

March 2025

Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand

Next Meeting:

Monday 10th March 2025 at 10am

Venue:

St Chads Church, 38 St Johns Road, Remuera

Principal Speaker:

Dr Joost de Bruin, Director Hundertwasser Art Centre.

“Hundertwasser’s Legacy: Art, Architecture, Ecology and the Vision of the ‘Five Skins’”. See below.

Mini Talk:

John Malcomson, Past President, will present a well-illustrated talk. The Falkirk Wheel is a masterpiece of engineering design and an ingenious, energy efficient way of rapidly lifting or lowering canal boats from one level to another, without the need for long flights of locks. A brief illustrated talk will explain how it works using the principle first defined by Archimedes well over 2000 years ago.

Meeting Tasks:

Greeters Famous and Infamous plus Poetry
Morning tea NZ History

Next Month’s Speaker:

Monday 14th April **John Montgomery**, “Approaches to Auckland. The place of the Hauraki Gulf in the oceans”.

The Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery celebrates painter, architect, ecologist and visionary Friedensreich Hundertwasser and contemporary Māori artists. The Austrian New



Zealand artist Hundertwasser, who lived in New Zealand from 1973 to 2000, was first and foremost a painter but became involved in architecture and environmental activism because of his concerns about the exploitation of natural resources and ruthless urbanisation.

The design of the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery was based on initial sketches by Hundertwasser himself thirty years ago. In this presentation, Dr Joost de Bruin, Director of the Hundertwasser Art Centre, will reflect on Hundertwasser’s legacy and how it is represented in the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery. He will discuss Hundertwasser’s vision of the ‘Five Skins’ that articulates how we are all defined by our bodies, our

clothes, our homes, our identity and the earth on which we live.

President's Message



Greetings to all u3a members

It was grand to see so many attend our first meeting in February. We had 6 visitors and welcomed 4 new members. I hope that when new members come to study groups, they're made to feel welcome, and part of the great U3A network. The February guest speaker Matthew Hooton gave an excellent talk about his life and times as a political analyst and journalist. His view of the changing attitudes in politics over the years was most enlightening. We are indeed fortunate to have speakers of high calibre, willing to talk to us about their specialised field.

Our new speaker on March 10th also promises to be most interesting. Dr Joost de Bruin will speak on "Hundertwasser", the iconic building in Whangarei.

Many of you will recall the presentation last year by Peter Morgan on "digital farming" or have seen him on Country Calendar. Jackie Humphrey has organised a trip to his Waikato farm on March 12th. The committee looks forward to seeing as many members as possible joining us. If you've not signed up and paid, do so as soon as possible, as places are limited*. Partners and friends are welcome. Cost \$70.00 is to be paid into the U3A bank account – 12 3030 0469700 00. This includes a lunch provided by The Red Shed.

I look forward to hearing how and which study groups our new members have enrolled in. Continuing to learn in our "Third Age" and making social connections is vital to enjoying life in our senior years. ENJOY every day!

Alison Ross

* The visit is now fully subscribed. However, you may apply to join the waiting list.

In Memoriam

We acknowledge the life of Elizabeth McPherson, who died in February 2025. Elizabeth had been a member of u3a Remuera since 2020 and participated in the Genealogy, Foodies and Walking groups. We send our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

From the Director of Studies

Thanks to members, Convenors and Deputy Convenors for the great response to the recruitment talks last meeting. Most of the study groups gained a few new members. The new Digital Know-How Group has 13 people keen to get that underway. First meeting was held on Wednesday 26th February 2025. Convenor, wallis.walker@xtra.co.nz

Convenor's meeting will be at 10.00 am on Monday 31st March at St Chads.

Wallis Walker

Group Reports

Famous or Infamous Group

Famous or Infamous is on the first Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. in members' homes, where a lovely morning tea is served, and one or two talks are given. We are 8 members at present. So far, we have heard talks on the NZ Police, Kings and Queens, politicians, legal systems, Treaty of Waitangi and states of Australia. After each talk, we vote on whether the subject of the talk is famous or infamous.

For more information phone the convenors, Elaine or Piers Davies on 09 524 6927.

Poetry Group

"Poetry is so important because it helps us understand and appreciate the world around us. Poetry's strength lies in its ability to shed a "sideways" light on the world, so the truth sneaks up on you. No question about it. Poetry teaches us how to live. Poetry is like the Windex on a grubby car window—it bares open the vulnerabilities of human beings so we can all relate to each other a little better."

Alice Osborne, singer/songwriter and poet

Our poetry group meets monthly. We each bring a poem to share, and copies of the poem for other members to take away. The poems we share are written by a wide range of poets over a wide time frame, and on a wide range of topics. Each poem is followed by a discussion which may include information about the poet, the style and structure of the poem, the impact, themes, and related topics. As a group we begin to get to know each other through this sharing.

In my experience, poetry connects us to our hopes, our fears, our realities, our dreams, our past, present and future. Poetry can be a very powerful way of sharing with others. Poetry offers us a sharing of experience, wisdom, appreciation of our world and each other, as well as understanding, and guidance at times.

I include a poem, by Langston Hughes, (1901-1967) associated with the Harlem Renaissance: the flowering of black intellectual, literary, and artistic life that took place in America during the 1920s.

Lesley Gamlen, Convenor, email lgam5661@gmail.com



"Dreams" by Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow

"If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." Martin Luther King Jr

Looking Back

The first meeting of u3a Remuera for 2025 was held in February and was well attended by 83 members and 6 visitors. This was the largest attendance in 2½ years. We welcomed 4 new members, increasing total membership to 139.

Each of the 16 study group convenors gave a short presentation outlining the scope of their group's interest, the topics they cover and the format of their group meetings. A new group was introduced, "Digital Know-How," which members were invited to join. All u3a members were encouraged to participate in one or more study groups as a place to socialise, a chance to participate, and to learn something new to keep their mind active.

All, including visitors, are welcome to attend any of the study groups at any time of the year. Details of each group is on the website <https://remuerau3a.org.nz/>



The main speaker for the morning was Matthew Hooton, one of New Zealand's most experienced and best-connected strategic consultants, policy-advisors and lobbyists. He is well known for his regular column in the NZ Herald and articles in Metro and The Australian. He covered several political topics and issues relating to New Zealand. These included:

- The dire concern of an increasing fiscal debt, currently 40% of GDP, following many years of government deficits, with annual interest payments of \$10 billion to service that debt. Unless there is significant change to government borrowing, New Zealand could be in default by 2040. The current government aims to address this issue by promoting economic growth. However, he pointed out, growth needs to be substantial around 6% annually to redress the fiscal debt.
- He was critical of New Zealand's school education system which has significantly deteriorated over the years. "The New Zealand secondary school NCEA qualification is not worth anything" he said.
- Internationally, New Zealand is aligning itself more closely with the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and NATO. To remain a credible partner, New Zealand would be expected to significantly increase its spending on defence. At present this is not affordable. The threat of Chinese expansionism in the South Pacific is topical with the Cook Islands / China deal about to be signed.

He concluded by saying New Zealand needs a bold initiative from one of the major political parties. It will take courageous decisions to make significant and immediate economic and educational changes to address the long-term issues facing the country. Sadly, there is no clear evidence of this at present.

The u3a Network Committee invites applications for mini speakers for the Network event in July'25

Here is what you need to do: -

- prepare a 12-minute presentation using PowerPoint
- practise, practise and practise! Know your material thoroughly!
- ensure that you can use a microphone successfully
- present your talk to your u3a group
- if you are nominated by your group to be a mini speaker, the next step is to present your talk to the Network Committee via Zoom or Google Meet.

Should you wish to be considered or wish to nominate someone for this event, please contact Alison Ross, email ea.ross@xtra.co.nz

Notice Board

Meeting Tasks for April

Greeters	Music Appreciation
Morning tea	Foodies
Mini Talk	Poetry
Newsletter Group reports	Music Appreciation and SARUS

Meeting Tasks for May

Greeters	Travel and Walking groups
Morning tea	AAAA
Mini Talk	Genealogy
Newsletter Group reports	Foodies and NZ History

Future Speakers

14th April at 10am. Speaker: **John Montgomery**, "Approaches to Auckland. The place of the Hauraki Gulf in the oceans".

12th May at 10am. Speaker: **Marama Royal**, Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei and the history of Auckland.

9th June at 10am. Speaker: **Kerry Gibson**, "Youth Mental Health in New Zealand".

14th July at 10am. Speaker: **J.R. Rowland**, "Supporting Aotearoa New Zealand's transition to a low-carbon and sustainable future".

Key Contacts

President	Alison Ross	ea.ross@xtra.co.nz
Vice President	Laurence Melton	l.melton@auckland.ac.nz
Director of Studies	Wallis Walker	wallis.walker@xtra.co.nz
Almoner	Raewyn Bluck	jrbluck@xtra.co.nz
Membership Secretary	Lynn Bartram	lynnbartram3@gmail.com
Treasurer	Karin Hulme	khulme@xtra.co.nz

Email Address

u3aRemuera@gmail.com

Website

<https://remuerau3a.org.nz/>

Study Groups

<https://remuerau3a.org.nz/study-groups/>



u3a Remuera meets at St Chads Church, Meadowbank on 2nd Monday of the month at 10am. u3a provides a place for those in the 3rd stage of their life journey, to come together in their local community, a chance to socialise, a chance to participate in interest groups, to learn something new and keep the mind active.

"Nothing is impossible. The word itself says 'I'm possible!'" Audrey Hepburn
