 **NEWSLETTER 109 12 June 2022**

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**Message from Wendy**

Kia ora katoa

We have enjoyed a delightfully balmy autumn, the best for years I believe, but now we face the icy blast of winter. Winter has its pleasures too, and I look forward to a cosy fire and a good book, hard frosts followed by beautiful, clear sunny days and watching the first of the spring bulbs venturing out into the world. Isn’t Nature wonderful?

I hope you have all weathered the Covid storm too, either having had it or avoiding it but we cannot be complacent and now need to ensure our influenza vaccinations are up to date as a supposedly bad season is predicted. I understand that our attendance numbers may be down a little as we take a virus prevention approach and hibernate for the winter but our staunch conveners will be holding the fort until you all feel safer to join in and enjoy the conviviality of your groups.

Our new Gathering convener, Graeme Burnard, presented his first offering with Bronwyn Locke giving a most informative presentation and we look forward to the next Gathering in August.

Keep safe and well until then

Nga mihi

Wendy

**The Next Gathering**

Further to Wendy’s comment above, our first gathering for some time was held on Wednesday 25th of May. Around 30 people enjoyed a most interesting presentation from Brownyn Locke, newly appointed Wairarapa Cancer Society Manager. As well as talking on the role of the Cancer Society, Brownyn also recalled tales of her long career working as a nurse and midwife with Medicines sans Frontiers (doctors without borders) in Afghanistan, Africa and the South Pacific. This was followed by lunch. Bronwyn sent Graeme Burnard an email, thanking him for inviting her to speak and commented on the warm reception she received from U3A members, so thank you to those who attended.

Please note your diaries for the next gathering, planned for Wednesday 27 July. The guest speaker will be Celia Wade-Brown, former Mayor of Wellington who will be talking about her walking/cycling adventure from Cape Reinga to Bluff and return.

Our Secretary Margaret will send out a formal notice of the Gathering in due course

**Group reports**

**U3A Opera Appreciation Group**

Due to covid being rife, in the Wairarapa, we cancelled our April session. In May, we continued our focus on Baroque opera, with The New York Met's performance of “The Enchanted Island”, inspired by a pastiche of Baroque music , and Shakespeare’s “The Tempest” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”. We continue to meet in two private homes.

Current membership is 15, with hard-core attendees of 6 to 8.

**Barbara Lovatt Convenor**

**Scrabble**

The South Wairarapa Scrabble group have managed to escape the threat of Covid and

continue to meet every second Friday at the home of one of our members, a few k's

south of Martinborough. We have room for two more players at our current venue.

Although we play to win, we are also a very friendly, sociable group and really enjoy

our morning together. We would love to welcome some new players.

**Graeme Burnard, Convenor**

**TED talks:**

In April we had very interesting talks about ocean exploration and issues of sea bed mining and in May we learned about the Dunedin longitudinal study, another one being run in the UK then, for light relief, we watched one about why so many incompetent men become leaders. The last was by a man but obviously for a female audience.

We always learn so much from all our talks and by taking turns, we are exposed to many new ideas and facts. For those who cannot attend, I send out all the links after the session.

**Margaret Cole, Convenor**

**South Wairarapa Current Affairs Group**

Our convenor Paul is away but our meetings go on.

In April our starter topic was the UN Veto – Mike had excellent knowledge of this subject and we all found it very interesting to learn more. In May we had the recent report on sea level rise in NZ as a starter but quickly moved to everything else including how we could individually make changes to help with climate change – though a countrywide will to make simple changes is needed. We all agreed on what we could do but ……..

**In place of Paul Mallinson, Convenor Tel: 06 216-2803 Cell: 021-109-4652**

**Masterton Book Group.**

The Masterton book club has 11 members. Our meetings are at REAP house in Masterton on second Monday in the month at 1.30pm We have had two new members join us and one member has moved from Masterton and has left the group. This month's topic was weather which produced a variety of books with some sort of weather in the title, rain, mist, sun. Next month is free choice which gives some of us who have a great pile of books beside our beds a chance to catch up on some personal reading.

So many books to read, so little time!

**Catherine Graydon, Convenor 027 255 4046**

**North-South book group**

We had two meetings in May – one on 2nd as the previous Monday was Anzac Day, and one on 30th to give members time to find and read their books. Our topic for 2nd May was “A book that won an award” – preferably not the Booker Prize, but if that was what was chosen it was perfectly acceptable. With 10 members present, we had quite a range of awards, some obscure and some well known. The topic for the end of May was “A book on conservation in Aotearoa”. The weather was awful and we had only 6 members present – the lowest number I can remember. Several people sent in reviews and, although some people found the topic difficult to find a book for, there were several very interesting books reviewed. **The hall at Roseneath Village is** proving to be a warm and hospitable venue and we can look forward to our bimonthly meetings there.

**Jean Travers, Convenor**

**Carterton Book Group.**

Our group is truckling along nicely - though we had our smallest turnout in years last month - only eight of us.   There was an epidemic of illness, injury and other appointments, though many sent in reviews even though they could not join us in person.   Our group presently numbers 14, which is probably a good maximum number.   We have a good range of genres and an increasing number are now reading non-fiction.

**Sue Burns, Convenor**

**With Love** .

The With Love group continues to build up an interesting repertoire of early life experiences. Last month the topic was" An event that has impacted your life"

and during the discussion, the subject of changed communications came up so "Communications" is the topic for June.

**Wendy Woodhouse, Convenor**

**French Conversation**

The group continues to meet every Friday afternoon at the Education Centre in Masterton. In this session we discuss points of interest or aspects of 'news' from our week. This always leads to much discussion and questioning which in particular stretches our knowledge of vocabulary. After a cup of coffee we then turn to a more formal approach by looking at the Coffee Break French series which we have been following for quite a while now.

Alongside our Friday meeting we also meet each Wednesday afternoon for an hour at Kainga café in Carterton. We are also considering instituting a 'Movie Friday', perhaps once a month.

**Brett Clark  Convenor**

**Wairarapa U3A Film Group**

On 19th May, Curry Twist at Kuripuni was the venue for a luncheon meeting of 11 members. Favourable reviews were advanced in respect of several recent films viz "Downton Abbey: A New Era", "Operation Mincemeat" and "The Velvet Queen".

At Sunset Cinema, Carterton next Friday, is "Be Natural" a biopic about the life and legacy of Alice Guy-Blache, "the world's first woman film director".

The French Film Festival Aotearoa is now underway in Masterton (Screening Room). Visit [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) to book online from a wide array of movies.

Adrenalin-charged members may wish to see "Top Gun: Maverick" which is screening multiple showings this week at Wairarapa cinemas. This film seems to have had big thumbs-up from the theatre-going masses as well as having received critical acclaim.

The next luncheon meeting for U3A Film Group will be at The Screening Room on Thursday 23rd June at Midday. Note the change of venue, to cater for members who are on gluten-free diets or currently have dietary restrictions.

**Mark and Lib Coubrough, Cinema Group co-convenors**

**Almoner**

Following a number of health issues amongst our members, it has been suggested that we have an Almoner in our U3A branch. We all appreciated outside contact through recent Covid lockdowns, if only a phone call. To continue this support for those who would like some help in difficult times, we would like to hear from anyone who could take on this voluntary role. If you are interested or want to want to know more, please contact Wendy (027 626 9142) or Margaret (06 304 8499).

**New Groups – Course resources**

Some of you will know about the on-line courses provided by U3A Australia at [www.U3Aonline.org.au](http://www.U3Aonline.org.au). Click on “Our Courses” and then “Independent Study Courses”. These cost A$30 (NZ $33) p.a. for an individual. However, should you want to study in a group situation, we can organise a site licence which we believe, will cost A$35. This would spread the cost over the number of participants.

There has been some interest in forming a History group within U3A Wairarapa and it maybe that one of these on-line courses could form the basis of such a group. If there is a course which you would be interested in, please advise us so we can gauge the level of interest from members. If we could get 5 or 6 into such a group that would lower the cost of a study course per person to say $7 each.

**And finally**

I am sure that some of you participated in the Featherston Booktown events over the weekend, despite the tempestuous weather. While wandering around the bookstalls in the Anzac Hall, I was reminded of a quote from the Austrian Philosopher Schopenhauser who said in 1851 “To buy books would be a good thing if we could also buy the time to read them; as it is, the mere act of purchasing them is often mistaken for the assimilation and mastering of their contents”. No doubt some of you, like myself, experienced this with textbooks in our student days.

All the best

David