

July 2025 Newsletter

From the President

Our recent speaker

My childhood friend Peter Lynn gave a very interesting, and at times humorous, talk about his 50+ career in kites, adapting them for various applications. He has become famous world-wide for his construction of the world's largest kites, giant inflatable display kites, the popularisation of kite buggying and contributions to the development of power kiting and kite surfing. We couldn't fail to be impressed by the high level of innovation and determination that he brought to his craft. Peter has been prepared to cope with frequent failures to ultimately gain success, and he often put his personal safety at risk to test a prototype. We gained some insight into what drives a Kiwi inventor who has successfully bridged the challenging gap between technical success and commercial success.

(My apology for omitting to invite questions at the conclusion of Peter's talk.)



Celebrating our 10th Anniversary

It is 10 years since U3A Ellesmere started, and we will mark this milestone by cutting a celebratory cake at the start of our July meeting. Lena Metcalf was the inaugural president, and she will say a few words about the early days of our U3A branch. According to our database, 25 members who joined at the start are still members today.

Web site update

The committee has decided to contract a local company Meta Digital to host our web site, going forward. There have been ongoing problems with on-line membership applications failing to reach us, and this will be the first matter to be attended to. The next steps will be to enable us to keep the content up to date, and to add other features such as making previous newsletters accessible. A subcommittee comprising Lyn Minchington, Murray Allison and me will liaise with Meta Digital throughout the project, to ensure our objectives are met with the revamped web site.

Our upcoming speakers

Wednesday 30th July*

Our speaker will be **Rose Challies**, CEO Terra Nova Foundation. Her topic is *"The Leading Generation - how our community elders can change the world"*

Rose, a Lincoln local, is an engaging and inspirational speaker, having spoken at events around the world on change and how to make an impact. Her expertise and experience across government, business and not-for-profit organisations in New Zealand and overseas, and the adversities and triumphs she has encountered, comes through in the engaging stories and insight she brings.

***NOTE: This meeting will be on the 5th Wednesday (ie, 30th July), not the 23rd July.**

Wednesday 27th August

We will have two speakers, **Liam Bately and a colleague**, who are postgraduate students at the University of Canterbury. They will talk about bioengineering and an overseas aid project they have been involved with in Tonga. Bioengineering uses engineering techniques to design and develop new devices, materials, and processes for various applications, particularly in healthcare. The talks will include key initiatives aimed at improving healthcare infrastructure and biomedical capabilities in Tonga.

Wednesday 24th September

Our speaker will be **Dr Sam Hampton**, Lecturer in the Department of Geological Sciences, University of Canterbury. His topic is *"The Formation of Banks Peninsula by Volcanic Processes"*

Sam is an earth scientist with over 15 years' experience in teaching and learning. He uses his academic knowledge and adventures in the environments of New Zealand to encourage people to look and delve deeper into the landscapes, geology, and environments of our country.

Interest Groups update – Lyn Minchington

Potential Te Reo group

Three people have expressed interest in learning some Te Reo, and I am wondering if there are any other members who would like to be part of a new interest group. Ideally, if there is also anyone that can already speak some Te Reo, that would be excellent, as they could guide the group.

Movie Group

The Movie group has gone into recess due to lack of convenor. However, there is now an opportunity for someone to restart this group.

Other groups

Anyone is welcome to make suggestions of possible ideas for interest groups, and I can then float the idea amongst the members.

For more information on any of the above options, please contact me at wattle@xtra.co.nz

Car-pooling from Prebbleton?

I have received an enquiry concerning the possibility of Prebbleton members sharing transport to our meetings. If you are interested, contact Graeme Savage - gidesign75@gmail.com or 0274 566 789.

The Last Word(s)

As I move through my senior years I try to resist the urge to be a “grumpy old man”, but it’s not always easy to avoid. For example, I have an issue with intrusive noise, perhaps because my hearing isn’t what it used to be. Sources of irritation include loud music at the gym, incessant cell phone chattering on the bus, and the happy hubbub at the local café (where patrons gradually raise their voices to make themselves heard). However, I resist the urge to complain. But there are other negative habits that we may also develop as we get older, and these can be annoying to others.

I came across this check list recently:

Twelve habits in old age that irritate people, but no one tells you

Getting older can be a blessing, but sometimes, without realising it, we develop habits that can push people away:

1. Constant complaining – life can be hard at times, but focusing on the negatives drains the energy from everyone around you.
2. Talking only about illnesses – sharing health updates is fine, but there is more to life than aches and pains.
3. Becoming too opinionated – sharing our experience matters, but being rigid in our views makes conversation exhausting.
4. Neglecting personal hygiene – this is a sensitive but important issue; taking care of yourself shows self-respect.
5. Living in the past – it’s great to share memories, but staying connected to today’s world is vital.
6. Being overly negative about young people – every generation is different, so praising their strengths builds bridges.
7. Gossiping or meddling – respecting others privacy brings peace and stronger relationships.
8. Refusing to adapt – learning to use modern technology and accepting change keeps your mind young and open.
9. Playing the victim – instead of blaming loneliness on others, reach out and take the initiative.
10. Being financially controlling – support your family with love, not enforcing conditions tied to money.
11. Refusing help – accepting support isn’t a weakness; it’s a beautiful way to stay connected.
12. Losing a sense of humour – life is easier with laughter, and a joyful heart attracts people more than a youthful face.

Growing old with grace, kindness and curiosity keeps you loved and respected. Recognising and working on even just a few of these habits can transform your relationships, making your golden years even more golden.

Committee responsibilities for 2025/26 :

President – Errol Wood, **Vice-President** – John Prendergast, **Secretary** – Murray Allison,
Treasurer – Neal Borrie **Interest Groups Coordinator** - Lyn Minchington
Constitution Revision – Nancy Borrie **Membership Coordinator** – Dorothy Jordan

Morning Tea Team Leader – Nola Sutherland (not a committee member)

Our email address is u3aellesmere@gmail.com
