



Taradale U3A Newsletter

January 2024

PRESIDENT KEITH PONDER:

PONDERING AS A NEW YEAR EMERGES



Pondering can be a demanding and challenging occupation. It has been for me as December 2023 has rolled over into January 2024. Our world seems to be dangerously balanced on the edge of a cliff. The news is dominated by tales of genocidal violence, revenge, hatred expressed at the end of a gun, an armed drone, or a bayonet. The war in Ukraine grinds on. The events focussed on Gaza and the West Bank of Palestine/Israel, at the time of writing, show no sign of escape from a never-ending cycle of violence. Here in New Zealand, there are ominous signs of rough waters ahead and suggestions of social conflict. I saw the new year in, stayed up till midnight – it always seems to me a silly custom but, on this occasion, I wanted to make sure that dreadful 2023 had really ended and not been able to negotiate an extension to its miserable reign. It was a year that left no day on its calendar untouched by its destructive and blood-stained fingers. Here in Hawkes Bay and Tairāwhiti, 2023 will be remembered as the year when Gabrielle visited and damaged already fragile communities.

It would be great if the day came when TV news was no longer punctuated by warnings that “the following item may be offensive to some viewers”. The whole of 2023 has been offensive!! I’m not big on miracles but we could do with a few as 2024 unfolds. But the possibility is that 2024 will be shaped by continuing efforts to clean up the local and international messes left by 2023. If Putin, Netanyahu, Trump and many other leaders we could name, as well as those whose corporate greed damages others, were to take a good hard look at themselves in the mirror - it might provoke a miracle or two from which the whole world will benefit.

Thankfully 2023 did bring personal pleasure as births were celebrated, achievements enjoyed, and milestones marked within families and extended communities. Thank you 2023 for these things – but you could have done a lot better on the larger canvas.

I regard myself as fortunate that, every month, I gather with other members of a couple of U3A groups where we can discuss in a non-judgemental setting what’s going on in the world and, sometimes, how we can each contribute to a more peaceful, less violent, more generous community. There’ll be some spirited and challenging discussions in 2024. And so there should be! We certainly live in a mixed-up and dangerous world.

Keith

Thought for the day:

The nicest thing about the future is that it always starts tomorrow.

NOTICE OF U3A TARADALE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

We will gather for our annual meeting on February 5th at 9.45am, for a 10.00am start in the Senior Citizens' Hall, 10 White Street, Taradale.

If we arrive by 9.45, we can pick up a cup of coffee or tea at the servery and be seated around tables and eats in time for a 10.00-ish beginning.

The agenda for the AGM includes recognition of those who have died, the President's spoken report, election of Committee, President, etc., as well as an opportunity for discussion about our U3A programme for 2024.

Nominations for Committee and President should be with the secretary by the time of our meeting. Two members of our current Committee have indicated they will not be available for re-election and will need to be replaced. We can add to the number on the Committee. Keith Rowe has served as President for two years and, according to the Constitution, cannot serve for more than three years. It would be ideal if we had a Vice President willing to prepare to take over the role of President at our 2025 AGM.

Nomination forms will be available at our AGM and require the agreement of the person being nominated, a mover and seconder. Or you can use the form below and send it to our Secretary Yvonne Huckson: yhuckson@gmail.com or phone her on 021 149 5415

NOMINATION FORM U3A TARADALE 2024

I/We

NOMINATE

FOR THE POSITION OF (Committee Member/President/Vice President)

.....

Proposed by..... **Seconded by**

Approved by the Nominee

Nomination forms will be available at our AGM and require the agreement of the person being nominated, a mover and seconder. Or you can use the form below and send it to our Secretary Yvonne Huckson: yhuckson@gmail.com or phone her on 021 149 5415

Agenda for AGM:

- Apologies
- Confirmation of 2023 AGM minutes
- Matters arising
- President's report for 2023, Keith Rowe
- Treasurer's report, John Warren
- Election of Officers and Committee

Note: Election of **President** (Keith Rowe is available for a further year), **Vice-President** (vacant), **Secretary** (Yvonne Huckson is available to continue), **Treasurer** (John Warren is available to continue), **Committee** (Janet Turvey is available to continue), Peter Green is *ex officio* as Past President). Geoff Tilyard, Erin Mahoney and Jeanette Elgie are standing down and will need to be replaced. It is possible, perhaps desirable, that we increase the number of members on the Committee which meets at least 4 times (usually 5) a year. Each member undertakes a particular task for the year.

Annual Fees

Thanks to all who responded so promptly to the invoice for payment of 2024 U3A fees. For those yet to pay, a reminder that our account number is 03 0631 0175173 00 for internet payment.

For those wishing to pay cash this can be done at the Annual General Meeting. The fee is \$10 if paid before then end of February and \$15 beyond that date.

Following the formal AGM, we will welcome **Pam De Frere**, President of *Hastings U3A* and **Hayley Burnette**, Hawkes Bay Programme Manager for the **Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawkes Bay** organisation.

Pam de Frere, the President of Hastings U3A, has been a mentor for Eden for a year now. She says, "It has been a wonderful year of learning and delight... I am learning so much about this young lass and about me as well. I find this programme fulfilling and energising. It is amazing to see how much Eden has grown in confidence in many areas of her life. We have so much fun together and being with her is a highlight of my week. The organisation is strong and helpful and has helped turn around the lives of many children in Hawkes Bay over the last few years. I am thrilled that Hayley is able to speak to us about this awesome and proven mentoring programme that has been growing steadily in HB for a number of years. At this stage, there are a hundred mentors working with working with young people on a one-to-one basis.



Pam with mentee Eden



Hayley Burnette

Community-based mentoring programme: *Community-based mentoring helps young people to increase their confidence, develop a greater sense of belonging and aspire to greatness. The majority of the young people who come through the **Big Brothers Big Sisters** programme are looking for positive adult role models outside of their existing support structure. A young person*

aged 6-11 is matched with an adult volunteer based on personality, shared interests, and geographic location. Once a week, for a minimum of a year, the mentor meets with the young person to spend time together – cooking, going to the beach, playing sport – the possibilities are endless.....

NEW GROUPS FOR 2024

Our last newsletter mentioned some new groups for 2024, subject to interest:

GARDENING GROUP

Hi fellow gardening enthusiasts!

Finally I am following up on investigating a Taradale U3A gardening group. My apologies for the delay in getting this underway.

I suggest that we have our inaugural meeting at 10.30 am on Wednesday 14th February.

Wednesday is the only day of the week when there is no other U3A group meeting.

You are welcome to meet at our place, 5 Chilton Rd, Hospital Hill, Napier. My mobile number is 027 632 6973. I am no expert gardener and am now limited in my gardening.

We have been away for a year so our garden needs a thorough overall. However, we have an urban garden of edible plants that might interest members.

We can talk about when we meet, what we want to accomplish from our group and how we organise the meetings. I am happy to coordinate the group with other members organising each month's activities.

Please invite other members that you think may be interested and let me know if you plan to attend.

Kind regards

Christine Smith (027 632 6973)

RELIGION: A MULTI-FACETED AND DIVERSE HUMAN PHENOMENON

The 6-session winter group exploring the forms, future and diversity of religion and religions has attracted sufficient members to go ahead. Keith Rowe will be in touch with the twelve would-be members to arrange a gathering when times, venue, dates can be decided. There is space for a few more members.

Contact: Keith (kkrowe@xtra.co.nz)

FAVOURITE MUSIC GROUP

David Day is offering a new group for those who would like to share and discuss their favourite music, described as follows:

Led by local musician, David Day, the idea is for members of the group to bring along their favourite CDs, and play their very favourite track (tune/song) and introduce the item, it's composer and the artiste. David will provide an adequate CD player and be the first "presenter". Offers will then be invited from other members of the group to present future sessions. In the meantime, David is investigating a suitable venue in order to establish what day and time it's available. Music range? Whatever your choice/s may be!!! For example, David's selections range from Delius to Brubeck, from Pavaroti to Josh Groban and the MJQ....

Indications of interest should be phoned in to David (06 8355177), preferably before the end of January.

OTHER GROUP NEWS

CYCLING GROUP

The Cycling Group has a new **U3A** logo for their vests and we look forward to seeing how splendid they look.....

WORDS WORDS WORDS

This group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, starting on Wednesday, 7th February, from 2-4pm in the *Senior Citizens Hall* in Taradale. New members welcome. \$3 entry fee covers room rental, photocopying and afternoon tea.

THIRTY YEARS OF U3A TARADALE

Chris Geddis kindly reminds us that *U3A Taradale* was established thirty years ago!

Background:

In 1972, Professor Pierre Vellas - and colleagues of Toulouse University in France - recognised the pool of experience, knowledge, and intelligence of retired people. The following year, they launched the *U3A* (L'Université du Troisième Age – the University of the Third Age). Eight years later, there were sixty such organisations in France. In the “French Model”, each *U3A* maintains strong links with a university and is based on attending lectures. Thus, we are not a “University” in the modern sense of the word. The guiding philosophy of most New Zealand *U3As* is that stated in 1981 by one of our founders in the UK, the late Professor Peter Laslett of Cambridge University:

*"Those who teach shall also learn
and those that learn shall also teach"*

Under New Zealand law, we cannot use “University” in our title as it reserved for the current University qualification establishments.

In the January 1994 Minutes of Taradale *U3A*, it is recorded that the New Zealand Qualifications Authority wrote drawing attention to the ‘legal protection of the word “University” and asking *U3As* to desist in its use in promotional literature. If we choose not to observe this, they will regard it as an offence under law.

Therefore, we could no longer call ourselves University of Third Age - hence *U3A* is the name currently used in New Zealand. Franki James has suggested that, instead of having to explain the acronym each time we are asked, we might like to call ourselves the “Universal Third Age” instead.

The *U3A* has spread world-wide – to the UK in the early 80s where it became more of a self-help organisation, to Australia in 1985, then to New Zealand in 1989 (at Remuera in Auckland) and it has since spread throughout the country. New Zealand has followed the so-called “British Model”.

Meetings were held in 1992 to form a *U3A* in Hawkes Bay, with the intention of one *U3A* covering branches in Havelock North, Hastings, Napier and Taradale as *U3A Hawke’s Bay Incorporated*. However, Havelock North chose to be incorporated separately.

The first group in Taradale to meet was Antiques in November 1992 closely followed by Current Affairs. A report in the HB Herald Tribune on 7 November 1992 stated:

“A U3A in Taradale opens next week with twenty members. In Havelock North, forty members have enrolled although courses have yet to be finalised”.

On 25th August in 1993, when Hastings had twenty-seven members, Napier twenty-one and Taradale forty-four, they were incorporated as branches under U3A Hawke’s Bay Incorporated.

In 1993, Taradale U3A’s forty-four financial members were engaged in six active study groups: Antiques, Comparative Religions, Creative English, Ancient History, Modern History and Current Affairs.

By 1994, Taradale U3A had sixty-three members in twelve groups: Ancient and Modern History, Scottish History, Pencil Sketching, Local History, Coastal Navigation, Comparative Religions, Creative English, Geology, Watercolour Art, Antiques and the ever-popular Current Affairs.

Hastings U3A incorporated separately in 2001, which left Taradale U3A as both a branch and the parent body as Napier had merged with them by then.

On 2nd July 2002 the Constitution of the U3A Hawke’s Bay Incorporated was altered and re-named as, U3A Taradale Incorporated.

On 13th November 2002 a lunch was held at the Taradale Club, costing \$16.50 a head, to commemorate the ten years since the first meetings of U3A groups in Taradale. In 2003, the Napier Secondary Schools’ Speech Contest was started as part of the tenth anniversary celebrations, and it continued for about 15 years.

On 6th June 2012, a lunch was held at the Napier Golf Club to commemorate twenty years since the first meetings of U3A groups in Taradale. On 25th August 2018, a lunch at the Napier RSA to commemorate twenty-five years of U3A Taradale was held.

Chris wonders why nothing was done to celebrate thirty years of U3A Taradale.

Editor’s note: Perhaps Covid and Cyclone Gabrielle had something to do with it?

Christmas Party New Honorary Life Member of U3A Taradale

At the start of the *U3A Taradale* Christmas Party on 4th December 2023, hosted by members of the *History* group, President Keith announced that, in addition to our two existing Honorary Life Members – Vic Chick and Sonia Mackenzie - a third member, Eric Niania, had been appointed. Eric was introduced by Vic, after which he was presented with a special certificate which, it later transpired, he himself had designed some long time before!



President Keith



Vic Chick, Eric Niania and Sonia Mackenzie

Eric then gave the following acceptance speech:

“Upon retiring from a career year of about forty years as schoolteachers in the Waikato and Auckland regions, my late wife Ramari and I felt the call to return to our provincial *turangawaewae* (places where we feel empowered and connected), Hawkes Bay; she originally from Nuhaka and I, from Te Reinga.

The year 2000 and Taradale seemed a favourable compromise for us both; so, we decided Taradale would be a god place to settle.

Now, all of you in this hall will know, that retiring is not a matter of watching the sun making its way across the sky, day after tedious day and thus, being interested people doing interesting things, we both wanted to make use of those hours.

It was then that I discovered in the *Napier City Council* brochure, “Interesting things to do”. I scrolled down the list and the U3A organisation popped up. This was the first time I had heard about such an organisation. I soon joined U3A Taradale - about the year 2000.

There are many, many reasons why the U3A is so very meaningful for me.

There is a very profound saying in the *Māori* world which typifies the spirit of U3A:

*‘He aha te mea nui o te ao?
He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!’*

*‘What is the most important thing in this world?
'Tis people! people! people!’*

U3A has flushed out of me my *Māori* origins and has led me into the cultural world of the *Pakeha*. Through the U3A I have met and befriended many people and I like to think that today is a testament to that recognition.

There was **Shirley Round**; for me, Shirley was probably the most catalytic member to set my sparks of enthusiasm alight. Shirley, a retired secondary school teacher, was our *History* Convenor. As a result of Shirley, I was nominated (by default) onto the Committee. She certainly pushed me into giving talks in the *History* group. I owe a lot to Shirley for boosting my confidence and for treating me as an equal.

Space does not allow for the inclusion of so many friendly people in U3A who have bothered to help and share their favourable time with me:

- **Vic Chick** - our go-to for legal matters;
- **Margaret Hicks** - fun-loving, efficient and a great leader.
- **Doug Kerr** - close friend with more than a passing interest in the world of the *Māori*.
- **Drew Keffalas** – such a loyal and close friend who worked tirelessly for U3A
- **Dick Smithies** - very intelligent friend who was the ideal member to convene *Controversial Issues*.
- **Pat Ballard** - a real giver, loyal President, who took over from **Belinda Galbraith** as Convenor of *Community Affairs*. Pat and I still trade oranges for spinach!
- **Norma Sinton** – long-serving member of the *History* group and her Dad was my Headmaster at the *Te Reinga Native School*.
- **Franki James** - Just the kind of person ideally suited to the functions of U3A. Franki took over from me as Convener of the *Napier Secondary Schools’ Speech Competition*.

Oh! there are so many others who have touched my life as a U3A member.

In finishing, I still take U3A *Māori* lessons with a very diligent group. They are so keen and hardly need any prompting!

*‘He aha te mea nui o te ao?
He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!’*

Thank you.”

Following Eric's speech, Sonia read a poem she had specially written for the festive occasion:

*Good morning fellow members, it's great to see you here
Especially when the Christmas season is so very near.
I almost can't remember how many times I've been
To an end-of-year celebration with my friends of U3A.
Twenty-five years plus we started up as a friendly bunch
All have learnt a thing or two about a subject that is new...
and this is what you are meant to do.*

*Each year the list of things to study grows bigger, better
and more widely-spread to keep our members right in touch
and make the lot be widely-read.
Meeting for lunch to keep them fed, learning of the taste of wines,
which is best of white and red.
Music fills the hearts of many. History keeps the mind so steady,
Words forefront in several ways can fill up a lot of days.*

*But let's not forget that Christmas comes just once a year,
And, once again, it's almost here!
I'm sure that once is all it comes but maybe I cannot do sums.
So, I want to say "thank you" for the year that has gone by,
For the friendship and the laughter that has come into my life
Just from being a member of the U3A.
So, pretend to raise a glass up now and shout out "Merry Christmas!"
We'll see you back in '24 with renewed enthusiasm.*

A Christmas Quiz, courtesy of Joe Barnett, followed, with the enthusiastic participation of all present, while Ian MacEwan very eloquently filled us in on some of the themes that had been discussed in the *History* group sessions.

Given that the *U3A* originated in France, it was perhaps fitting that members of the three *French* groups contributed to the occasion, telling us how Christmas is celebrated there, finishing with a rousing rendition of a Christmas carol in French, complete with instrumental accompaniment.



The celebration finished with a special morning tea with most people agreeing that the new format, with everyone sitting at tables and having time to talk to each other, should be repeated in future.

President Keith finished by giving special thanks to Wynn Barnett and her helpers in the Dipping into History group for organising and serving the delicious food and drink and to all those who had contributed to making the event such a success.

<i>Current U3A Committee 2024</i>			
Keith Rowe	President	kkrowe@xtra.co.nz	021 258 5298
John Warren	Treasurer		845 4623
Yvonne Huckson	Secretary	yhuckson@gmail.com	021 149 5415
Janet Turvey	Registrar	janet.turvey51@gmail.com	027 367 9120
Peter Green	Past President	pandagreen@xtra.co.nz	0274 795 403

Want to send an item for the next newsletter?

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