 3 ends with the September/October school holidays. As both the order of events and the titles of the talks can change, go to www.u3awellingtoncity.org.nz/programmes, and check the weekly email for the latest information. Term 4 topics will be in Newsletter 134 at the beginning of October.

Friday 1 August

Tom Kay

Making Room for Rivers

Tuesday 5 August

Christopher Pugsley

Breaking Ranks with Empire: New Zealand's War Memorials on Gallipoli and the Western Front



Serge van Dam

Friday 8 August

Serge van Dam

Angel investing the key to Wellington's prosperity



Sally Davenport

Tuesday 12 August, Friday 15 August, Tuesday 19 August and Friday 22 August: no lectures during NZ International Film Festival.

Tuesday 26 August

Sally Davenport

Challenging Science: Doing "Mission-led" Research in New Zealand

Friday 29 August

Kathryn McCallum

The importance of understanding AI for all



Kathryn McCallum

Tuesday 2 September

Lewis Rarm

Topic TBC

Friday 5 September

Emeritus Professor John McClure

The climate crisis – Why don't people do more? And how can we make it happen?



Paul Ward



Jeff Hall

Tuesday 9 September

Rebecca Macfie

Hardship & Hope

Friday 12 September

Paul Ward and Jeff Hall

The Capital Kiwi Project – a success story

Tuesday 16 September

Rob Campbell

Swapping knowledge for political intuition



Rob Campbell

Friday 19 September

TBC

Tuesday 23 September, Friday 25 September, Tuesday 30 September and Friday 3 October: no lectures during the School holidays

Making the most of midwinter



The highlight of the July holiday events was a trip to Greytown Winter Festival, complete with sprinkles of snow, a midwinter feast and seasonal decorations. Closer to home, Events Co-ordinator Sue Dale (events@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz) took a group for an exploratory ramble into the quirky corners of Cuba Street. A “few little things” are planned for the Film Festival break, and the spring holiday. Sunday lunches continue, the next on 3 August. Photos: Sue Dale (Town Hall) and Sachiko Webber.

Farewell to four from the committee

Faith Atkins: 500 welcomes, one farewell



Faith Atkins, Membership Secretary since 2022, says her hard-working fellow committee members have been inspiring to work with. “I shall miss the stimulating weekly lectures, but we are moving from windy Wellington to the warmth of Hawkes Bay.”

Faith and her family chose New Zealand over 25 years ago. As British diplomats, they had moved around the world for 20 years, but after a stay in Wellington, “couldn’t bear to leave this wonderful country, so jumped ship to stay permanently.” When she retired after a career in public engagement for a variety of academic and research institutions, “U3A was a natural fit for me, with its emphasis on continuing education”. In three years, Faith has welcomed nearly 500 new members, a growth of over 50 percent. Her technology skills smoothed the transition to the Stripe payment system and made her a valuable member of the ongoing database system review team. But she also ensured the dwindling number of members not on the internet were kept involved.

Jeannie Buxton: Checking you in

Jeannie Buxton will soon hear each lecture session from the start. As Front-of-House (FOH) coordinator for the past five years, she is usually late into the auditorium after checking all arrivals are accounted for. The growing membership, and interest in speakers makes for increasingly busy days at FOH. An average of 271 have attended each session this year, with a record 443 for Peter Boshier.

With 15 on the roster, Jeannie says, “Front-of-House has run very smoothly over the past term - thanks to our excellent team of volunteers, who turn up



Continued on the next page

punctually, are very welcoming, and well versed in the procedures we have established.” Technical issues were once a major frustration, but now rarely occur as most have been resolved. Jeannie says committee IT advisor **Malcolm Wheeler** is providing great support – especially as IT expertise was not her strength in her previous role in charge of production for a film company.

“Now, if only everyone would pick up the new membership cards we keep at FOH all would be well!” she says.

John Rutherford: long-serving and long-distance

Treasurer **John Rutherford** (pictured on page 1) is required to step down, having served the maximum of five years as an Officer of the committee. John was elected Treasurer in 2020, the year he joined U3A. Waikanae resident John is a long-distance lecture attendee, usually choosing to travel by train and bus.

His time covers the introduction of Stripe payments, and the switch from spreadsheets to Xero for accounting – a move with which U3A member **Terry Hughes** was extremely helpful. In turn, SIG Facilitator **Demetra Kennedy**, thanks John (and Faith) for being “super-generous with their time when I was new to U3A, assisting me to learn processes and find information, and setting up an efficient invoice approval system”.

John has had experience in the management of electricity generation and transmission projects covering a range of generation technologies and transmission voltages. That includes involvement with the Clutha River hydroelectric, Tongariro Power Scheme, some thermal power stations and the Ohaaki geothermal scheme, as well as the preliminary stages of some wind farms.

John has found time for overseas travel, both business and pleasure, but although he has a son in New York, is not sure whether he will travel beyond New Zealand again.

Gill Sutherland: Diversity and balance



When new U3A member **Gill Sutherland** (pictured) saw the appeal for someone to join the Programme Team, it seemed an ideal fit for her interests and extensive network of contacts. Gill retired after 29 years as the Director of Academy Operations for the Royal Society Te Aparangi. The Academy is made up of Fellows recognised for excellent achievements in the sciences, technology and the humanities. In her role, she met some outstanding individuals – and compelling speakers.

With the Programme Team, she has set up systems and protocols to ensure a diverse and balanced coverage of a rich range of topics. Team member **Simon Louisson** says Gill has been a superb leader. “Under her guidance the committee has hit the sweet spot nexus between science, the arts, societal issues and entertainment that has seen our audiences grow and grow.”

Gill is happy to see the involved and engaged response to speakers and get positive feedback from members. She is equally pleased when the busy and in-demand presenters tell her how much they value the U3A audience for its attention and questions. “They see it as an honour.”

With a range of other interests, such as Bridge, golf, walking and a long-standing book club, and family members around the country, Gill originally intended to serve only three years as Programme Leader but persuaded herself to extend to four years because she was enjoying herself so much. “I have relished the chance to use my professional networks to bring interesting speakers to our U3A audiences and have enjoyed learning more about areas I would not usually have delved into. It has been a most rewarding voluntary job.”

A warm welcome to new members

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|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| ● Diane Atkinson | ● Deborah Earl | ● Don MacKay | ● Martyn Pinckard |
| ● Margaret Austin | ● Thomas Earl | ● Christine Maddock | ● Jackie Pivac |
| ● Joan Basher | ● Christine Edwards | ● Bev Marshall | ● Joanna Poole |
| ● Reid Basher | ● Tom Eginton | ● Andrew Matheson | ● Patti Poole |
| ● Helen Bath | ● Marion Elliott | ● Sarah Mayo | ● Diana Pryde |
| ● Gavin Beattie | ● Elizabeth Elliott | ● Jeanette McCracken | ● John Rowlinson |
| ● Ken Boam | ● Jennifer Falvey | ● Joan McCracken | ● Marian Salmon |
| ● Dawn Brown | ● Helen Ferguson | ● Graham McDonald | ● Sunita Singh |
| ● Tracey Collins | ● Annette Finlayson | ● Maria McDonald | ● Kim Slessor |
| ● Edwina Cormack | ● Mayuri Gangdev | ● John McKinlay | ● Kevin Smidt |
| ● Ailsa Cornell | ● Brigid Grant | ● Sue McLaren | ● Wendy Stockwell |
| ● Nicole Cosgrove | ● Jan Haynes | ● Tim McMahon | ● Diana Suggate |
| ● Pip Cresswell | ● Judy Hedwig | ● David Mills | ● Margaret Swinerd |
| ● Bronwyn Cross | ● Jude Henry | ● Joanne Milne | ● Bridget Taumoepeau |
| ● Debbie Curran | ● Charlene Hillyard | ● Malcolm Moore | ● Mike Tylee |
| ● Sally Davenport | ● Michelle Horwood | ● Lyn Mulholland | ● Ron Veitch |
| ● Rebecca Denford | ● Caroline Hughes | ● Peter Muxlow | ● Eve Wallace |
| ● Nigel Deppe | ● Malcolm Joblin | ● Chris O'Brien | ● Karen Watson |
| ● Brian Dobbie | ● Allan Johnston | ● Katrina Oliver | ● John Willett |
| ● Alastair Duncan | ● Tony King | ● Gail Philipsen | ● Elizabeth Wood |

Membership news

Tena kotou katoa, ko **John Marwick** toko ingoa. In June **Faith Atkins** passed the role of Membership Secretary to me. I'd like to thank her for running the membership process with care and efficiency. She warned that June and July would be busy times with the annual renewal process; she wasn't wrong.

I'd like to thank the 88% of members who chose to renew or join through Stripe. That's the system you use when you "Click here to renew online" in the email we send you. Stripe records your renewal, charges the subscription to your credit card, and automatically sends you a receipt. Nothing for me to do. Maybe in future we will be able to offer members a similar automatic annual renewal.



Reminder:
pay U3A
sub

If you still use internet banking or payment through a bank teller please put your first and last names, your U3A membership number (it's on your membership card and in the reminder notice), and SUBS as a reference. That helps ensure I apply the payment to the correct person.

Sub still due? Your \$50 subscription must be paid by Sunday 31 August to continue access to lectures, SIGs, and holiday events.

U3A Wellington City – www.u3awellingtoncity.org.nz

"Providing opportunities for continuing education that promotes the ongoing development and wellbeing of our members".

Lectures on Tuesday and Friday at the Embassy Theatre from 10.30-11.45.

Enquiries and feedback: info@u3awellingtoncity.org.nz