



University of the Third Age
The Age of Active Retirement: People Exchanging Knowledge

Newsletter October 2025

Our next meeting is on Monday 21st October.

The speaker is Dr Amy Scott talking on Literacy Opportunities in NZ Today

With expertise in early literacy and language development, Dr Scott will discuss how evidence-based approaches, including the shift to structured literacy in NZ, can support young readers.

Message from the President



Not much to report this month except that we had two excellent talks. Thanks to Katherine Peet for arranging David Rogers talk on his trip to Antarctica. It was amazing.

Mary Lynch is busy contacting Interest Groups. She has resurrected the Book Club, Singing for Fun looks hopeful and Mahjong is going well. There are a few others in mind but if you have an idea, please don't hesitate to suggest it to us. Read on to get more information on these.

Several people have asked if we are going to have a Christmas lunch and the answer is "yes". It's on the third Monday 15th as that is not too close to Christmas this year. Sometimes we have moved it to a week earlier, but not this time.

Geo/Bot still have places available on the Castle Hill trip on Nov 19th, cost \$30. Contact me if you'd like to come.

Don't forget to look up our website www.u3apegasus.org.nz to check on information about upcoming meetings.

Information about Previous Meetings

Our last meeting was on **Either You Control Social Media or Social Media Controls You** given by Dr Kseniia Zahrei

65% of the world is now on social media, with people spending more than 2 hours a day on it; that's about 7 years of your life. In New Zealand it's 80% and changing fast with more than 100 media platforms. It is a different way of forming relationships and many people can't imagine life without it. It can be a support, but too much use can lead to depression, anxiety and loss of self esteem; even loneliness.

We used to get news by reading the papers or watching TV where chosen subjects were shown. Now you can scroll endlessly over thousands of items designed to catch your attention and react instantly. A quick judgement is easier on the brain than slower consideration and thinking logically. "Thinking is to humans as swimming is to cats. They can do it but prefer not to."



Self control over how much you use social media is hard. Initially it can be high but it is designed to keep you on it and even if you intend to limit use you may still find yourself using, even knowing it has a negative impact on your life.

A question after the talk gave us the information, that even if your phone is turned off it is listening to our conversations, and social media can then use the information to direct advertisers and items to us about these overheard topics.

If anyone would like to go through the slides from Dr Zahreni's presentation, contact Lyn Russell (nylrus1951@gmail.com) and she can send this through.

For those of you who were interested in keeping going with the exercises speaker, Antony Bush recommended to keep you fit into old age, here are the exercises he gave us:

5-10 slow and controlled opposite arm and leg lifts.
10-20 second hold each side



Start off on your knees.



5-10 squats



20-30 second hold





Start off on knees
Keep your back down against hand.
Crunch your tummy on. Don't hold your breath



5 lunges each side
2-3 sets 5 leg pumps each side

GUIDELINES:

1. Walking often, daily.
2. Strengthening two days week.
3. Less is more to begin, start small.
4. 150-300 mins total exercise per week.

Additional talk - David Roger's trip to Antarctica

In 1955-6 Sir Edmund Hillary took a party of 23 men to the Antarctic to build Scott Base ready for an attempt on the South Pole the following year. The team's job was to build huts to establish Scott Base, using pre fab materials they brought with them. They dug foundations in the frozen ground with picks, laid railway sleepers and based the hut on a wooden framework. The first hut was completed in January and five others by mid-February.

David was due to turn 21 whilst on this trip and had bought a camera just before he left. He was treated to a flight in one of the planes and took the opportunity to take aerial photos of the camps. The photos he took showed a real artistic flare and were the only coloured ones taken on the expedition as the official naval ones were in black and white. Copies of Dave's photos are now in the Naval Museum in Devonport.

News on the Book Discussion Group

The Book Discussion Group is rejoining the Book Distribution Service for 2026. Our Book Discussion members choose a range of titles. There is a cost of \$8.60 per book/month \$86 pa. The Pegasus U3A Committee has approved a subsidy for 2026.

We are a group of eight men and women enjoying reading a variety of books chosen by our members. We welcome new members and the sign up sheet will be on the table at our U3A meeting on Monday 20 October. Currently there are four vacancies. ***The Book Group meets at noon on the third Monday, after our U3A.*** Contact Mary Lynch if interested, at (granmarylynch12@gmail.com).

Our Interest Groups are becoming more and more interesting. Here are some of the new ones underway thanks to the suggestions of members:

DINING OUT

PHOTOGRAPHY (start 2026)

MOVIES

SINGING FOR FUN

CARDS

FOR OUR NEXT MEETING THERE WILL BE SIGN UP SHEETS ON THE TABLE FOR ALL INTEREST GROUPS .

Please sign up to any you are interested in – or suggest another new interest group that you might lead/support.

The first Dining Out group gathering is going to be at Casa Nostra in Ferrymead in November, date and time to be confirmed. Contact Anne Fahey (afahey8@gmail.com) if interested in going.

INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

Below is the list of U3A Pegasus Interest Groups, their convenors and contact details. If you would like to join any of the groups, please contact the convenor

ADVENTURES IN TRAVEL	Meets monthly in members' homes on 1 st Tuesday of the month at 3pm in members' homes. Contact Lyn Russell 021 2388 788 Email: nylrus1951@gmail.com
ART APPRECIATION	Meets monthly, 2 nd Friday of the month. Contact Helen Harkness Ph 384 2890 Email helenharkness294@gmail.com
BOOK DISCUSSION	Meets monthly after the U3A lecture, 3 rd Monday of the month in the Mt Pleasant Community Centre. Contact Mary Lynch email granmarylynch12@gmail.com or Judy Eden edenjudith@xtra.co.nz (This group is now full.)
CAFÉ GROUP	Meets monthly, 2.30pm on Tuesday of the week following 3 rd Monday of the month. Contact Jenny Long jennylong@xtra.co.nz 384 8463.
CANTERBURY HISTORY	Meets monthly, 2 nd Monday of the month. Contact Judy Calder Ph 384 1269 Email judycalder@hotmail.com
CYCLING GROUP	Meets monthly, 2 nd Wednesday. Contact Jane Cowan-Harris Email: janechbythesea@gmail.com , Mob 021 043 5342
GARDEN GROUP	Meets 4 th Monday of the month. A mixture of speakers, garden visits and 'tea & cuttings'. Contact: Gaynor Button Email: buttonmg@gmail.com
GEOLOGY/BOTANY	Meets twice a month on 1 st Monday at Redcliffs Bowling Centre and 3 rd Wednesday for an outing. Contact Pat Whitman Ph 384 3475 Email patwandpate@gmail.com
SCRABBLE	Meets fortnightly Tuesdays 1.30pm.

INTEREST GROUP UPDATES

Art Appreciation Group

SEPTEMBER

From morning tea at Little Battersea a brief walk took us to Chambers Gallery at 80 Durham St. South. For those of you who remember visiting this gallery and the neighbouring National Gallery in Moorhouse Avenue close to Colombo St., you will be surprised to know town houses are currently being built there. At Chambers, Gallery Manager, Julie Williams explained that their gallery concentrated on emerging artists as she introduced us to the current exhibition of three artists. Hamish Allen "Songs from Suburbia." Neville Campbell "Silent Beauty." and Jaqueline Spencer-Macleod "Mouthful of Diamonds." Hamish a full-time artist had transitioned from sculpture to painting. His acrylic on canvas paintings interpret "Natural environment, the human condition and the relationship between the two." "Catcher in the Sky (Quail Island) "



is an example of his precision work and pleasing colour choices. Neville Campbell and Jacqueline Spencer-Macleod both have teaching backgrounds and are perhaps less well known. Campbell works in a variety of media and this exhibition consists of digital prints on archival paper. (see below) "Silent Beauty 1." In Spencer-Macleod's "Mouthful of Diamonds", she muses upon "how human actions have upset the natural order of things with tragic consequences. "Owl with Athena in Contemplation" (see left) is oil & acrylic on Belgium linen, a work that followed a visit to Greece. An example of her "critique of modern hubris" is the sculpture "Tidal Wave."



Canterbury History Group

We had a very interesting visit to the Lyttelton Tunnel in October and were treated to some fascinating facts about the tunnel (1.5 million 6" tiles line the tunnel), from Senior Tunnel Controller Rick. We saw the extensive camera system used by the controllers to ensure safe passage for the thousands of vehicles which travel through the tunnel each day. Our tour



finished with a visit to one of the upper passageways which runs above the southbound road (to Lyttelton) and which houses many essential services, pipes and cables into and out of Lyttelton.

The huge fan which brings fresh air into the tunnel (see above) was turned off for our visit to this upper area so we could hear our guide and were not being blown away!



Cycling Group

The bike group had a nice ride this month with 7 of us starting out from the Mt Pleasant Community Centre. We followed the Heathcote River around to Beckenham passing through Hansens Park where we witnessed an enormous tree that had been uprooted in the storm the weekend before and fallen across the cycle track. Then it was through to Colombo St and linked up with the Quarryman's Trail as far as Pioneer Stadium. Then we made our way across to Cashmere for the obligatory coffee at Zeroes and home via the river and Ferrymead Park. A nice way to spend a morning. Jenny Bartley

Garden Group

Our September meeting was held at Streamside Court, St John Street in Woolston. We had a very informative demonstration by Jo McGirr on seed raising. Jo covered such topics as :

Ensuring you are using viable seed

Make sure you wash your trays before using

If you are not sowing directly into your garden, don't use garden soil to plant seed into or to plant the pricked out seeds. Soil doesn't drain well and there may be weed seeds you cannot spot.

Use seed raising mix – you do not need fertiliser to start them off but plant out the seedlings into a fine grade potting mix.



Once they have two leaves they are



transplantable into a bigger punnet. You can sit them on a sunny windowsill or if you are really

serious you can invest in a seed heat mat and pop them on that.



Once they have big enough for transplanting into a garden, don't forget to harden them off outside on a deck for several days, bringing them in a night.

Jo had a number of older propagators and was kind enough to bring them along to give to members.

She also donated the sprouted plants (above) which enabled members to try their hand at pricking them out (on the left) and taking them home.



A really productive and educational afternoon.

Geo/Botany Group

6th October 2025

Coral

Paul Broady



Corals are found worldwide, in the warm tropical seas but also in colder regions. Many are shallow based, forming platforms, and are composed of millions of individual polyps on a calcium carbonate foundation. They have stinging tentacles which catch food, and some have a symbiotic relationship with single-cell algae which live inside the polyp and use sunlight to produce sugars. Deeper species live up to 4,000m below the surface where no sun penetrates and these get food from the water, filtering detritus. Because they are undisturbed, they can grow for thousands of years.

Corals face many problems, suffocation by algae or seaweed, rising sea temperatures and increasing acidity as carbon dioxide levels grow and it dissolves in the water. However, Paul told us of many temperature changes over the last 600million years, all of which have allowed the coral to survive, so in the long run they probably have a better chance than us.

17th September 2025

Bottle Lake Grant Gillard

- Grant led the group to where the earthquake landfill was deposited. Before any planting, biosolids from the wastewater plant are spread thickly, followed by a layer of composted material from the council's green waste operation, followed by topsoil and then plants. Natives grow well but deeper-rooted trees can't thrive as they die when they reach the waste layer. The landfill gas is "vacuumed" from the "straws" inserted into the mass, transferred to a ring pipe which encircles the whole site, fed into the gas plant where it is cooled before being piped into the city. It is used at QE2 pool, the Art Gallery, civic buildings and wastewater plant (for drying bio-solids).
- The new ponds are attracting huge numbers of birds.



The smaller hills seen north of the highest point are the sites of demolished Christchurch buildings post-quake, with the lowest hill comprising those buildings where people died, including 4 people who have never been found.

This is the site where 29,000 tonnes of rubble from the CTV Building and the PGC Building is buried.

On 22nd February 2011 at 12.51pm, a 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck Christchurch.

Tragically, 115 people who were in the CTV Building and 18 people who were in the PGC building lost their lives. Many others were seriously injured. The names of 185 people who lost their lives in this earthquake are inscribed in stone at Oi Manawa Canterbury Earthquake National Memorial, Oxford Terrace beside the Otaharo/Avon river. Four earthquake victims were never found or identified. This is their final resting place.

CLUB DIRECTORY

Pat Whitman	President	patwandpate@gmail.com	3843475
Sue Beardsley	Treasurer	sueandgrant21@gmail.com	0274134186
Jane Cowan-Harris	Newsletter	janechbythesea@gmail.com	0210435342
Anne Fahey	Website	afahey8@gmail.com	021 111 5711
Mary Lynch	Interest Groups	granmarylynch12@gmail.com	3849664
Helen Peate	Meeting 'Greeter'	helens@xtra.co.nz	0272949641
Katherine Peet		kmpeet@gmail.com	3841281
Lyn Russell	Secretary/Speakers	nylrus1951@gmail.com	0212388788
Christine Toner	Membership	christine@toner.co.nz	0274339598

U3A Pegasus email address: u3apegasus@protonmail.com

U3A Pegasus website address: www.u3apegasus.org.nz