



**TAWA INCORPORATED**

## NEWSLETTER

**JULY 2020**

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## 2020 - the year of the unexpected.

It has been a year of the unexpected. We began activities in February looking forward to another busy year of U3A programmes with more than 50 courses advertised. Hardly had the courses begun when New Zealand became part of a global pandemic of a scale not seen since the 'flu epidemic of more than 100 years ago.

It's been a challenging few months, and we've all had to change the way we go about our everyday activities. For U3A it meant we had to abandon our usual gatherings in person and to try and explore other means of staying in touch. The word 'Zoom' has taken on a new meaning and some courses have found ways of making this experience work. Other groups have kept in touch by email and others by phone calls.

New Zealand's swift and vigorous 'Lockdown' response has seen the country come through the dangers of the pandemic in remarkably good shape and to date one of few countries able to enjoy a return to what seems to be a normality of life. Now that we are at Level 1, the freedom to meet together has meant the welcome return of most of our groups.

**Can we uninstall  
2020 and reinstall it?  
I believe it has a  
virus.**



Members will have received in their letterboxes the U3A Tawa courses A – Z supplement for July to December. This booklet contains information about the new courses offered as well as outlining what is happening with existing courses that were disrupted by the lockdown. This information is also available on the website.

*A fore-shadow of 'Zoom' meetings?*

## Thank you to..

### Dave Smith

In June the U3A committee received with regret the resignation of Dave Smith from his roles as Deputy Chair, publicity and website coordinator. Dave was elected to the committee at the AGM in 2016.

Dave brought to the committee an enthusiasm and passion for all that U3A stood for and a desire to modernise and develop the scope of the courses that could be offered to members. These included courses reflecting his own expertise in law, film, books, philosophy and current affairs. He was also able to contact speakers from academic and business backgrounds to share thought provoking talks and seminars.



In his role as publicity lead, Dave produced colourful and interesting newsletters keeping members informed and connected. Dave also, in 2018, supported Digby Gudsell and Steve Lovell of Rainbow Creations in a major upgrade of the Tawa U3A website. This has streamlined the enrolment process and the selection of courses. During the recent period of lockdown Dave worked tirelessly to keep the website refreshed and interesting, contributing many articles and encouraging other members to share their talents and skills. A number of members have commented that the website during this time helped to keep them connected with U3A.

Although Dave has stepped down from committee roles he continues to lead and facilitate a number of courses.

### And to Gretta Dymond, U3A's long-serving leathercraft tutor.

A long running U3A group, Leathercraft, comes to an end after 14 years.

Gretta Dymond has lived in Tawa for more than 50 years. She began a life-long interest in leathercraft by taking night classes at Tawa College under the guidance of tutor Jan Merilees. At the time her children were students at Hampton Hill School and Gretta discovered some basic leatherwork tools in a storage cupboard. Using leather scraps leftover from her College class, she volunteered to run a Friday club for children.

Gretta then became a tutor at Newlands College for Adult Education classes in both leather and cane work. For 8 years she taught leathercraft at the Forensic Psychiatric unit at Kenepuru Hospital. 14 years ago the first Tawa U3A leatherwork classes began in the Art and Craft centre in Linden with about 12 members. Although numbers have dwindled in recent years, a faithful core of participants have met each Thursday afternoon, now in the back room of the Union Church. Participants describe Gretta as a patient and encouraging tutor who has always been willing to share her expertise with all in the group.



Gretta, at the right, with the leathercraft group.

# Having your say about Covid-19 and Lockdown

Members of U3A and other older people have been invited to take part in a research project undertaken by the School of Nursing in the University of Auckland. Here is the text of a letter written by Janine Wiles, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

'I am writing to you regarding an exciting new research project, funded by the Auckland Medical Research Foundation, that will collect the views and experiences of New Zealanders aged 70+ regarding Covid-19 and lockdown.

We are inviting people 70 and over to write a letter to share their experience of lockdown and other aspects of Covid-19. All letters (with the letter-writer's permission) will become part of a permanent archive at the Auckland Museum. This will be an important historical record as well as a resource for informing future responses to pandemics by the government and media.

You may write your letter in the language you feel most comfortable communicating in. It does not have to be English. If you prefer, you may send us an audio or video file, if that is a better way for you to communicate your thoughts. If you would like one of the team to give you a ring to discuss the project further, please let me know.

People over 70 were identified as most vulnerable to the virus, but were characterised by the media as passive and in need of protection. We heard very little about how people in this age group felt about the pandemic and lockdown. We feel it is vitally important these voices are heard to inform future pandemic responses. The more letters we are able to collect, the more weight the project will have in terms of informing government responses to future pandemics and the richer the historical archive will be. The project has received ethical approval from the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

We'd be really grateful if you could encourage your whānau, friends, neighbours, colleagues, acquaintances aged 70 and older to also take part in our study. Thank you very much for taking the time to read this invitation and we are looking forward to your response'.

If you would like to take part in this research project, you could send your letter by:

email: [letters@haveoursay.org](mailto:letters@haveoursay.org)

Or by posting a letter to: Have Our Say, c/- School of Nursing, University of Auckland,

Private Bag 92019, Auckland Mail Centre, Auckland 1142

Or fill in an online form at: <https://haveoursay.org>

## Our Sympathies

We record with sadness the deaths of U3A members in the last while. **Carol Sinnott, Beryl Smith and Audrey May**. We send our condolences to their families.



## Out and About post Lockdown

The **Botany group** met together on a frosty morning in early June to walk through Tawa's historic Willowbank Reserve.



The **Travel group** at their July meeting enjoyed a fascinating power point presentation by Ian and Karen Harris illustrating a cruise from San Diego down through the Panama Canal finishing in Florida.



The **Art group** meets in the Community centre weekly on a Thursday morning.

### Next Year

As we look towards the coming year, 2021, we would like to continue to offer interesting courses or talks on topics of interest to our members. Can you help?

What topics for future talks would you be interested in?

Do you have an interest or hobby that you would like to share with us?

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