



July 2017

[www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com](http://www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com)

U3A Bay of Islands, PO Box 833, Kerikeri 0245

[u3a.bay.of.islands@gmail.com](mailto:u3a.bay.of.islands@gmail.com)

## From the New Chair

It seems appropriate that I should introduce myself because so many of you have joined U3A BOI since I was last your president. I joined U3A 10 years ago, having left behind a teaching career in New Zealand and Scotland. Soon after that I was elected to the committee as Vice President, in 2011. Our President, John Gibb, immediately headed off for a long visit to America, leaving me to chair not only my first committee meeting but also the next general meeting. So it goes.

The following year I graduated to President. During my two years we formalised the role of the group convenor and concentrated on setting up a wide variety of new interest groups. Groups are at the centre of our activities in U3A BOI, and with memberships growing continuously, and some groups reaching their natural conclusions, our most important task was to initiate new ones and find new facilitators to run them and so share their knowledge and enthusiasm. That will again be a priority in the coming year.



U3A BOI also runs a series of open meetings. Finding interesting speakers for them, was then, and will continue to be now, another of my priorities. These meetings are interesting in themselves, they reinforce a sense of community amongst present members and, since they are open to the public, they provide an introduction to potential members. Let's look forward to a series of talks from interesting locals as well as some from further afield.

I retired from the committee in 2015 after a further year ex-officio as immediate past President, but kept myself busy teaching the history of Ireland to two U3A groups for another year. Then Keith and I visited Ireland for an amazing two months which included centennial commemorations of the 1916 Easter Rising.

So, I must be a glutton for punishment since I am now back as the 'new' U3A Chair. Despite the changed title, I will not be restricting my role to chairing meetings. I plan to draw on the ideas and skills of all members of the new committee, and of some other U3A members, and together we will keep U3A Bay of Islands moving forwards, catering for our increasing membership and providing new opportunities for all members.

Cheers,  
*Lesley McNaughton*

## New Members

U3A Bay of Islands is delighted to welcome new members Janice White, Jennifer Gilchrist and Judy Klaus. Be sure to look out for them in groups and at the next General Meeting and say "Hello".

## **U3A AGM 2017**

### **Chairs Report to AGM of U3A Bay of Islands 26 June 2017**

It gives me great pleasure to present the 18th annual report of the U3A Bay of Islands. It has been another successful year for membership, groups and general meetings.

#### **Membership**

The membership has increased to 180 members. At the New Members meeting held in April most of the new members said that their interest in the U3A had been sparked by word of mouth and I thank you all for telling others about your experiences in the U3A. It was also reported by some new members that they had come from other regions and had been U3A members in that district. The committee will follow up on the comments of the new members, such as including the website address when advertising in the media, and suggestions for new groups. I would like to thank Stuart Leitch for fielding the new members' enquiries and signing them up, in his combined role of Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Looking after the membership has also been a role for Maebeth Hart our almoner who has sent cards in times of illness or bereavement. I thank Maebeth for that and her 5 years of service on the committee. Jane Holmes has taken on the duties of almoner and is enthusiastically completing this role now.

#### **Groups**

There are 28 groups at present. The Opuia Local History group has now morphed into the Opuia Current Affairs group. The I Spy, Computer/Camera, Political Ideology and Natural History groups have ended. The following are all new groups that have started this year: It's Showtime, History of Food, Understanding Greek and Roman Technology, Antiques and Collectables, East to West, and Developments in Technology and Physical Science.

At the new members meeting, the facilitators were invited to describe their groups and, as they did, I was struck by the diversity of the groups. Not only did they spark interest in the new members but they also recruited other facilitators as members for their groups. I thank the facilitators for attending the meeting and also for all the effort, enthusiasm, research and time they put into the groups. I would like to thank the hosts for providing their homes for the groups. Margaret Rasmussen has been an excellent Group Convenor juggling people, places and times. Catherine Gossage has communicated with the facilitators for the schedule, reports and for photographs of the groups.

#### **General Meetings**

The guest speakers for the general meetings have spoken on diverse topics and included two of our members this year. Our very own Stuart Park gave an informed "Show and Tell" talk in June on New Zealand glass. In August, anthropologist Bill Guthrie entertained us with the dark side of funereal practices in Macau. Helen Ough Dealy in October explained what "Tiggy Oggy" was and how the Cornish people left a legacy in Mexico. In February's general meeting, another of our very own, Catherine Gossage took us on a stroll along the Seine showing the paintings of the impressionists and the same views today. April's talk was about the change from gas to geothermal power in the soft paper industry and was a holistic presentation with humour by Murray Lucas. I would like to thank all the groups that took on their role of kitchen duties with great aplomb. Thanks to Judy Ramsey for publicising these meetings so well and Martin Ough Dealy for organising all of them so professionally.

#### **Other Stuff**

Margaret Rasmussen ably assisted by Lesley McNaughton, updates the website recording the groups and the general meetings past and present. Many of you have commented on how easy the website is to use and how clear it is, thank you Margaret and Lesley.

You may not know that the committee keeps in touch with other U3A groups sharing newsletters. An Asus computer was purchased last year and has been used for this purpose and for checking our emails. It was also used once for the Singing for Fun group. I'm sure the new committee will expand the use of the computer over the next year.

Not just Maebeth but Margaret is also leaving the committee after putting five sterling years of service into the U3A. Catherine is also leaving the committee and I would like to thank them all for their time, hard work and for completing their duties with great efficiency. Thank you so much.

Stuart, with Martin standing in for him whilst he was away, has carried out the Treasurer's role simply and proficiently. Thanks go to Dugald McDonald for reviewing the figures.

The display advertising of the U3A and the AGM was initiated by Judy in her publicity role.

Your old committee must be thanked for all the support they have given me over the past year.

In conclusion I thank you all for your attendance at the groups and general meetings and your enthusiasm for making the U3A what it is - a fun group to belong to - I will miss it.

*Sue Robertson*

<b>2017-2018 Committee</b>			
Chair	Lesley McNaughton	09 407 6936	<a href="mailto:lesley@mnaughty.com">lesley@mnaughty.com</a>
Vice Chair	Stuart Leitch	09 407 3458	<a href="mailto:sleitch21@gmail.com">sleitch21@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Christine Cronshaw	09 407 6871	<a href="mailto:annachristine@gmail.com">annachristine@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Judith Burling	09 407 8197	<a href="mailto:j.bburling@actrix.co.nz">j.bburling@actrix.co.nz</a>
Group Convenor	Howard Smith	09 407 9593	<a href="mailto:ngapuke@slingshot.co.nz">ngapuke@slingshot.co.nz</a>
Meeting Coordinator	Martin Ough Dealy	09 407 5925	<a href="mailto:mdealy@clear.net.nz">mdealy@clear.net.nz</a>
Publicity Officer	Judy Ramsey	09 407 4471	<a href="mailto:judyramsey43@gmail.com">judyramsey43@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter Editor	Grainger Brown	09 407 7247	<a href="mailto:weens.kew@gmail.com">weens.kew@gmail.com</a>
Almoner	Jane Holmes	09 407 7500	<a href="mailto:tony_holmes@xtra.co.nz">tony_holmes@xtra.co.nz</a>

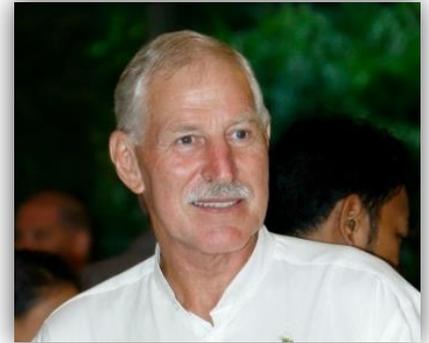


**2017-2018 U3A Bay of Islands Committee Members** (from left to right) Judy Ramsey, Martin Ough Dealy, Jane Holmes, Stuart Leitch, Judith Burling, Lesley McNaughton. Absent Christine Cronshaw, Howard Smith, Grainger Brown.

## Report on General Meeting of 26 June 2017

U3A BOI Talk by Cam McNichol on **Online Learning and the MOOC** (Massive Open Online Course)

Cam certainly lived up to his reputation as a man of many parts (mathematician, engineer, naval officer, teacher, educationalist and Master of Science) when he gave us insights into the modern world of online learning. Cam started with an introduction dealing with the early history of learning by remote means, then the development of conferencing from disparate remote locations through to a description of MOOCs. He ended with a thought provoking description of the opportunities now available for online learning and the relevance of these to U3A.



To the cognoscenti, online learning is the result of the development of the old-fashioned correspondence courses conducted initially via “snail mail on paper”, through to audio graphics using conference calling via telephones to the current provision of learning via the internet.

Online in the current jargon essentially involves the use of computers connected via various means including wi-fi, broad band, copper wire, and or satellite to the World Wide Web (www) known as the Internet. Nowadays this vast network provides the means for anyone with a home computer to contact any one of millions of information sources (websites) of a vast variety. Within this multitude can be found sites dedicated to the specific provision of learning and formal education.

The advent of video via Skype and Facetime facilitated the early development of remote learning via the internet with the use of video conferences. In the 1990’s schools, universities and other centres of education started to put their courses on line, available free to anyone with access to the World Wide Web at any time. This developed to the availability of courses designed on dedicated websites set up by the likes of MIT, The Open University and many others. The courses cover almost any topic under the sun and many can lead to formal qualifications recognized internationally. Cam gave several examples including Western and Chinese Art, Technical Innovation and Mathematics.

The great advantage is that the individual is in complete control and free from the “classroom environment”. Specific advantages include choice of topic at any stage from basics to advanced learning, timing (start and stop at will without penalty), repeating lessons at no extra cost, and doing it for simple personal interest, group learning or with view to a formal qualification.

The availability of MOOCs has sky-rocketed since 2012 and there are many dedicated sources including EdX, Coursera, Futurelearn, Udacity, plus others such as You Tube and Khan Academy.

Cam ended his excellent talk by emphasising the opportunities for U3A groups to take advantage of the material available on the internet for their own areas of interest. He will be providing an article for a later edition of this Newsletter in which he will provide guidance on specific websites providing MOOCs and how to access these.

*Martin Ough Dealy*

## Treasurer's Report

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2017-2018, may we remind you that the preferred way to receive your subs would be using online banking, details as follows?

Online payment to **Account: 02 0352 0020910 000 Payee account: U3A BOI** (please include your surname, first name and the word "sub" as a reference).

The other method would be by cheque payable to "U3A BOI" with your name in block capitals on the reverse of the cheque. **Post it to the address below:**

The Treasurer, U3A Bay of Islands, P.O. Box 833, Kerikeri 0245

*Stuart Leitch, Treasurer*

## Group News

**The Adventure of English** group has its first session on Monday 4 July. Thank you to Pam Jenkins who is our facilitator and Stephanie Beggs who has offered to host the group. One or two places are still available for this interesting group.

### New Groups

#### Boat Maintenance

The busy boating season is now over, so it is a good time to think about all those little jobs you have not had time to attend to over summer. David Mounter, who is an experienced boat builder, has kindly offered to tutor a group on preventative boat maintenance. David says that it is much easier to learn to identify potential problems before they become expensive repair jobs. No matter what type of boat you have, he will work with you to identify those problems on your own boat and show you how to repair them. You will first learn some useful theory and then have some hands-on experience where you will have an opportunity to learn from working on each other's problems. What a great way to get a step ahead before next summer.

#### Maths for Fun

Are you one of those people who shuddered at the very thought of Maths at school? Have you always wished you understood it a lot better? Well, here's your chance. Clair MacDonald, who has a degree in Mathematics, has kindly agreed to facilitate a Maths for Fun group. She has run fun maths events for families and school groups and has found that participants really enjoyed the activities. Small groups will work together to solve interesting puzzles with a mathematical basis. The emphasis is on fun. Nobody need be worried about getting things wrong as you work as a team. Clair will tailor the content to the interests of the group. If you need help with practical problems such as how to work out compound interest or how to calculate how much wallpaper you need, bring your questions along. Clair can give you useful strategies for approaching those frustrating Sudoku puzzles too. This is different from anything we have had before so why not give it a go?

Please contact me as soon as possible if you wish to join one of these new groups - Margaret Rasmussen - [rasi@clear.net.nz](mailto:rasi@clear.net.nz) or 09 402 8949

*Margaret Rasmussen*