



U3A Taradale Newsletter

April 2024

PRESIDENT KEITH PONDERS:



My pondering for this month is simple:

I want to tell you about our quarterly Coffee Morning for the combined membership on **Monday 6th May** in the **Senior Citizens' Hall** in Taradale. Those of us who have planned it have high hopes for a significant occasion.

Many of you will recall the *Napier Secondary Schools' Speech*

Competition sponsored by U3A Taradale until a few years ago. It gave us an opportunity to relate to and encourage a group of students in local schools. It represented the partnership of elders and youth in the shaping of our society. There were, indeed, some memorable occasions. However, time moved on, and that formula no longer met the needs of the schools. But the notion that, as elders, we have something to share with youth and plenty for us to learn from them persists.

So, next month, we open a new chapter in our commitment to elders and youth, sharing their wisdom, fears and hopes as we move into a challenging future for our communities and our world. We will be hosts to a group of senior students from **Taradale High School** and **William Colenso College** for a panel discussion on issues and challenges facing our society. The panel will consist of several students and two of our U3A members. There may also be an opportunity for questions from the floor.

Every generation faces challenges but, when most of us left school, life seemed more predictable and stable than it feels today. Internationally and locally, violence seems to be on the increase; many societies are losing the focus on unity; minority groups are sometimes treated badly but, more often than not, prioritised; the gap between rich and poor is growing; racial and cultural diversity is often feared rather than welcomed; climate change is an overwhelming challenge, and who knows what artificial intelligence will bring? Over and over, I hear people in our senior age group expressing anxiety over the future that awaits our children and their children.

The theme of our **May 6th** gathering is: **Across the Ages - youth & age exploring life together - a panel discussion on things that matter.**

I think I have mentioned before a significant book by William Macaskill, ***What we owe the Future***. He reminds us that, though we live in challenging times, if we respond wisely, there is the possibility to build a more caring and just future. But we will need to escape from some of our narrower ways of thinking; discover a more generous and thoughtful appreciation of our neighbours, and a sharing of generational, cultural and religious wisdom that for too long has existed behind

walls of prejudice, fear, ignorance and aggression. We need to learn how to share wisdom, how to 'hear' those we have been taught to distrust, how to imagine new ways of living together and organising life. It's a time when dreamers and activists need each other. Macaskill argues that we live in a period when, in a time of vast challenges, new possibilities beckon. We are, he suggests, like glass blowers: the glass is molten and malleable, and it can be blown into one of many shapes. We live in a period of what he calls 'plasticity'. A major, ever present question is: what sort of a future will our decisions and actions create for our children's children to live in? For Macaskill, 'future people count'. We can make their lives go better. Even though we have not and will not meet them, their lives will be largely shaped by the sort of world we bequeath to them. For some of us, 'life' is largely shaped by what we remember. For those who are younger, it is significantly shaped by what they anticipate and are preparing for. Each group has wisdom to share with the other. Memory and aspiration, experience and vision, need each other.

Above, I used the term 'elders' to describe people of our chronological age. 'Elders' in most cultures are those who have travelled longest and are respected for their accumulated wisdom. Elders, wisdom-bearers, those who endured through yesterday's tough times, have an important role to play in every society. Elders offer wisdom rather than impose it.

Travel well,
Keith



OUR AUTUMN U3A GATHERING WILL BE IN THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S HALL, SYMONDS LANE ON MONDAY MAY 6th at 9.30AM AND WILL INCLUDE MORNING TEA.

As mentioned in Keith's musings above, the theme of the meeting will be ***Across the Ages*** - youth & age exploring life together - a panel discussion on things that matter.

The meeting will be hosted by our Leisure Cycling Group

FEEDBACK FROM LAST NEWSLETTER

Fortunately, we have Life Member Vic Chick on board to keep us right on points of order regarding our Constitution:

“In the *U3A Taradale* newsletters for November 2023 and January 2024, you refer to the award of Life Membership to Eric Niania as *Honorary*. Clause 4.6 of the Constitution provides, in part, that: ‘*The award of Life Membership may be made to any member who, in the opinion of the Committee, has rendered significant service to the Society over a period of several years.*’ It is implicit from this that the award is earned, not *Honorary*. Clause 4.2 provides for: ‘*The award of Honorary Membership to any person who renders special services to the Society*’.”

CONVENORS’ MEETING

Around twenty convenors attended a very constructive get-together in the Missionview Village Hall on Monday 11th March when matters including promotion of ***U3A Taradale*** and how to attract new members were discussed. Instead of the time-consuming task of posting or hand-delivering printed copies of the newsletter to those not on e-mail, it was suggested that printed copies be given to their Convenors to hand to them out instead, especially as postal services are not always timely or reliable. Very unfortunately, in the wake of this meeting, about a quarter of those present tested positive for *Covid*.

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMITTEE

STORAGE:

Our committee is looking for a spot where we can store a number of things owned by U3A Taradale: old paper records, various items used by groups, cups and other utensils, a screen etc... We have finally established an accurate list of equipment owned by U3A Taradale but need a spot where we can store them so that they can be available to groups in need of them.

Do you have any suggestions? Perhaps you have unused space that might be available? It needs to be dry and accessible. Please let our Secretary Yvonne Huckson know if you have any suggestions. (021 149 5415)





If there is a worldwide baby boom as an indirect outcome of *Covid*, what will happen in the mid-2030's? A whole bunch of quaran-teens!

GROUP NEWS

The **Art Appreciation group** meets in the *Taradale Library* every second Tuesday of the month at 1-30pm in the meeting room. We are a small group who enjoy art. We each pick an artist of our choice, research them and then present a 10-minute talk about that artist. We would love to have some more people join us. If you think you might be interested, why not come along to a meeting and see if it is for you? Our next meeting will be on 14th May.

Convenor: Kathleen Cocking (06 845 15 53)

The **Book group**, which meets at 2pm on the second Friday of each month in private homes, would welcome about four new members.

Convenor: Vic Chick (06 843 3474).

The **Contentious Issues group**, which meets on the first Thursday of each month from 1.45pm to 4pm in the Missionview Village Hall, could also do with some new members. It should perhaps be pointed out that their discussions, though sometimes passionate, never become angry!

Convenor: Keith Rowe (02158 52 98).

The **Community Affairs group**, together with the combined membership, will meet on Monday, 6th May in the Senior Citizens' Hall in Taradale from 0930 for morning tea followed from 1000 to around 1100 by the inaugural **Across the Ages** discussion, the panel consisting of several students from *Taradale High School* and *William Colenso College* with two of our own members. There will be no charge for this meeting. **Kindly note that there will be no meeting in June** as the first Monday in the month coincides with the King's Birthday celebration.

Convenor: Franki James (06 843 59 26).

The **Cycling group** – members of which are going to be hosts at the upcoming Coffee Morning - informs us that, at present, they are not taking any new members.

Convenor: Vince Alcock (06 845 36 43).

The **Gardening group** - The U3A Taradale gardening group is now under way. We have thirteen members, including two men.

The group aims to have a variety of activities with a different member organising the event each month, each including including a coffee stop. We are a lively group with a shared interest in gardening but not necessarily great gardeners. We meet on the second Friday morning of the month at a location to be decided each month.

Our first outing was to Crude Foods, the community gardens in Puketapu. They do a great job of growing food for the community and any donations of seeds or plants are most welcome.

Last week we had a demonstration on propagation from Carol Dacey. Carol's demonstration was most informative and interesting. Despite the inclement weather we were able to gather on Christine and Tony's courtyard to watch Carol give a comprehensive demonstration of different propagation techniques.

We also had a visit from Sue Pollard of U3A Havelock North. Sue shared with us some ideas and tips she found useful when co-ordinating the Havelock North group.

Future trips planned include visits to the Green Door Nursery, Bio Rich, The Figgery, Ruth and David Bennett's garden, and the Environment Centre Hawke's Bay. Trips to a country garden, council gardens and reserves, and inviting speakers on specific tonics are also being considered.

Co-ordinator: Christine Smith (027 632 6973) chrismsmith999@gmail.com

I don't know who
needs to hear this
but you are a great
gardener.

That plant really
should have tried
harder



(Quote courtesy of Judy Rasmussen)

The **Mahjong group**, which meets on Tuesdays at 8.45am for a 9.00 start, has recently had a change of venue to the *Taradale Bridge Club*, 48 Clyde Jeffrey Drive (adjacent to the hockey fields at Park Island).

Convenors: Bev Doohan (845 38 34) or Joy Lawrence (027 284 4235).

The **Photography group** consists of about fifteen people who enjoy taking photographs and enjoy each other's company. It is mainly a social group using photography as an excuse for meeting. The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month from February to November at 1.30 pm at the Missionview Masonic Village in Avondale Road. We share each other's photographs on the monthly topic and then enjoy afternoon tea, concluding at about 3 pm.

We don't get too deeply into photographic technicalities as most of us rely on point and shoot, although the topics do try to cover different skills. This year's topics have been *Off the Ground; Piles of Things*, and *Patterns in Nature*. For the remainder of the year, we have *Black and White; The Sea; Steps and Stairs; Made of Metal; Look Through any Window; Narrow Streets; Curves*, and *Ten Photos that Narrate a Story*. Apart from the social aspect of the group, one of the biggest benefits is that, for an entire month, we look at the world through a different lens. Rob Jackson, who took the photo below from a hide at the only place where they nest in New Zealand, tells us, "It was magical!" The group is always happy for others interested in photography to join them.

Convenor: Rob Jackson (021 033 808)



White Heron Juveniles on Nest at Waitangitaona River

The **Te Reo group**: There are some changes to the *Te Reo Maori* group. Unfortunately, we are not taking beginners this year but welcome anyone with some knowledge of *Te Reo*. As a group, we have progressed past the beginner stage, and want to advance our own learning and conversational skills. We have also changed our time and venue, now meeting every Tuesday afternoon from 1.30 to 3pm, in a private home. Anyone with some knowledge of *Te Reo* is welcome to join us to see whether our levels are compatible.

Convenor: Claire Donkin (02102987728) for further information.

POSSIBLE FUTURE GROUPS

Te Reo (short course)

Claire Donkin, Convenor of the **Te Reo group**, tells us: “We are also inviting expressions of interest in a short course (4 to 6 weeks) for non-Māori speakers, covering pronunciation, placenames, and Māori words and phrases used on radio and TV, and commonly throughout New Zealand.”

Please contact Marie Howard (027 508 6688) if you are interested.

Favourite Music group: In the last newsletter, David Day very kindly offered to set up a new group for those who would like to share and discuss their favourite music, to bring along their favourite CDs, to play their very favourite track (tune/song) and to introduce the item by speaking briefly about the composer and artiste. For example, David’s own selection would range from Delius to Brubeck, from Pavarotti to Josh Groban and the MJQ. He has already had a couple of expressions of interest but not yet sufficient to warrant setting up such a group. He would provide an adequate CD player and be the first “presenter”. Offers would then be invited from other members of the group to present future sessions. If it goes ahead, the likely venue would be the Community Hall in *Missionview Retirement Village* on Thursday mornings during June and July, continuing into the future if it proves popular enough

Indications of interest should be phoned to David asap (06 835 51 77)

Want to send an item for the next newsletter?

The newsletter email address is newsletters@taradaleu3a.org.nz

U3A Committee 2024

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