



P.O. Box 87291, Meadowbank, Auckland, 1742. Email: u3ameadowbank@gmail.com

Secretary: Melda Brunette

www.u3ameadowbank.nz

NEWSLETTER – JULY / HŌNGONGOI 2024

Greetings from the Temporary, Deputy Acting President!

Our June meeting was held on June 17th on a pleasant and unseasonably warm winter's morning. In a few days it will be the shortest day and we can start to notice the lengthening days and prepare to welcome the arrival of spring. Although we do have to go through winter first.

Members were reminded of measures to be taken in the event of an emergency.

We welcomed new members Anne Greville and Ann Campbell along with two visitors.

We acknowledged the recent death of Annette Charlton and the resignation of Rosemary Lang.

Rosemary has been a member of U3A Meadowbank since 2014. She has been particularly active in setting up and supporting the society's website and database on which she has worked hard, spending many, many hours.

Rosemary suffered a serious accident last year and has more recently been working full time in a new business she has taken on with her husband. Consequently, she has little spare time and feels it is time to hand over to new or different hands. She has very kindly offered to work with her successors to continue support during the changeover period. The society owes Rosemary a huge debt of gratitude for the years of expertise and time she has devoted to the website and database and I wish to convey the committee's great appreciation of this work. If any member has knowledge of or experience with website creation or maintenance, could they please introduce themselves to any committee member.

We enjoyed introductions to two of our groups, Money Matters presented by convenor Joan Duncan and Books and Authors presented by convenor Adele Hirsh. I was worrying about what I was supposed to do next, so cannot report on what was said, but both presentations were well received. We are lucky to have a great range of groups available and such hard working and able convenors.

The main speaker was Devya Seth from Age Concern. She pointed out that falls are the number one cause of hospitalisations in older people but are not caused by age. The main causes of falls are lack of physical fitness and upper leg strength, poor balance, dizziness, low blood pressure, eyesight, hazards, risky behaviour such as standing on chairs, unsafe footwear and alcohol.

Her six tips for avoiding falls are regular exercise (30 minutes per day is enough), balance training, review medicines for side effects, regular eyesight checks, remove hazards from the home, drink enough water and ensure sufficient vitamin D.

Falls are not a natural part of age and are preventable. Use it or lose it. The more you do, the more you can do.

Members were reminded that the society needs a president and a vice-president. In addition, at least two longstanding committee members, secretary Melda Brunette and membership coordinator Judith Stewart will probably be resigning at the next AGM.

We do not want the society to fold for lack of volunteers. Please come forward.

John Goodman (Treasurer)

John Goodman and Shirley Grayson with our June speaker, Divya Seth, Age Concern



Who's Who for Monday 15th July 2024 meeting: 9.45 a.m. for 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: Shared Reading

Mini speakers: Op Shops – The do's and don't's of donating - Margaret Davidson Architecture

Guest speaker: Sam Stubbs – Co-Founder of Simplicity – 'Why New Zealand's Future Will Be Better'.

Simplicity is a nonprofit Kiwisaver manager, now with NZ billions set up to give Kiwis a better deal from the finance industry. He is a father of four, and wanting to be a grandfather. He has no time for hobbies. "True happiness has nothing to do with what you have, it is to do with people...There is zero correlation between wealth and happiness."

Who's Who for Monday 19th August 2024 meeting: 9.45 a.m. for 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: History

Mini Speakers: Saints and Sinners (Jill Wilson); Cultural Conversations (Stephanie Markson)

Guest speaker: Gay Williams, Past President/Acting President and member of Meadowbank U3A since 2003. Gay will endeavour to outline the ever-changing scope of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

This will include: (1) Common terms used when discussing AI; (2) Major AI chatbots and who produces them; (3) Key people who contributed/are contributing to AI developments; (4) How AI is already used in our everyday activities, and in business and science; (5) What generative AI currently produces; (6) The risks of AI; (7) The future of AI; (8) Learning more and references.

Membership Coordinator's Report, U3A Meadowbank. 24 June 2024

A cold month, a quiet month, and very little to report with no confirmed new members. The total membership remains at 240.

For those not at our last general meeting I shall repeat a short report about the New Members' morning tea. Unfortunately, ten of the 19 members were travelling, unwell, or busy and unable to attend. Only three members attended and with the seven committee members we enjoyed relaxing hospitality in front of an open fire at Shirley and Bill Grayson's home. We had time to introduce ourselves, briefly outline our duties, and learn more about the new folk. We all thought the idea was worthy of repeating, perhaps twice annually, with venues and times further investigated.

Our sincere thanks to all who attended, to those who sent apologies, and especially to Shirley and Bill for their lovely home, in a sane, Auckland street, with lots of parking space.

Please continue to tell prospective new members, and anyone wishing to attend a meeting in order to investigate our ways, to phone or email me, (or any committee member,) directly until our website update is completed.

JUDITH STEWART Phone 021 617 481: Email U3Ameadmemb@gmail.com

Whakataukī / Words of Wisdom

Time to enrich our days with some more words of wisdom from around the world!

Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt. **Herbert Hoover**

The thing that impresses me most about America is the way parents obey their children. **Edward VIII**

Without education, we are in a horrible and deadly danger of taking educated people seriously. **GK Chesterton.**



u3a Auckland Network welcomes you to a day of celebration

Salvation Army Church, 18 Allright Place, Mt Wellington
Saturday 27 July 2024 - 9:30am (for 10:00am) to 2:30pm

Speakers:

Morning: Distinguished Professor Emeritus Paul Spoonley MA MSc PhD FRSNZ

"The supersizing and superdiversity of Auckland:
how Auckland will change over coming decades."

Afternoon: Sir Ashley Bloomfield KNZM

"Public trust in New Zealand: where we are at, and how do we
strengthen public trust to build social capital and social cohesion?"

Also included are four presentations by u3a Members and lunch - \$45.00

To register go to.....<https://www.u3auckland.net/event>

U3A Meadowbank Interest Groups Vacancy (in brackets) List as at 15 June 2024

To enquire about joining a Group Click on "Groups Coordinator" link in "Contact Us"

Architecture (8): Homes - 4th Thurs, 10.00 am

Art Appreciation (6): Homes - 4th Fri, 10.00 am

Book Club (1): Homes - 2nd Tues, 1.30pm

Books & Authors (1): Shalom Court, St Johns Rd - 4th Thu, 1.45pm

Cultural Conversations (2): St Andrews Keeling Room -3rd Tue, 10.00 am

Dollars & Sense (4) Homes - 2nd Thurs, 10.00 am

History (1): Meadowbank Retirement Village - 2nd Wed, 10.00am

Jazz (5): St Andrews Keeling Room- 1st Fri, 10.00am

Luncheon Group (22): Various - 3rd Fri, 12.30 pm

Long Walks (5): Meet at the back, Gerard Way side, corner of Meadowbank Carpark-1st Thurs, 9.15am

Memoir Writing (5): St Andrews Keeling Room - 1st Wed, 2.00 pm

Military History (3): St Andrews Keeling Room - 2nd Tue, 2.00 pm

Modern American Literature (1): Homes - 3rd Thurs, 2.00 pm

Money Matters (8): St Andrews Keeling Room - 4th Tues, 10.00 am

Music (2): Homes - 3rd Wed, 2.00 pm

Poetry (5): Homes - 3rd Thurs 10.00 am

Ramblers (2): Various - each Thurs, 10.00 am

Saints & Sinners (1): St Andrews Keeling Room - 3rd Wed, 10.00 am

Science & Technology (6): Lounge at 7 St Vincent - 2nd Mon, 10.15 am to 12.15 pm

Shared Reading (2): 2 1/7 The Parade -3rd Wed, 1.30 pm

Short Walks (32): Meet at Meadowbank Carpark-3rd Thurs, 9.15am

Time Poor Walkers (6): St Heliers Bay Playground-each Wed, 9.00 am

Wine Studies (1): Homes - last Tues, 2.00 pm

Newsletter Editor Needed for 2025!

We are looking for someone to volunteer taking over the monthly U3A newsletter from January 2025. It is not a demanding task, and is fun! I would be happy to help someone interested in taking over from me, in the month or two before the end of this year (the October and November newsletters,) so that you are confident and comfortable with the steps involved. Please let me, or any member of the committee know if you are interested. Thank you. Chris Hawley - mobile: 021671298 chawley48@hotmail.com.

Greetings from Gay Williams in Haute Provence, France!

Gay continues to enjoy early summer in Haute Provence in southern France. Here is Gay's message for U3A Members

Bonjour a tous!

I am in the village of St Etienne Les Orgues in the Haute Provence

What a great choice we made, off the tourist track but great for cyclists and walkers. We are surrounded by beautiful hills with lots of herbs, wild flowers and the inevitable lavender fields. We arrived just at the end of the iris season, in the middle of the roses season, hollyhocks, and the beginning of the lavender blooming.

The area is full of history with Priors, Abbeys, and small churches everywhere. The local gardens are magnificent, concerts just beginning, and the stars!!!

I get up around 4am to look at the sky - never seen so many large and beautiful stars. There is a famous observatory close by - not sure if we will make the night viewing - from 9.30pm to 12.30am 🙏

The local markets are so interesting with beautiful fresh produce as well as many different goat's cheeses especially the famous Banon cheese wrapped in Chestnut leaves.

The locals are very friendly and have got us out of difficulties from time to time- one gentleman - a local truck driver- backed us out of a road blocked by workers, and another undid our petrol cap which had been put on so tightly (by another man showing us how to put petrol in our MG hybrid) we couldn't undo the cap 🙏

We are nearly half way through our stay - can't believe how fast time passes when you're having fun!

Best wishes to you all, Gay Williams

A cheese platter (goat cheeses)



The three of us in the village of L'hospitalet



Below: The bookstore in Banon, one of the 10 most important countryside bookshops in Europe. People visit from around the world. Weekly talks by authors are held in the library, in French of course, but other languages, such as English too. Gay heard American author, David Vance, speaking on his book on the Cherokee nation.



Below: Behind the Lure mountains



Lavender field nearly ready to bloom



Below: An old Roman bridge



Sisteron



Book of the Month

The French Revolution and what went wrong' by Stephen Clarke 2019

Being in France what else would I choose but this amazing book bought from Le Bleuët bookshop in Banon. Stephen lives in Paris and has written many books that have been best sellers worldwide (especially the 'Merde' novels!). Research for this book lead him to spend time in the French archives searching for the actual words, thoughts and deeds of the Royalists and revolutionaries of 1789.

By going back to original sources he uncovers the little known and rarely told story of what really happened in

revolutionary France.

Stephen's style is really entertaining and I learned such a lot about the life of the French during the 18th century- the details of the King's personal lives where nothing is private, including their sexual, eating and toileting habits! The lives of the nobility and the clergy were so different from the majority of the population who were heavily taxed and exploited.

Voltaire was described as the consummate communicator- Stephen suggests that "if he were alive today he would be posting one minute satirical rants on YouTube".

The lives of Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette are detailed, and the 'cahiers de doléances' (grievance notebooks) of 1789 clearly show the majority wanted a strong monarchy and had gratitude for the King asking for their opinion. They wanted to improve life through reform not revolution. It was the clergy and the aristocracy who didn't want to give up their many rights and privileges. Stephen also refers to the amount of 'fake news' that occurred at this time - so what is new! Any reader with an interest in history will really enjoy this fascinating book

Gay Williams

Next Monthly Meeting: Monday 15th July 2024 at 10 am at St Chad's.

Don't forget to send us your U3A news to include in the next newsletter – we rely on your contributions

Deadline for AUGUST 2024 newsletter items is FRIDAY 26th JULY 2024. Expect receipt confirmation

If you change your personal details, OR LEARN OF THE BEREAVEMENT OF A U3A MEMBER, please email the change to u3ameadmemb@gmail.com. Please include YOUR full name, physical address, phone number and email address.

TO CONTACT COMMITTEE MEMBERS please use the correct gmail addresses below:

Secretary: u3ameadowbank@gmail.com

Membership Coordinator: u3ameadmemb@gmail.com

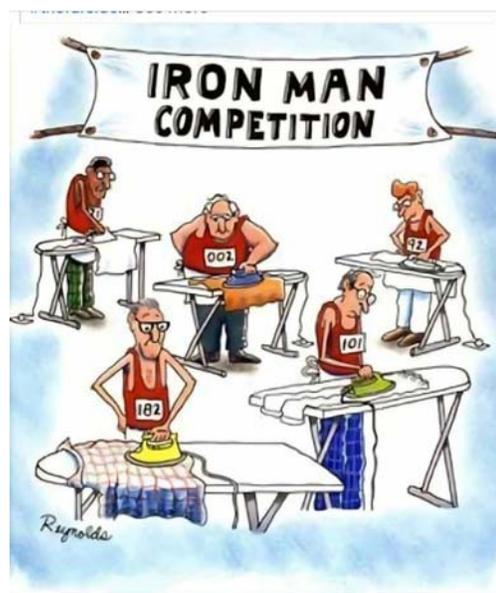
Treasurer: u3ameadtrea@gmail.com

Newsletter Coordinator: u3ameadnews@gmail.com

Feedback: u3ameadfeedback@gmail.com

Groups Coordinator: u3ameadconv@gmail.com

Something Amusing



Letters:

To The Times:

Your correspondence on the subject of attaching warning bells to both cats and bicycles reminded me of the advice given to hikers in the wilds of America to carry pepper spray and attach small bells to their clothing to alert grizzly bears to their approach. Another suggestion is to be on the lookout for the bears' droppings, which typically smell of pepper and contain small bells.

John Burscough Brigg, Lincs

Love letters from the White House

A new book compiling presidential love letters proves that the Oval Office's early occupants weren't as "bloodless and formal" as they looked, says Meghan Cox Gurdon in The Wall Street Journal.

Calvin Coolidge was no different, says Patrick Kidd in The Times. Passing the chicken yard on a visit to a farm in the 1920s, his wife Grace asked how often the rooster mated. "Dozens of times a day," said the farmer. "Tell that to the president," she laughed. When this exchange was relayed to Coolidge later, he asked if it was always with the same hen. "Oh no, Mr President, a different one each time," came the reply. "Tell that to Mrs Coolidge," he said.

Something Interesting

Tomorrow's world



ST Engineering

Is it a boat? Is it a plane? No, says The Economist, it's the AirFish – a new high-tech fast ferry with a top speed of 138mph. The design is based on a Cold War-era naval craft nicknamed the "Caspian Sea Monster" and exploits an area of high pressure created between the wing and the water to glide over the ocean waves. It's cheaper to produce and run than helicopters or seaplanes, and can operate directly from a small dock or even a beach, making it the ideal ride for its first planned use: island hopping in the Mediterranean. (Source: The Knowledge)

On the way out

Camembert might be “facing extinction” in France, says Emma Beddington in *The Guardian*. Industrial production means that the fungus required to make the cheese – *Penicillium camemberti* – is “dangerously lacking in genetic diversity” and losing the ability to reproduce. The news “landed hard” with my husband, who’s from Normandy. “Camembert is a religion there: his grandparents ate it for breakfast, dipped in their morning coffee.”