



Newsletter - February 2026

2026 Annual General Meeting

The New Year kicked off with the Annual General Meeting on the 20th of January attended by 65 members – a great turnout.

The Committee members elected for the coming year were Marian Hobbs - Chairperson, John Boland - Secretary, Marie Prescott -Treasurer, Tim Davin - Publicity, Barbara Woods - Course Co-ordinator, and Ray Walker - Membership Secretary.

It was also decided that Subscriptions for 2026 will remain at \$15 per person. Subscriptions are due from 1 December each year i.e. the financial year goes from 1 Dec 2025 until 30 November 2026. So, if you haven't paid yet payment can be made by Internet Banking to the Tawa U3A BNZ account 02-0552-0198393-00 or paid directly at the NZ Post Shop in the Main Road.

At the AGM the Committee was asked to investigate:

- The possibility of making the financial year July to June each year. This would mean the AGM would be in July or August and membership renewal would be in July.
- Creating a policy for appropriate payment of guest speakers and developing a policy for covering costs of photocopying and the payment of expenses

The February Committee Meeting

At the Committee Meeting on the 2nd of February, it was reported that there are now 230 members. It was also advised that 5 additional members had just joined up. This is excellent and the sign of a healthy Club.

It was reported that Co-ordinators have been provided with a session on ways to foster social connection and it was well attended. Also, a data projector has been donated and is available for use by any group. It was decided at the meeting to also purchase lapel microphones, and these will be available for use by groups.

New Courses for 2026

There are a wide range of new and exciting courses available in 2026, and they are already attracting a lot of interest. If you have not already enrolled, it is not too late. You should do this by emailing the Co-ordinator directly. In fact, you can do this any time of year for any course.

How the EU Works ... and sometimes doesn't

Winston Churchill urged the continental Europeans to start working cooperatively after three highly damaging wars in 70 years. They did that by setting up a massive socioeconomic structure in Brussels that proved hugely successful across 28 states. So successful that Britain (who had lost an empire without finding a role) joined up after initially deriding the (then) EEC.

The new creation has always been "an ever-changing project" designed to reduce friction in trade and promote Europe as a model political counterweight to the US. It has now become unwieldy, and the convulsing world of Trump and Putin has sparked a new European war. What will be its strengths and weaknesses in the fraught coming years?

There will be 3 sessions on Thursday 10th, 17th, and the 24th of September at 2 pm, at the Tawa Union Church Lounge. The Co-ordinator is Dave Smith email - dogsnake33@gmail.com.

It's Election Year!

The topics that will be covered are:

- Energy - How do we get enough at a reasonable price? The speaker will be Geoff Bertram.
- Health - What are the priorities towards the goal of good healthcare for all?
- Housing - To house all our citizens do we have to lower the standard of our housing?
- Jobs and wages
- Climate Change
- Pacific and Foreign Affairs
- Education

These sessions will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.30-2:30 pm, beginning on the 18th of February at Tawa Union Church Lounge. The Co-ordinator is Marian Hobbs email - marian.hobbs@gmail.com

So, You Want to Write the 2027 Budget?

The First Session will be with an economist setting the scene. This person has helped with the process of writing a budget.



The following Sessions are:

1. Four separate groups will choose a Department and work out what we want new, its cost, and what we are not able to fund.
2. We compare our chosen budget with the budget of another Department to see what is alike and seeing if we can still manage to do all that we want.
3. We are in Cabinet, with a total budget imposed by the Minister of Finance and cuts will have to be made. What do we cut and why?
4. In final session we consider that if we exceed the budget limit, how are we going to make up the deficit. At this point we will invite in a tax specialist to provide some advice.

The purpose is to have some fun in the role plays and to learn about the choices and the processes for making those choices.

This Course will be held over these 5 sessions fortnightly starting on the 7th of April at 1.30 pm to 2:45 pm, at Tawa Union Church and. The Co-ordinator is Marian Hobbs - email marian.hobbs@gmail.com

Reduce Your Electricity Consumption and Pay Less for it

What you will learn at this event could save you a significant amount of money over time. The following topics will be covered:

- How electricity consumption is measured, how to monitor your consumption, and compare your monthly and annual usage.
- Ways to save electricity. This will cover lighting, appliances, hot water, space heating and more.
- Saving electricity over summer. Yes, there are opportunities for savings in the warmer months.
- Are the big-ticket items (e.g. solar energy and double glazing) going to save you money?
- Is it worth changing electricity providers?
- What is a Time-of-use Plan and how do you compare them.
- How to use "changing power supplier" web sites.
- Future power saving technologies.

This one – off session will be held on Wednesday 8th April at 1:30pm. The Co-ordinator is Ray Walker email - raywalker@hotmail.co.nz

Music Appreciation

The group is about sharing music that you really like with others in the group. For some, this might be classical, for others it might be music of a particular country, or blues - or something else. A Bluetooth speaker will be available, or a laptop if people want to do something that involves graphics or film.



You don't need to "know" anything about music to participate - or to speak about the piece you like, just to enjoy listening to it. All are welcome!

This will be held on the third Wednesday of the month at 11.30 am, beginning on the 18th of February, at Tawa Union Church Luke Chapel.

The Co-ordinator is Barbara Woods email - pandbwoods@outlook.com

The French Revolution

The French Revolution was rooted in a philosophical notion that France should emulate Britain and be a constitutional monarchy. The English had managed that a century before with a fairly painless civil war. Such a change would take France from being an unjust feudal state to a more modern science-based democracy.



Early results were encouraging. The seductive catch cry of "liberty, equality and fraternity" rang true alongside the rights of man. Within a decade Napoleon was proclaiming himself Emperor and 300,000 of his people had suffered brutal and violent deaths. How did it happen? Was there any upside?

This course will be held the on the 17th of March, and on the 31st of March at 10:00 am at the Tawa Union Church Lounge. The Co-ordinator is Dave Smith email - dogsnake33@gmail.com

Porirua U3A

Don't forget to have a look at Porirua U3A are up to – on their website at www.porirua3a or feel free to contact Bill Gebbie at porirua3a@gmail.com or 027 677 0180

Finally, don't forget to regularly check the U3A Website for the latest news and updates at www.u3atawa.org.nz

Tim Davin

Publicity - Tawa U3A Committee