

U3A WAKATIPU CHAIRPERON'S ANNUAL REPORT

14TH NOVEMBER 2011

It gives me great pleasure to present the second annual report from the Chair.

We have now been in existence for just over two years and our membership and our members' enthusiasm continues to grow and flourish. Our membership now stands at 275. Our lectures are well attended, averaging between 70 and 80 people.

Our topics this last year have been many and varied as we try to cater for all interests that our members have brought to our attention.

We ended last year on a high note with our music series and were extremely privileged to attend the last public concert given by Maurice Till. We all mourned his passing two months later.

We started this year with a great series on Contemporary NZ Art and this included a well-attended field trip to Gore to the Eastern Southland Art Gallery.

Our March series focused on medical matters and we are grateful to the support from the Neurological Foundation with one of our lectures by Dr Andrew Clarkson attended by a record number of 143 people.

April took a different tack as we headed into the world or should I say orbit of Astronomy. A field trip to Mt John Observatory, Tekapo, was very well organised by Marion Borrell. We were also most fortunate to have Lindsay Kennett, a well known milliner speak to us on Millinery in the 20th century. This was in conjunction with the Lakes District Museum who was staging an exhibition of his.

Criminology was our focus for the May series and we examined the criminal processes involved in the Court, Prison, Probation and Parole systems.

The rest of May and June we went into recess as attendance is unpredictable in the winter months.

We have held eight study groups this year, throughout the year, and they have proved very popular and often over subscribed. Many thanks to Marion Borrell for her role in organizing these groups, and taking some of them - and to her co leaders, Justine Cranfield, Athol Dixon and Peter Barber. Study group topics included two on music, three on literature, one on social issues. The music groups continue to meet regularly for the sheer enjoyment. Barbara Glass organised and conducted two Art tours of the Wakatipu, visiting artists in their workshops. This was, once again very popular, and we will revisit this area again next year.

July saw a lecture by Associate Professor Bronwen Connor assisted again by the Neurological Foundation. We were offered the opportunity to host this public lecture for the Foundation. It was attended by over 100 people.

In August we combined again with the Lakes District Museum to host Associate Professor Susanne Ledanff who gave a lecture on the Holocaust and its legacy in conjunction with an exhibition on Anne Frank held at the Museum.

In late August and September we had our International series commencing with Adam Childs speaking on International Humanitarian Assistance. He was followed by Dr Kevin Clements speaking on International conflict resolution. Mr Neil Walter, gave us insight into New Zealand's diplomatic service and outlined external challenges facing New Zealand. Professor Bill Harris ended the series with an amazing update on the crisis in Syria.

October took on a more local flavour with lectures from two of our members Jules Tapper and Bill Dolan on historical aspects of aviation and tourism in the Wakatipu.

One of our all-time favourites, Dr Trevor Chinn, returned to enlighten us on "The Icy Origins of the Wakatipu" and this was followed by a well-

subscribed field trip around the area conducted in liaison with Royden Thomson.

November has involved the members in a series of lectures discussing the “Future Vision for the Wakatipu. This series is being co-ordinated by Dr Ralph Hanan and ably chaired by Bill Dolan, who together with Ralph, will collate the members’ ideas and thoughts at the end of the series, and present them to QLDC. We are privileged to have such talent amongst our members and all very appreciative of the work Professor Blair Fitzharris put into his presentation to us; we are looking forward to Dr Ralph Hanan’s presentation today to wind up the series. Professor Bob Lloyd warned us that he was regarded as a “prophet of doom” and he certainly challenged us as all as to the future of life in 2030.

I would like to thank our long and faithful sponsors, the SBS. Not only do the staff come and assist at morning tea, but they also provide financial assistance throughout the year. The assistance from SBS is hugely appreciated.

This year the committee decided we needed to have our own equipment and we purchased a laptop and a screen. We are now self-sufficient with our own audio equipment as well.

Finally I would like to thank my hard-working committee. Marion Borrell for her untiring work suggesting and helping organizing speakers and lecture series.

Our thanks to Sue Maclachlan for her unstinting work as our treasurer, morning tea provider and together with husband Frank, organizing the name cards. Sue is retiring as treasurer but will remain on the committee and we thank her for diligent work in keeping the books. We welcome Justine Cranfield to take over her role. Elaine Wells gets the prize for loyal assistance and working behind the scenes.

We would be back in the Dark Ages if it wasn’t for our IT Whizz Alan Townsend, who keeps our website up-to-date and deals with all technical matters with help from his Man Friday Bob Cranfield who is in turn very supportive and positive with every step we take.

We were thrown into disarray earlier in the year when we thought we might lose the services of Wonder Woman Gitti Tapper. However, in her inimitable way she has managed to keep us under her wing and look after our secretarial needs. Long may it continue and thank-you, Gitti.

Finally it is with great regret that we farewell Bill Dolan from our committee. Bill has been our life-blood, our chief advisor on EVERYTHING, a very hard worker, and always there to lend a hand. We thank him for wearing so many hats and for his major contribution to the successful running of U3A. I know he will continue to be a lively and stimulating participant in our future sessions. Thank-you, Bill.

I would like to thank Bruce Morris for preparing our annual accounts.

Finally I would like to thank you, the members, for your support, for your enthusiasm and for all your brain-bending, and the sometimes challenging ideas you have put forward to us. Without your input and support we would not be the vibrant group that we are.

Thank-you

Mary Stammers-Smith
Chairperson
U3A Wakatipu
9/11/11