

October 2025

Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand

Next Meeting:

Monday 13th October 2025 at 10am

Venue:

St Chads Church, 38 St Johns Road, Remuera

Principal Speaker:

Michael Littlewood will speak about his new book, "William & Tiraha: A Biographical Novel." A first-person story inside a nineteenth-century memoir, constructed as a novel.

Mini-Talk:

Peter Buckland, from the Current Affairs study group, will speak on "Being human in the 21st Century". Being human encompasses a rich tapestry of qualities that shape our thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Meeting Tasks:

Greeters: Genealogy
Morning Tea: Walking and Travel groups
(Convenors of Walking and Travel groups, please contact Gillian West 09 634 3439 to confirm duties and time.)

Michael Littlewood is a retired lawyer, employee benefit consultant, director and academic. He worked in New Zealand, Vanuatu and the United Kingdom. Michael has written extensively about public policy issues associated with saving, retirement and pensions, including a book *How to create a competitive market in pensions – the international lessons* (Institute of Economic Affairs, London, 1998). He maintains an interest in those issues.



He had a 'Who do you think you are?' moment in 2010 when he first saw a photo of his great-great-grandmother, Tiraha Cook. That prompted him to write William and Tiraha's story.

Paihia, 1823, and William Cook is injured and abandoned by his whaling ship. He is nursed at the Mission by Tiraha, whāngai daughter of the great chief Nene.

Fifty years later, this couple's grandson meets his grandparents for the first time and hears the story of their long life together.

Abraham senses long-buried secrets as his grandfather tells how, abandoned once again, this time with a young family in the isolated deep south, he and Tiraha drew on the knowledge and skills of both their cultures to survive, and to escape.

Pioneer shipbuilders on remote Stewart Island, and making ingenious use of scarce resources, William and Tiraha eventually cross the Tasman with their growing family to deliver a new-built vessel for the Weller brothers. They return, finally, to the Bay of Islands to witness the coming of British law, the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Flagstaff Wars. Despite the tensions from their own divided loyalties in these turbulent times, William and Tiraha grow to understand each other and the new country they are helping to shape.

"Success is not something to wait for, it is something to work for." – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

President's Message



Greetings to all u3a members

How delightful it is to look out and see new leaves adorning our recently bare trees. That means we can say goodbye to winter, and welcome to spring. But, my goodness, the year is racing by, and soon it will be Christmas and summer holidays.

I'm delighted that our membership is growing, and that new members are willing to join the committee. Like many similar organisations u3a needs all members to participate in the running of the show. Indeed, I was somewhat reluctant for many years as I felt I had too many responsibilities to deal with. However, the committee members who had served before me were most supportive, and always on hand with help and advice. So, my message is to all members, please say YES, when someone shoulder taps you and suggests a role you might fill. Each role on the committee is clearly laid out, so that one knows what is expected. The committee meets four times a year; it's the best way to meet other members, make friends, and really get to know more about this amazing worldwide organization. The Annual General Meeting is next month, 10th November, so please speak to me over coffee and offer your service, we NEED you!

Alison Ross

Director of Studies

At our meeting on 24 September, it was decided to wind up the Digital Know How Study Group due to lack of members. During this year members have shared skills and learned from each other, gained confidence in trying something new or attending a community help session.

We recommend Digital Seniors service at:

- Remuera Library. They are available on Mondays between 10:00 and 12:00. The next one is the 6th October 2025.
- Onehunga Library, Fridays 10-11.30 am. The next one is the 3rd October 2025.

The u3a Digital Study Group shares this advice when creating a Power Point presentation.

1. Plan your presentation. Make 3 main/key points Decide the order.
2. To save time formatting later, set background, title, text and bullet style for consistency.
3. Font style. For clarity use Arial or similar. Use max of 2 font types. Size 20 to 24 points.
4. Limit palette to not more than 4 colours.
5. Contrast background to font. Light to dark or dark to light.
6. Not too much text. One idea per slide. Phrases no sentences. Max of 6 bullet points per slide. Max of 6 words per bullet point.
7. Skeleton/ bare bones on slide. Flesh is what you say. Need to know on the slide. Nice to know in your talk.
8. Pause for slides with text so audience can read it. Then enhance your message by speaking.
9. Don't turn away from your audience or mumble.
10. Know your topic, practice, interact with your audience.
11. Sound and Animations may be added but should enhance, not distract from your message.

Wallis Walker wallis.walker@xtra.co.nz

Group Reports

Use it or Lose it Study Group

We meet at 4pm on the first Thursday of the month. For the first hour we tackle numeric, word, lateral, visual and general knowledge puzzles and it is always interesting to see what our members bring to solve. The second hour we use for socialising whilst sharing a wine and sandwiches. It is a happy group and we enjoy each other's company.

New members always welcome

Famous rabbits you may like to solve

The rump Bribe patter Hitler with babe Brat briber Teeny
Sunbather Riot grabber Very ha Heath charmer



Convenor: Janet Barnard janet-barnard@xtra.co.nz

Famous or Infamous Study Group



We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 10 am in private homes. We always eat wonderfully prepared morning teas and you get to choose your topic and decide whether it's Famous or Infamous or, as known elsewhere, "Saints or Sinners".

Topics so far have included USA today, great explorers and adventurers, Sir Winston Churchill, a tour of Italy, familial histories, Maori chiefs, medical and archaeological explorations etc. It's all yours!

Famous or Infamous welcomes new members.

Convenor: Piers or Elaine Davies piersdavies153@gmail.com or call 524 6927.

Annual Subscription Now Due

Please pay your annual subscription for the financial year
1st October 2025 to 30th September 2026.

This year the Committee has increased the subscription to \$55.00 as the hall rent and other costs have increased. The preferred method of payment is by electronic banking.

Please pay fifty-five dollars (\$55.00)

The account name (Payee) is **U3A Remuera Incorporated**

The account number is 12 3030 0469700 00

Please put your surname with your initial as the reference.

If you do not wish to continue your membership, please advise either:

Lynn Bartram - lynnbartram3@gmail.com or Karin Hulme - khulme@xtra.co.nz

"The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention." – Anonymous

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE AGM

The Committee proposes to amend Clause 6.1(iii) of the Constitution to alter the term of office served by the President at the discretion of the committee and with the consent of the sitting President. Currently the Constitution prescribes a one-year term for the President. The Committee recommends changing this to a period of up to three concurrent years, should the sitting president be willing and able to do so. The Committee believes this would provide greater continuity to the governance of the organisation.

The Committee also proposes to amend Clause 3.3(i) of the Constitution to shorten the period of time for which it may terminate membership for unpaid subscriptions and fees from 6 months to 4 months.

The proposals will be formally presented with the Notice of the AGM.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

u3a Remuera welcomes **Marion Cumming** and **John Blakey** as new members this month. We hope you will explore one or more of the study groups and find your experience fulfilling as well as meet new friends.

Looking Back

At our meeting last month, Michelle Leggott entertained us with a brief life history as well as reciting some poetry. Michelle was New Zealand's first Poet Laureate 2007–9, although Te Mata Wine Estate had previously acknowledged other Poet Laureates. Each NZ Poet Laureate is presented with



a tokotoko, a traditional Māori ceremonial talking stick, which signifies authority and status for the poet during their two-year term. Carved by an artist, it serves as both a symbol of the poet's role and a physical object for discussion and engagement with the public, often featuring unique carvings relevant to its owner.

Five years ago, Michelle was diagnosed with lymphoma which among other side effects has left her blind. However, three years ago she began CAR T-cell therapy, or Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy, which has given her life a significant uplift.

Despite her illness she has published 2 books over the past 5 difficult years; her 11th poetry collection "Face to the Sky" and "Groundwork" co-authored with Catherine Field-Dodgson. Both books are inspired by a 19th century painter of botanical water-colours and poet, Emily Cumming Harris. "Face to the Sky" tells stories of love and loss from two women in the shadow of the same mountain, more than a century apart. Both Michelle and Emily lived in and around New Plymouth.

Michelle recited some of Emily's poems of life in 19th century New Plymouth at the time of the Taranaki wars. She also likened some of Emily's experiences as revealed in her poems to her own situation while waiting for treatment in the 21st century.

Mini-speaker was Wallis Walker who described her travels around England, staying in various university residences. The visit also included a tour of Italy staying in monasteries. The whole tour was organised by Sage, an Australian travel company, and was organised for u3a members from Australia and New Zealand.

Notice Board

Meeting Tasks for November	Greeters	Monday History
	Morning Tea	Famous and Infamous and Poetry
	Mini Talk	SARUS
	Newsletter Group Reports	Poetry and NZ History

Meeting Tasks for December	Greeters	NZ History
	Morning Tea	Current Affairs
	Newsletter Group reports	Travel and SARUS

Next Month's Speaker 10th November at 10am. **Troy Churton**, "The Pathway to a Fairer Retirement Village Regime."

Future Speaker 8th December at 10am. **James Duncan**, "Infant Sparks; Auckland's early electric trams."

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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.

Editor: Peter Buckland, contact peterlbuckland@outlook.com 0274764873