



www.u3anelson.org.nz

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Learning for Life

Volume 14, Issue 3, April, 2021

Our next Members' Meeting will be the AGM on Wednesday 5th May from 10 am till 12 noon at Elim Church, 625 Main Road, Stoke, Nelson. **Note that this is a week later than our usual meeting day, to allow time for the Treasurer to complete the annual accounts.**

Our speaker for the AGM will be Mr Richard Griffin, who will be well known to many members of U3A from his time as a political reporter for television in the 70's and 80's. Richard sent us this bio:

"My career has pivoted on publishing and broadcasting and the occasional flirtation with public relations both here in New Zealand and offshore in Europe and the US.

My family has a connection to Nelson going back to the 1840s but I was born in Wellington and educated in Auckland and Dunedin. I have on occasion been a foreign correspondent for the BBC. In more recent days: chair of the Parliamentary Press Gallery; Political editor for Radio New Zealand. Executive director with TVNZ; Chief Press Secretary and head of information for the Jim Bolger led Government. I have been Broadcasting representative on several Government Boards and was, for ten years, chairman of Radio New Zealand.

All my news and current affairs experience is a long way from where I started as a med student at Otago University. Strange really!"

Topics covered in this Newsletter:

- Subscriptions due
 - Notice of AGM and agenda
 - Reminder to use the website
 - Possible scam
 - President's report
 - Membership or subscription inquiries; update your details
 - Group reports—(Serious Discussions; Birds of the Nelson Region; Russia - then and now)
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Subscriptions

These are now due. Thank you to those who have already paid. The annual subscription is \$30 per person. **If paying by Internet banking (the preferred method), pay to U3A Nelson, account number 03 0703 0385648 00 and be sure to include your initial and family name.** Our Post Office Box has been closed.

If you don't use Internet banking, take your money to your bank and ask the teller to pay into the U3A account as shown above. Be sure to ask the teller to put your name in the Particulars part of the account so that the Membership secretary can immediately see who paid the money in. Get a receipt too!

Last year quite a number of members paid twice. If you aren't sure if you have already paid, please contact Wendy Cornish at tonyandwendy@xtra.co.nz or phone 544 2794 and she will tell you.

Notice is hereby given that the U3A Nelson Annual General Meeting will be held in the

Elim Church, 625 Main Road Stoke, 10.00 am May 5, 2021.

Agenda—

Minutes of the last AGM – July 22 2020 – on U3A Nelson website-

President's Report – David Turner – on U3A Nelson website

Financial Report – Allison Robertson

Election of Committee for 2020.

The following committee members are available and willing to serve for the coming year.

President – David Turner	Vice President— Wendy Cornish
Secretary – Bill Brett	Treasurer – Allison Robertson
Anne White	Gordon Suddaby
Steve Shaw	Trevor Lewis
David Wright	Nan Turner
Immediate Past President - Paul Lunberg	

We seek nominations for one vacancy to bring the committee up to full complement.

Nominations should be on the form available on the U3A Nelson web site and sent to the secretary before April 21, 2021. (bbrettnz@gmail.com)

Remits

The committee has no remits to put to the meeting. Remits from members must be received by the secretary by April 21, 2021. (bbrettnz@gmail.com)

General Business

Close

Don't forget there is a wealth of information on our website at www.u3anelson.org.nz so please make a habit of checking it for anything you need to know about U3A Nelson. Click on any of the headings (see snip below) to find how to join; the list of Study Groups including those with vacancies; past newsletters; an Administration section with meeting details, etc; and a list of the committee and how to contact them.

[U3A HOME](#) [JOIN](#) [STUDY GROUPS](#) [NEWSLETTERS](#) [ADMINISTRATION](#) [CONTACT](#)

Starting a new group

If any U3A member has an idea for a new group, please approach the committee as they may be able to help with resources.

Possible Scam

U3A members please be aware of a possible scam. Recently a current member had a person claiming to be from U3A and stating that he had been sent to fix a computer. He was invited into the house and spent some time "playing" around on the said computer. Highly suspicious!

U3A does not claim to offer computer fixes or remedies!

David Turner

President's report

Hello U3A Members

Many of you will remember the brilliant NZ comedian, John Clarke (AKA Fred Dagg) with his song, "You Don't Know How Lucky You Are!" I thought of this when reading an email from a U3A colleague in Capetown: John Stoddart. I quote from John's recent email: "At the time of writing, our country has had over 1.5m cases of Covid19 with more than 52 thousand deaths thus most U3A branches have not had face-to-face meetings for a year now. Vaccination is proceeding at a snail's pace. At this rate it will take 16 years to reach the target of 67% of the population so there is little prospect of returning to face-to-face meetings. People have been limping along using Zoom with the benefit of being able to join in Zoom talks given by other branches. There are over 12 000 U3A members in South Africa and 26 branches. The drawback is that bigger talks (up to 500 participants) tend to become more like a webinar and not at all interactive!" This is definitely food for thought! Although there are grizzles and grumbles from some, I do believe we "do know how lucky we are!"

In this newsletter you will see we are asking for nominations for interested people to join our U3A committee. I guarantee we don't bite!

I look forward to renewing friendships at our AGM, Wednesday 5 May.

Warm regards.

David Turner

Membership or subscription inquiries

Please remember if you have any questions on either of the above, send them to tonyandwendy@xtra.co.nz, or membership@u3anelson.org.nz.

Update your details

While on the subject, if you have recently changed your email, phone number or address etc, please contact Wendy on either of the above so she can keep the database up to date.

Group Reports

Serious Discussions.

What a good meeting we had yesterday. It was Easter Sunday so unsurprisingly we lacked a couple of members but the 6 remaining cleared their minds on a most interesting topic. Our Convenor is Liz Chinnery-Jack-Bowyer and she directed each one of us to talk for about 4 minutes on the topic. Of course we had planned our positions during the weeks before the gathering and had worried about 'News and Information: Where do we gather these from and how to we know our sources are reliable?' Having heard each person we spent perhaps 5 minutes clarifying some of the points they had made, then after all had spoken we had a general discussion about the subject.

At our first meeting [the first Monday of March] we discussed "Liberal democracy as the most appropriate form of government for the 21st century", and that too was elucidating.

Of course we started with tea and bikkies, as the photo shows.

This promises to be a really interesting monthly event, with many possible viewpoints.

Paul Lunberg



From Left
Gerald, Liz
Richard and
Barbara

Birds of the Nelson Region

Spotless Crakes, Fernbirds, Spoonbills and much more...

This enthusiastic band of birders got off to a great start with spotting two rarely-seen native bird species.

On our first outing at Rough Island, hoping to spot the secretive *banded rail*, instead, we were lucky to watch three equally secretive *Spotless Crakes* on the muddy water's edge between a tidal side stream and the main estuary channel. Oblivious to us and passing cyclists and traffic they scuttled about for a good twenty minutes, while members stayed glued to their binoculars or tried to capture them on camera.

We had already watched *spoonbills* in a tidal channel, sifting the water with their wide, sideways-sweeping bills; elegant, long-legged *pied stilts* feeding from the mud on the water's edge, and *pied shags* flying overhead from their roost in the pines.

"You just have to be patient and slow down" remarked someone.

"Be alert, watch and listen", our leader's advice.

On our second outing, we began with watching various waterfowl species on the sewage ponds, then moved to the Wakapuaka Sandflats Reserve. We made our way in single file through long reeds and carex grasses, to a scrubby patch of manuka, listening intently for a clear "*click, click*", the sound of our native *fernbird*, reportedly present in the area. Sure enough, within 15 minutes, we heard a "click" first from a bush in front, and an immediate replying "click" from the bush behind us. So we stealthily edged our way closer. Reward! A non-descript sparrow-like bird, thoroughly camouflaged in manuka scrub, could be seen hopping about from branch to branch. Becoming aware of our presence they moved closer to each other, but being curious, even closer to us. Holding our breath with intense excitement we were almost close

enough to reach out and touch them. A rare treat.

Our Easter Monday trip to Snowden's Bush, an old remnant podocarp forest, was alive with the whistle, and rambling collection of clicks, rattles, warbles and gargles of *starlings* (not the native bush birds we might have expected). During morning tea we were introduced to a typically solitary, ground-feeding dunnock (hedge sparrow).

Then along the road and over the bridge we settled to watch through our binoculars the large flocks of *greenfinches*,

busy in the field of sunflowers and other seeding grasses.

If you are interested in joining these, "there's no hurry" explorers, do get in touch with our Study Group Convenor, Steven Shaw. We meet alternate Monday mornings, and vary the start time, and locality. Being mindful of resources, we do try to car-pool and take our own morning tea to enjoy outdoors where bird-spotting opportunities continue.

Come with no expectations and it's surprising how Nature will reward our openness to what is, on the day.

Grace Sutherland, Convenor



Russia, then and now

We are a group of people who meet once a month (first Thursday) and take turns to present a topic with a Russian theme. The group know the topic beforehand and contribute to the discussion after the presentation. Topics have included Faberge eggs, the Romanovs, Trotsky, the Gulags, Russian activists, musicians, beautiful cities, food, the Bolshoi, Rasputin, the Koryo-saram people . . .and much more.

We have 8 members and would welcome more.

The next meeting is Thursday 6 May at 1.30pm. The topic is the Koryo-saram people of North Korea, sent into Russia by Stalin in the late 1930's.

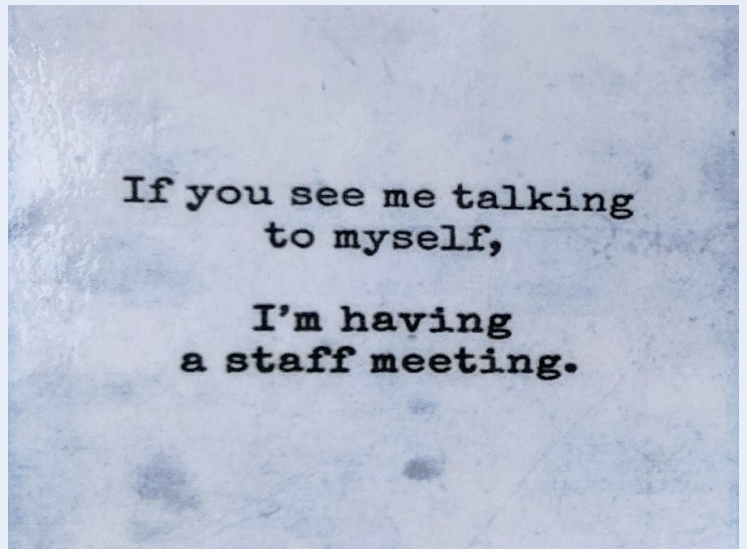
Carol Suddaby, Convenor

My doctor said now that I'm older
I need to install a bar in the shower



If you see me talking
to myself,

I'm having
a staff meeting.



Synonym

(n.) A word used in place
of the one you can't spell.

Calories

(n.) Tiny creatures that
live in your closet and sew
your clothes a little bit
tighter every night.

From the Editor

Thank you to those who submitted articles. Reports from study groups are always welcome, especially if your group has vacancies, as this is a good way to showcase what you do. Photographs are also great to make the newsletter more interesting and colourful. **Deadline for articles for the May newsletter is Monday 10th.**

Trevor Lewis