



U3A Tawa Incorporated

# ON COURSE Newsletter

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## HALF YEAR MEETING – 13 JUNE



New courses were presented for the second half of 2019. John Baldwin typified the computer course as being a resource for all U3A members wanting to get better use out of their devices for which new apps are pouring into the marketplace at a quite baffling rate. Also, there are people who can be flummoxed by IT generally. They can be assured that there is an ongoing U3A resource that will help them through their problems at any time. They only need ask, whether they are course members or not.

Two old favourites have returned in the form of *Singing for Fun* (Sister Francine McGovern) and *Shakespeare Readings* (Carolyn Marshall). The latter is likely to fall in the more comedic end of the Bard's creative spectrum.

Dave Smith outlined his two new courses - *Aspects of the Great War* and *European Film*. The War course is intended not as a grueling trudge through the entire history of the war. Rather it is meant to be a dynamic but selective discussion forum based on internet materials (to be supplied). Controversy will be the keyword.

Jim Cunningham was not present but his course will entail a 21<sup>st</sup> Century view of Christianity that promises

an appreciation of Christ appropriate to our increasingly troubled and perplexing times.

Michael Holland was overseas last year and visited some fascinating but little known (in New Zealand) British places i.e. Eyam – the Plague Town that opted to cut itself off from local society to contain an outbreak, Woburn Abbey, Chatsworth House the seat of the Dukes of Devonshire but located up north in Derbyshire, Sutton Hoo and The Tidemill (in Woodbridge). He promised much interesting detail.



Mary-Lynn Boyes spoke briefly about her latest Katherine Mansfield offering *Miss Brill* while Jasmine Thompson opened up the field of *Poetry Readings* which promises to be both a performance and poetry creation opportunity.

Bruce Murray was unavailable to speak to the meeting but is devising a fascinating road trip (by bus) concept relating to the history of the old Porirua Road. We will cover this course in great depth when more is known. As also with the course on seniors' health and death and dying (the practical issues).

## MEMBER PROFILE: Gerry Durr

Gerard (Gerry) Durr was born in 1933 in Stockport, England, the eldest of five children. He came to New Zealand in 1958 sailing on the "Captain Cook" and took up a job in Wellington.



As a long-time music lover, Gerry one fateful day decided to observe a choir practice at St Mary of the Angels Church, a decision that was to change his life. The Choir Director was the hugely admired Maxwell Fernie. He invited Gerry to trial with the choir. This was a real turning point in Gerry's life for two reasons: first, Maxwell's mastery of

religious choral and organ music made a deep impression on him while secondly Gerry met his future wife, Elizabeth (Betty), a soprano who had been singing with the Wellington choir.

Gerry was a founder member of the Tawa Soccer Club, worked on the Brian Webb Kindergarten Establishment Group, supported the St Vincent de Paul Society, sang with the Wellington Male Voice Choir for over 27 years and is now a very keen participant in U3A Tawa and the various courses it offers, a favourite being *Current Affairs* ('spirited but polite').

Gerry and Betty have now been married for 58 years, and have five adult offspring who in turn have produced 16 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

### IVY PEARCE – LOSS OF A FINE MEMBER



We regret to have to record the sudden death of Ivy Pearce, a stalwart of U3A Tawa for many years. Ivy will be greatly missed. Ivy was the Coordinator for *Current Health Issues - for Seniors* for many years and an active participant over the years in *Discussion Group*, *Garden*

*Group*, *Opera*, Michael Holland's talks, *Piano Recital*, *U3A Singers*, and *Travel Adventures*. Shortly before her passing she was taking her customary place in the U3A Singers concert at Malvina Major. The photograph we include now was taken on that very day.

### ANCESTRY: NEW OPPORTUNITIES

*Ancestry* continues to be one of U3A Tawa's bigger courses. New Zealand has a notably immigrant past and many of our members have family trees set firmly in the United Kingdom even if they themselves are Kiwis. We dropped in on the group's 21 June meeting attended by nearly 20 members.

To construct a family tree is to learn so much more about oneself than merely who, what and when. Much social history is bound up in laying out the entire structure of large families across time.

Ancestry group members frequently piece together exciting new aspects of their family pasts; enabled by the ever-widening sweep of public records now becoming readily available on computer. There are valuable shipping and military records plus a novel focus engendered through DNA searches.

Not only are immigration records now more readily available but many church parishes in England and Wales have turned their registers over to consolidated online access with remarkable results. Many local ancestry enthusiasts have created unique publications such as *Lost Cousins*; of which Brian Abel spoke and distributed copious back copies he has been holding.

Margaret Robertson used PowerPoint to take members through the enhanced H M Passport Office (General Records Office) computer searches out of the UK. Their sub-systems are becoming more capable of creating crucial supplementary data that will often crack open previous information gaps such as historical 'mother's maiden name'. This all goes back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and so covers many generations.



Disclaimer: This newsletter is created for the interest of U3A Tawa members only. The writer and the executive make every effort to ensure that the information it contains is correct but take no responsibility for any inadvertent errors that might appear.

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