

U3A Nelson in Retrospect

1991 A course for Senior Women is organised by Faith Williamson and held at Nelson Polytech. Pat Wilkinson, Eve Emsley and Lois Morgan and others are the founding committee and establish a U3A Nelson study group. Eve Emsley is U3A Nelson Convenor. An Art History group, continuing to meet in 2017, joins U3A Nelson as one of the first groups after Val Gardiner comes back from completing an art course in Auckland. Harry Naylor and Albert Jones's long-standing Astronomy group meets for the first time.

1992 A trial programme is held in the winter term offering topics of World Religion and Enjoying Poetry. The founding group decides to start small and let U3A develop in its own way. Bill and Faith Williamson run a group on The History of Glass.

1993 U3A Nelson receives a setting-up grant of \$800 from the Aged Lottery, under the umbrella of Aged Concern. Pat Wilkinson visits Dewsbury U3A in Yorkshire and learns about how U3A works there. One rule she brings home is that U3A must not invite speakers from outside their group as the members must do the research and presentations, the emphasis being on participation. The Groups are offered on a term by term basis and The Hearing Association rooms are used for coffee mornings twice a year. In June an interview with U3A members Lois Morgan and Jack Scurr appears in the Nelson Mail.

1994 U3A becomes a Voluntary Organisation entitled to tax exemption.

1995 Meetings are still held in Hearing House, where over the winter a gold coin is required to keep the heater going but it doesn't work!

1996 The Sunday Luncheon club begins. Coffee morning speakers include Christopher Vine, and Mrs Jean Coultard, President of Nelson Genealogical Society. The venue changes to the Presbyterian Church Hall in Nile Street with 70-80 members attending.

1997 Marian Ring becomes Convenor in June. Coffee mornings increase to three a year and the venue is now the Red Cross Rooms. The end-of-year meeting is held in the Victory Room at the Trafalgar Centre. The art group coloured in the pamphlets to make them more attractive for library display.

1998 The first AGM is held. Marian Ring the Co-ordinator presents the first Annual Report. Groups have grown to fourteen. Val Gardiner's group on Pre-European Nelson includes the study of the Continental Drift, Geology, Archaeology, and Maori History of the area. By now there are groups studying History, Travel, Music, English Literature, and much more.

1999 Is the Year of the Older Person. Jack Shallcrass, well-known educator speaks about Lifelong Learning. Ann Carrol runs a History of Scotland group and the participants finished off with a haggis sent up from Dunedin. But they turned down the whisky! The winter programme for the 1999 Art History group is advertised as Art Deco China (John Phillips), Beginnings of Art Nouvea (Rosemary Boyd and Judy Slow), Revolution of Artists (Judy

Burks and Mary Wood), New York Graphic Art (Elly Maas), Jewellery and Fashion (Merle Baird and Jill Braithwait), Glass and Statues (Ann Carroll and Jocelyn Allison), Art Deco: Art and Graphics (Aroha Paisley), and Buildings, Interiors and Plastics (Helen Stuart and Gloria Hastings).

2000 Hockton Hall becomes the venue for meetings, and there are over 200 members attending classes. Classes are operated on a two-term basis each of 8-10 weeks. Albert Jones speaks at a coffee morning.

2001 Brian Say becomes U3A Nelson Convener. Eve Emsley is made an honorary member and Patron. The 10th Anniversary of U3A is celebrated with a lunch at the Maitai Bowling Club. The speaker is Athol Blair from The Historical Society.

2002 U3A moves to the SeniorNet Rooms at Pioneer Park. A charge of a gold coin for morning tea is introduced. 25 classes are offered with 23 going ahead.

2003 Sadly Eve Emsley dies and coffee morning members take a moment to remember all she had done for U3A. The longstanding Classical Music group is instigated by Brian Say.

2004 The venue for meetings moves to the Suburban Club, we are now outgrowing all the venues.

2005 The speaker for the AGM is a U3A member Shirley Miles who speaks about Pearly Kings and Queens. She'd raised \$18,000 in 2 years 2 months for Hospice. Another speaker is Jenny McKenzie from Guardian Health Care about personal alarms. Aroha Paisley and Val Gardiner help to get a U3A group off the ground in Motueka and a donation of \$250 is made to assist them to do this.

2006 Jean Morris becomes U3A Nelson Convener. A brochure advertising study groups is instigated. Pam Schouten of Grey Power speaks at one of the coffee mornings.

2007 A group called '*Suterable Art at the Suter*' works towards an exhibition in 2008 that will use material drawn from the Suter's permanent collection and reflect in art works the age span of members from the birth of their oldest member (Ann Carrol) until the youngest. AGM Speaker is Liz Chinnery-Jack on Education, and another speaker is Lisa Oldham from Elma Turner Library.

2008 The Suter Art group wins first prize in a New Zealand-wide competition for Dynamic Learning, receiving a trophy at a presentation held in Wellington. Community Post provides assistance with postage for posting programmes to members. A mid-winter lunch is held at Aloha Lodge with a finger food lunch and entertainment. The Coordinator is interviewed on Mainland TV. U3A Nelson participates in the positive Aging Expo. The AGM speaker is Rodney Haines on living with and surmounting disabilities.

2009 The Constitution is amended to include annual membership with a subscription of \$15 per member per year. Jean Morris is elected first President. General Meetings are now held every 2 months. Committee members co-ordinate the study groups, membership and communication. Study groups run for most of the year. The mid-winter lunch is well attended. The AGM speaker is Annette Milligan on The Art of the Performer. Another speaker is Matt Lawrey. There are over 100 financial members. Study groups for the year include Ancient Civilisations (Tony Charlton, later Caryll Brooker), Art History (Elly Maas), Astronomy (Harry Naylor), the Celts, Current Events, David Dimbleby's discussion on 'English Landscape,' Exploring Literature at the Nellie Nightingale Library (Averil Kepple), Famous and Infamous, Forum (Sally Warren, Geology: back to the beginning, Jazz and Big Band Music (Ron O'Reilly), Men and Women of Science (Paul Bieleski), Social and Political Isms (Paul Bieleski), Luncheon group (Stella Say), Music: the age of the performer (Brian Say), Science and Technology, Travel, Up the Garden Path (Rosie Page), Write Your Life 1 and 2 (Judy Campbell).

2010 Liz Chinnery-Jack is President. A Post Office box is rented for all correspondence and a web site set up by Barry Davis. The subscription is raised to \$20 per person per annum. A combined meeting of Top of the South U3As is held with Golden Bay, Marlborough, Motueka and Nelson members attending. AGM speakers are Alison McAlpine on Retirement – What's That? Rachel Reese on 'Between Ghetto and Graveyard,' and a group of Nayland College students talking about 'Retirement in the Future.' A new venue, Aloha Lodge, is found to be suitable. Albert Jones, Nelson's astronomer and a long term U3A stalwart turns 90. Members enjoy a Winter Lunch with entertainment by a musical group from Nayland college. There are 118 financial members. A regular newsletter is sent out to members and Liz Chinnery and Jean update the Constitution. New groups introduced this year include The Ascent of Man (Lindsay Hunter, later Jocelyn Lewis, then Anna and Malcolm Chalmers), Ballet (Meryl Baird), Flat Earth Walking (Jill Brathwaite, later Rosemary Evatt), Irish History (Fay Eades later Noeline Lawson), Pictures of England (Ngairé Birch). Plants and Places (Dorothy Ward), The Great Discontinuity (Carl Horn), They Made Their Mark, Write Your Life 1 (Jean Morris, later Lyn Falconer).

2011 The AGM speakers are Alan Mathews on Why Nelson?, Aldo Miccio, Mayor of Nelson, Joe Kennedy from Civil Defence, and Nick Smith and Maryan Street, MPs. A Committee working party recommends that groups are no longer run for a finite time, instead, once a group starts it can continue for as long as the group wishes. This enables an easier administration of the groups as members no longer need to reapply for groups at the beginning of each year. Kay Hunter spearheads The Welcoming Christchurch initiative. Following the earthquakes that devastated Christchurch, 66 members from Christchurch U3As were hosted by members of U3A Nelson, billeted by Nelson members, welcomed at a luncheon held at Founders Park, participated in study group meetings, visited places of interest around the Nelson area and farewelled at a dinner held at Anchor Bar and Grill, a most successful initiative. Membership stands at 146. New groups this year include Artworks, A to Z of Art History (Val Gardiner), Ballet (Meryl Baird), Current Clippings (Chris Bowyer), Great Discontinuity (Carl Horn), How We Built Britain (Ngairé Birch), Irish History (Fay Eades), Our Living Language (Liz Chinnery), Reading Group (Averil Kepple),

The Scottish Enlightenment (Paul Bieleski), Shakespeare (Liz Chinnery), The Search for Health (Ira Grewer), Shakespeare (Liz Chinnery), Social & Political Isms (Paul Bieleski), The Normans (Brian Say), Visual Arts 1900-1945 (Lois Davis), Write Your Life 2 (Judy Campbell),

2012 Kay Hunter is President. The meeting venue is now the Tahuna Functions Centre, which has a speaker system. The Constitution has been amended to authorise Life Memberships and Merle Baird, Judy Campbell, Barry Davis, Val Gardiner, Jean Morris and Brian Say are the first recipients. U3A has become a Registered Charity. A data base developer, John Blaauwbroek is engaged to develop an on-line data base that will revolutionise the administration of the organisation. Plans are made to celebrate the 21st anniversary of U3A Nelson in November. A debate is held at a general meeting to ponder the issue of 'Whether the Nelson City Council should be able to regulate the population' and Bill Malcolm's 'Little Bo-Peep's Money Pie' interests us. November 2012 Membership is 170, there are 40 active study groups, and 21 years of U3A Nelson is celebrated where Judy Hiener and her enthusiastic players present her hilarious rendition of 'Homer's story.' At that memorable event, the first recipients of Life Membership are awarded. They are Merle Baird, Judy Campbell, Barry Davis, Val Gardiner, Jean Morris and Brian Say. Liz Chinnery outlined the exceptional contributions made by each of them. New groups offered this year are Contemporary Literature and the Art of Writing (Lois Davis and Carol O'Reilly), Effective Democratic Meetings and Speak Up (by Carl Horn), Exploring Music and Why it Moves Us (Kay Hunter), Famous and Infamous (Georgina Rayner), History of Jazz (Ron O'Reilly), How We Built Britain (Ngairé Birch), Mosses and Lichens of Nelson (presentation by Bill Malcolm), Opera at the Met (Peter Sutton, later Heather Clendon), Political Science (Lindsay Hunter), Preserving Our Family History on DVD (Gerard Hueting), Scrabble (Tony Charlton), Science as Culture (Paul Bieleski), Search for Health Through the Ages (Eira Grewer), Theatre & Film (Kay Hunter, later Noeline Lawson), Write Your Life 3 (Kay Hunter later Annette Dacombe).

2013 A New Member Coordinator is appointed to regularly organise familiarisation meetings for new members. A valuable 'Planning Session' provides opportunity for members to talk about the strengths, weaknesses and their ideas for improving the organisation. Speakers throughout the year included Dr Murray McClintock on Global Warming, Coroner Mike Ward about How Life Long Learning fits into the Council planning, MP Maryan Street on her 'End of Life Choice' bill, and members Gordon Suddaby, Carl Horn and Lindsay Hunter provide hints on how to improve our learning. There are 45 active study groups and a membership of 200+. The Art History group has now been meeting for 20 years, with many of the original groups. New groups this year include: Architecture (Barry Davis, later Judith Hunter), Ascent of Man 2 (Sue Thompson-Horn), Children's Literature (Nan and David Turner), Critical Reading of Contemporary Literature (Richard Talbot), Forum (Sally Warren), Interesting People and Their Achievements (Paul Bieleski), Mosses and Lichens of Nelson (Bill Malcolm), History of National Geographic (Barry Davis), Pictures of Britain (Ngairé Birch), Problems and Solutions (Paul Bieleski), Revolutionary Thinkers and Their Revolutions (Paul Bieleski), Scrabble (Tony Charlton), TED Talks 1 (Kay Hunter, later Max Robertson & Judith Hunter), WEA Book Discussion (David and Nan Turner), Website

development group (Lindsay Hunter), Revolutionary Thinkers and their Revolutions (Paul Bieleski), Visual Arts 1900-1945 (Lois Davis), Write Your Life 4 (Judy Hiener) and Creative Writing (Judy Hiener)

2014 Jill Dickinson becomes president and the venue for our general meetings is now the Nelson Golf Club. Paul Bieleski and Elly Maas become Life Members. Presentations from Gordon Suddaby on Effective Groups: Contributing to a Positive Experience for all, Peter Millward on Nelson's Contribution to WW1, Grant Sidaway from SeniorNet, and Sir Geoffrey Palmer, talking about his time in Parliament. A new tradition establishes with an end of year party to thank the convenors for their valued contributions to our organisation. Around 25 convenors attend. New groups and courses include: Aspects of World History / History of India (Brian Say), Ballet 2 (Jill Ford), Bookcases (Sally Mason), Discovering Our Local Birdlife (Grace Sutherland, later Lyn Eden), Electrical Knitting (Roger Haynes), Exploring Nelson Walking Group (Stella Say), Genetic Engineering and Toxins in Food (Bill Malcolm), Hands in the Garden (Kay Hunter, later Jana Bott), How to make slip-cast pottery cups (taught by Bill and Nancy Malcolm), Jazz (Ron O'Reilly), More Social Isms (Paul Bieleski), Mosses and Lichens of Nelson (taught by Bill Malcolm), Political Science (Lindsay Hunter), Travel (Gordon Suddaby), Strong Women (Barbara Mason), Te Reo and Tikanga Maori (Anne Mitchell).

2015 Liz Chinnery is awarded a Life Membership. We enjoyed talks by Rebecca Bowater on 'Fliers, Flora and Fungi,' Neil Bruce Miller on 'WW1 American Cargo Ships,' Roger Pittman on his work in UK TV, and Julie Catchpole on 'Colour.' A study group works together to design a more comprehensive website for U3A Nelson. New study groups are ABC Anything but Classical (Roger Haynes), Australia (Jill Dickinson), Bookcases (Sally Mason), Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey (Carl Horn), Current Affairs (Pauline Daly), Economics: Exploring Nelson Walking group (Stella Say), Military History (Ian MacDougall), Social Brunchers (Pam Jenkins), Shakespeare in Italy, Theory Propaganda Reality (Paul Bieleski), Walking Through History and The Normans (Ngaire Birch), Save-a-Life with the Red Cross, Strong Women (Barbara Mason), TED Talks 2 (Paul Lunberg) Website Development Group (Lindsay Hunter).

2016 Peter Sutton is president. The upgraded website, designed by the Website Development group is developed and put up on the web by Lindsay Hunter. We enjoyed presentations from Jettie Skerten on the Refugee services in Nelson, Colin Davis on 'Improving Memory,' Paul Taylor on 'Autistic Spectrum Disorders,' and Angela Francis from the Nelson District Health Board on 'Primary Health Care,' An application goes to The Rata Foundation for funding to simplify the technology systems by linking the data base, website and email control panel and \$4,000 is awarded. John Blauwbroek is engaged to do this work. There are over 30 members acting as convenors. Caryll Brooker and Harry Naylor become Life Members. The membership is now around 250 and 55+ study groups operated throughout 2016. New groups this year are Ancient Civilisations 2 (Ann Childs), Applying Thinking Skills, (a course presented by Colin Davis), Civilisation (David Turner), In Pursuit of Happiness (Gerald Noonan), Musical Renditions (Kay Hunter), Musicals (David Turner), The Normans (Ngaire Birch), Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan and of Rossini (Cecile Strang),

Ramblers (Will Rickerby), Successful Gardening: Science not myth (course run by Bill Brett),

2017 New groups offered are Ancient Britain (Ngairé Birch), Naming Our New Zealand Plants (Grace Sutherland), Playing With Words (a course presented by Michelanne Forster), Bill Brett presents his 3rd run of his course, Successful Gardening: science not myth.

Compiled by Jean Morris and Liz Chinnery in 2012 and updated by Kay Hunter, April 2017.

2018 In April Lindsay Hunter passed away. Lindsay was a foundation member, who made a massive contribution to our U3A. Later in the year we also lost active and reliable Committee members Barry Davis and Jill Ford.

Early in the year the Admin program linked into the Public Program so that information about groups was always up to date. David Turner as SGC [Study Group Convenor] improved the organisation of the Groups, and this tool made life much easier.

At the AGM subs were raised from \$20 to \$30 – largely to streamline the tea service at General Meetings.

Stoke Community Sports Facility opened, earlier we had supported it but it turned out to be rather too expensive and not quite fitting for our needs.

The Age Concern Connect Project recognised U3A at the Inaugural Senior Champions event held at the Trafalgar Pavilion. The citation reads : “On behalf of Age Connect, we thank you for promoting positive aging, encouraging community connections and thereby supporting the older members of our Nelson Tasman community. For this we thank past President Peter Sutton.

2019

For the AGM. Keith Hawke spoke about and showed his film about Appo Hocton – just brilliant.

Pressure from the Golf Club had U3A consider insurance and we took out Indemnity Insurance with VERO, through Rothbury [Brokers].

Positive Aging Expo proved a worthwhile event to support with Wendy Cornish organizing the rosters at Headingly Centre

2020 This year started with BadNews! Our computer set up was removed from the Internet by our service provider as the Joomla program had been seriously attacked. The virus was causing massive overuse of the SP's system. Paul Lunberg wrote a simple Google-based website to replace the old Joomla one, while David Wright, the IT Coordinator, managed to work with the IP and get the old Admin program working and a link established to the new link to the Google site.

References

U3A Nelson Committee files

U3A Nelson card file 1991 - 2008

U3A Nelson online database 2012 - 2017

U3A Newsletters

Thanks also to the A to Z of Art History group for their memories.