



NELSON INC.

Learning for Life

www.u3anelson.org.nz

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NEW BANK ACCOUNT!! Note our new account number above. We have changed from Westpac to Nelson Building Society. Please delete Westpac from your saved payee.

Our next members meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 28th October**, from 10am till 12 noon. This will be at the **Whakatu Presbyterian Church** on Champion Road in Richmond. Our guest speaker be **Doug Mountfort**.

Who are we?

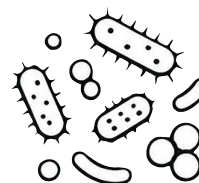
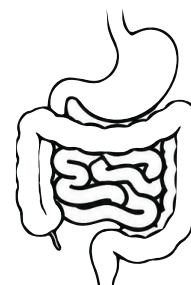
Doug Mountfort

Tasman Biotech & Biopharm Consultants

We are holobionts (a community of micro-organisms and human cells) and while the total number of micro-organisms we host is roughly the same as our own, their genome accounts for most of our genetic capacity. Consequently, our metabolism, immunity, and health are co-managed by millions of microbial genes rather than just our own DNA. I will lead off by discussing the Human Microbiome Project and its advancement of our knowledge on microbial species diversity as well as providing examples to show how changes in our microbiome are linked to the progression of some diseases. In focussing on the gut microbiome, I will provide examples of how micro-organisms can benefit us such as the role they play in the breakdown of dietary fibre, the way they train our immune cells to differentiate beneficial from harmful bacteria and the way they communicate with our central nervous system to influence mood and behaviour. I will also discuss what factors impact on our gut microbiome and the consequences that arise when it is disturbed or when there are mutations in the cells lining our gastrointestinal tract (e.g. in Crohn's disease). I will briefly cover how the disturbed microbiome can be repaired and give some examples of how micro-organisms can talk to each other as well as cross-talk with human cells. Finally, I will conclude by detailing some examples to show how ubiquitous microbiomes are.

Doug's Background

Prior to establishing his consultancy, he was a scientist at the Cawthron Institute for some 35 years. Over this period his investigations were wide-ranging beginning in 1976 with studies on the biochemistry of methane-producing bacteria through to the assessing the potential medical benefits of marine toxins and their derivatives in the 2000s. In collaboration with Australian colleagues (early 2000s), he established that UV irradiation could be a promising treatment for ship's ballast water to prevent marine pest incursions. Today around 41% of newbuilds have UV treatment systems fitted. Doug also initiated Cawthron's programme developing molecular genetic tools to detect marine pests in port surveillance. Among other projects he tested whether biochemical tools could be used to quantify marine toxins in a laboratory setting or in biosensors. This work took Doug to Cambridge University in 2002 where he worked with Lisa Hall on biosensors and Christian-Albrechts University (Kiel) in 2009, where he worked with Philip Rosenstiel on 'next generation RNA sequencing'. However, an underlying research theme that extended almost through his entire career at Cawthron was anaerobic microbiology and biochemistry. In collaboration with Tom Bauchop (DSIR) in the 1980's he made significant contribution to our understanding of the functional role of anaerobic fungi in the rumen and in another collaboration with Kendall Clements of the University of Auckland in the early 2000s, showed that the gut microbiome of finfish herbivores plays a significant role in the breakdown of dietary fibre contributing to the host's energy needs. These areas provide the background to Doug's talk today.



Presidents Report

Greetings to you all

I hope this Newsletter finds you all well and enjoying your Study Groups. With daylight saving, it is so nice to have the longer evenings. Spring is my favourite time of the year, with all the beautiful flowering blossoms, rhododendrons and camellias in the gardens.

Those who attended our last Members meeting in September will remember me talking about the Soroptimist's major fundraising project for 2026-2027, Ovarian Cancer. As you all know they do our morning tea catering so we help with their fundraiser, whilst they provide a lovely morning tea, a win-win relationship.

On **Saturday 31 October, at Whakatu Presbyterian Church**, where we have our Members Meetings, 10am, there will be a fundraising morning, with a speaker, talking about the successes researchers are having in **detecting Ovarian Cancer**. **Tickets are \$10** and will be available for those wanting to attend on Saturday 31st, at our next Members Meeting on Wednesday 28 October.

If you want to attend this interesting event, please bring cash to purchase tickets to our Members Meeting. Soroptimist Annette will have tickets for sale at our meeting. There will be door sales on Saturday 31st as well. Thanks

There have been 7 new online applications for membership since our last Members meeting, so there could be new members attending our 28 October meeting.

Please remember to wear your name badges, and for those new members, your name badges will be waiting for you at the Welcome Desk.

Cheers
Wendy



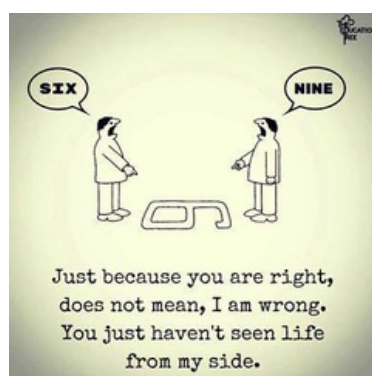
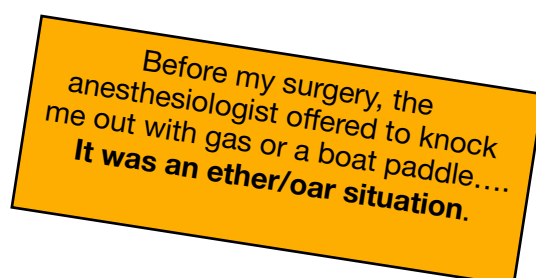
LIFE MEMBERSHIP



At our July meeting, the Committee unanimously voted to grant Wendy Cornish and Tony Gimson Life Membership of U3A. So well deserved for all their dedication and the amazing work they have done over the past years for U3A Nelson.

Congratulations to you both.

Presented by committee member....
Paul Lunberg.



THE IPAD GROUP

Stuart Yank, the Convenor of the iPad Group had major surgery and the meetings were cancelled for 2 months.

Stuart made a great recovery and was back on the job for the September meeting. The meeting started well, with Dolly Parton singing Nine to Five. Then it was discussions, videos, questions and answers, talks by members and of course biscuits and a cuppa.



Keep up the good work Stuart.



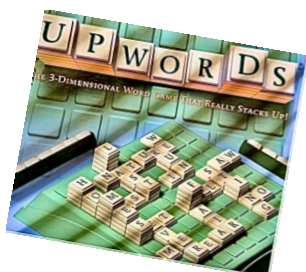
This photo was taken at the October meeting.
Group Discussions

SMART GAMES - what a title, as if any game could be smart, but all games are fun. Our wee group has been running a few months now and is certainly that. We meet twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday in the afternoon (1.30pm - 4pm). We now seem to have settled into a pattern and know all the games well, which means we laugh, and pray for a better hand next time.

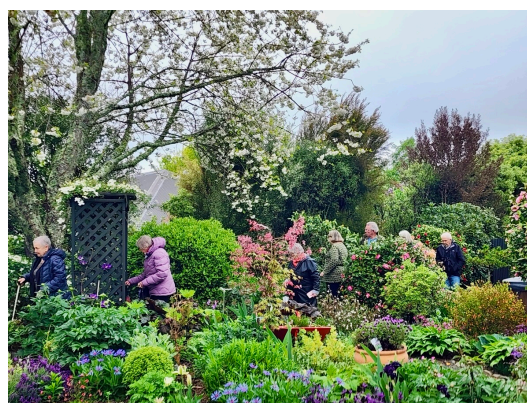
UpWords is like (but better than) Scrabble with a little luck involved, Quiddler is fun but much more luck is involved while Big Boggle is zero luck and all skill.

We have 2 or 3 spaces should you wish to join us. If this sounds like fun to you do contact Hilary on study@u3anelson.org.nz

Smart Games



Hands in the Garden



Heralding spring, 20 members of the group, braved the weather for a visit to Ellen Tilley's beguiling garden in Wakefield. The rain and wind held off and the cloudy sky gave an opportunity for some great photos. This is a secluded, quiet and beautiful property of 1800sq m, full of Ellen's favourite perennial flowering plants and trees: peonies, irises, clematis, wisteria to name a few. We voted it the top garden for 2026 (although there are two more to visit). A successful lunch visit to HQ in Brightwater, allowed for animated discussions of the garden variety.



History of U3A

U3A started in France at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Toulouse in 1973. It was started by Prof. Pierre Vellas. In France, many Third Age University groups are associated with a local university. This academic model is used in many other countries, in particular in continental Europe.

The University of the Third Age is now an international movement whose aims are the education and stimulation of mainly retired members of the community—those in their third 'age' of life. It is commonly referred to.

There is no universally accepted model for the U3A. Its original conception in France as an extramural university activity was significantly modified in the United Kingdom where it was recognised that most people of retirement age have something to contribute and the emphasis has been on sharing, without formal links to traditional universities.

Many English-speaking countries have followed this geragogic [Geragogy is a theory which argues that older adults are sufficiently different that they warrant a separate educational theory.] model.

In NZ has 88 U3As across the country with 35 in the South Island.

Nelson History

Nelson U3A has been operating since 1991. It is friendly and welcomes all third agers. As well as a wide and changing variety of study groups we have regular meetings featuring guest speakers, morning tea, study group presentations and any business items that need attention. There is also an annual lunch with entertainment. There are no compulsory activities although members are expected to join at least one study group each year and are encouraged to attend the regular bi monthly meetings.

The University of the Third Age (U3A) movement is a unique and exciting organisation which provides, through its U3As, life-enhancing and life-changing opportunities. Retired and semi-retired people come together and learn together, not for qualifications but for its own reward: the sheer joy of discovery!

Members share their skills and life experiences: the learners teach and the teachers learn, and there is no distinction between them. Aspects of History might sound 'heavy' but it is anything but! Marina insists that history starts now – so we feel OK to discuss current events. Our main programme, earlier this year, was looking at the History of the 'stans – such as Afghanistan. All that Asian food took us to the history of some foodstuffs for a few meetings.

Aspects on World History

Aspects of History might sound 'heavy' but it is anything but! Marina insists that history starts now – so we feel OK to discuss current events. Our main programme, earlier this year, was looking at the History of the 'stans – such as Afghanistan. All that Asian food took us to the history of some foodstuffs for a few meetings.

Later we followed the Origins of the People of Madagascar, Sri Lanka, Iceland, and others. All amazing!

Our most recent foray has been into the History of Rivers – Recently we have been enjoying a masterful reporter, Nick Thorpe, who explores the complex relationship between the river's fragile ecosystem and the diverse communities living along its shores. He is slowly heading up the Danube and describing the people and history associated with this terrific waterway.

Convenor...Paul Lunberg



Q: What is a snakes favourite subject in school?
A: Hissstory.



How did Benjamin Franklin feel when he discovered electricity?
Shocked, of course!

Emergency Contact Information

U3A Nelson members are invited to provide the name and contact details of an emergency contact person who could be contacted if a serious incident or emergency occurred while they were taking part in a U3A activity, particularly when they were away from home

Providing this information is entirely voluntary. There is no requirement for members to provide an emergency contact if they would prefer not to.

The purpose is simply to provide a useful point of contact in an unexpected and potentially stressful situation. For example, if a member became seriously unwell, was involved in an accident, or otherwise needed assistance while attending a U3A group activity or outing, the group convener or another appropriate person would have someone they could contact on the member's behalf.

This would, of course, be in addition to contacting emergency services, medical professionals, police, or any other appropriate authority where necessary. The emergency contact is not intended to replace those services, but to provide a personal point of contact for the member and their family or friends.

We hope members will see this as a simple precaution that could be helpful to everyone involved should an unexpected situation arise. However, the decision to provide an emergency contact remains entirely with each individual member.

Andy Ralphs, Health and Safety co-ordinator.



Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. I would love to have more news and maybe photos from groups. It's a great way for the Club to keep up with what is happening

The deadline for next newsletter is December 7th.