



www.u3ahamilton.org.nz

Post PO Box 1103, Hamilton

Email hamiltonnzu3a@gmail.com

Newsletter May 2020

Life is for learning.....learn for life

Meetings

Next meeting

The May meeting is cancelled. We will be in touch when we have news of the next meeting.

President's message

Dear U3A members

It may be some time before we are able to meet again as a large group to hear a speaker and catch up with friends. For now, we are restricted to our small bubbles, helped by the sunny weather which allows us to walk and garden. A number of our groups have been maintaining contact, however, as you can read in the newsletter. Zoom, which was unknown to most of us before the lockdown, has become a daily means of joining with others. I use it to talk with family and colleagues, to take part in regular pilates classes, and of course for the U3A book group reading Irish writers. I'm also planning a Zoom "party" for my husband's 80th birthday where we will drink a toast and cut the cake with relatives based in five NZ cities, three Australian states, and Canada. Technology can be wonderful.

Our U3A website now has a blog which lists online resources you may enjoy. There are many ideas to suit all kinds of interests. The blog is regularly updated so keep checking. I also joined a Facebook U3A group which has kept me entertained with

stories of what members (mainly in the UK) are experiencing. There have been life histories, sightings of new spring plants, puzzles, poems and many photos.

It is heartening that as a country we in New Zealand have been firm in our commitment to protect the most vulnerable in the population and that older people are seen as valuable assets to be protected. We must all feel grateful for this. It is not the norm in many other countries. However, some of us have also felt marginalized by the rhetoric. Committee member Peggy Koopman Boyden whose academic focus has been the sociological study of older people in the community, wrote to the Minister for Seniors, Hon. Tracey Martin to express her concern.

At a personal level. being over 70 myself, I have spent the last five weeks adjusting **to being defined publicly**, and for the first time in my life, by old age alone, and with that categorization, being sent home to stay at home and not be able to contribute to society in any way that would involve others. Along with many of my older colleagues, I had the feeling that our active contribution to society is no longer valued.

Some of you may have also read an article in the Waikato Times by Venetia Sherson, objecting to being classed as vulnerable solely on the grounds of age. Like philosopher Mary Warnock who died last year at 94, she does not want "to be pitied or patronised". Her hope is that when we emerge from lockdown "we in our seventies and eighties and beyond, who still live independent lives and class ourselves as sound in mind and body, can reclaim our status as productive and engaged citizens alongside other generations." This is consistent with the aims of U3A. It is encouraging that the government has listened to these concerns. The purpose of Peggy's letter, was to thank the Minister for the changed focus as we move into level 3.

I wish to congratulate you and your colleagues for providing a much more sensible categorization of the people we are concerned about, NOT defined by their older age alone, but more particularly by their risk of severe illness, AND then giving them the freedom to choose their level of involvement, from your careful list of relevant health conditions.

Our U3A committee will continue to produce regular newsletters and through the blog hope to encourage more groups to find novel ways of keeping in contact. If members have read interesting books, watched stimulating drama or podcasts, or taken virtual journeys to some of the places in the world we can no longer visit. I hope you will think about providing a short note about this to the committee for future newsletters.

In the meantime, keep safe in your bubbles, explore online connections, and look forward to meeting face to face again in months to come.

Noeline Alcorn, President

Groups

Interest group news

Obviously groups are no longer meeting face to face but some groups are trying new ways to “meet” and carry on with their interests.

Book discussion group

Our book discussion group used Zoom (with thanks to Lesley for organising it) for our April meeting to enjoy a lively chat about books read & experiences under Level 4. Not everyone was able to connect. However, I would encourage people to persevere when confronted with technical problems, ring a friend or relative for advice &/or google for a solution. We are meeting online fortnightly at present to further provide companionship & exchange experiences.

The Music Appreciation Group – Coping with Lockdown

Faced with the prospect of not being able meet up and listen to members’ music selections in the normal way, we decided that, rather than not do anything, we would use the Internet. Basically each member was asked to access YouTube to select 3 music videos and email their selection details on the artist etc. to Brett Robinson for collating into a YouTube Playlist. These details form the basis for our U3A Music Appreciation Group Claytons (the meeting you have when you are not having a meeting).

On the morning we would normally meet, an email is sent to each member prior to the 9.30am start along with strict instructions to,

1. Brush your hair, pour yourself a drink (or coffee)

2. Put your feet up, click on the link
3. Sit back-turn up the volume
4. Have fun and enjoy

The email includes the URL link to the day's playlist on YouTube and so we click onto that and enjoy both music and videos for the next couple of hours. We then have the option of connecting with our group and commenting on the selections by email later.

All Hamilton U3A members are invited to participate and enjoy our group's selection by opening up YouTube and searching for the following Playlists:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWrgFefgDppoJren1Mzs2sR_qGj_pXwfn

U3A Music Claytons 1

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWrgFefgDppqzmtbPmwSquGaTUF9rWIOT>

U3A Hamilton Claytons 2

Garden group

This group has been meeting on a regular basis via Zoom to discuss gardens they have visited, sometimes after viewing them virtually. We are also sharing what we have been up to in our gardens during lockdown as well as sharing solutions and tips.

Theatre and Shows Appreciation Group

We have now seen and discussed the following shows, bringing us to the end of April 2020.

National Theatre: One Man Two Guvnors, Treasure Island and Twelfth Night.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's: Jesus Christ Superstar, The Phantom of the Opera and Love Never Dies.

We would love to hear of other ways that groups are keeping in touch.

Committee news

Postings in the U3A Blog

A blog is a journal or diary, so new entries are made each week. Since the first posting was made on 31 March 2020, 27 postings have been made over the following 4 weeks. More postings will be uploaded in the coming weeks so keep checking the link: <https://u3ahamilton.org.nz/online-learning/> on your phone, tablet or computer.

Suggestions for new postings are always welcome.

The postings on our website at the time of the May newsletter are:

1. Learning during COVID-19 isolation: the 'Chatterpack' link for online learning
2. NZ Online Learning: News daily email, NZ String Quartet, singer Nadia Reid
3. Editor's pick (from the newsletter)
4. More U3A online learning: Painting portraits TV show, 1918 flu pandemic
5. Art in the J. Paul Getty Museum, 'Only Connect' TV quiz show, 1918 flu lecture
6. Learning to use zoom
7. Learning French: accounts of the pandemic in French
8. Learning in gardens: the gardening group and writing by a gardener
9. Learning of your family history: resources for starting your family research project
10. Books: an interview with an author, local bookshops
11. Music Appreciation Group activities, Futurelearn courses in music and Spotify
12. Theatre appreciation: UK National Theatre play: 'One man, two guvnors'
13. Ukulele group activities
14. Ukulele music links
15. Choral music: Royal Choral Society UK
16. Flu tracking
17. Fraser High School online adult education classes starting in May 2020
18. NZ Symphony Orchestra performance
19. Poetry of Sam Hunt
20. The Royal Ballet in the UK: Metamorphosis
21. Gardens of distinction

- 22. Neil Finn and family daily broadcasts
- 23. 'The Citizens Handbook' on RNZ
- 24. MOOCS – Massive Open Online Learning Courses
- 25. More gardens to explore online
- 26. Stories of hope for children in lockdown times
- 27. Theatre and show appreciation #2: Jane Eyre, Treasure Island and more

Attached to this newsletter email, is a file on how to use the blog.

Beverley Bell

Special Message

It is heartening to see so many of our members embracing new technology to maintain their social, cultural and intellectual interests.

The lockdown has had a major effect on individuals, families and businesses. Many have had to develop new skills and strategies to cope with the changes they are experiencing. This was exemplified by the way many commemorated Anzac Day.



Malcom Barr, principal trombonist with the Hamilton City Brass band, plays the Last Post at the front of his Hamilton home dawn.

