



Meadowbank

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President: John Goodman

Secretary Vivianne Child

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NEWSLETTER – JANUARY / KOHITATEA 2026

Greetings from the President

It really doesn't matter how hard you try to have everything prepared in advance, you are always going to forget something. The AGM went off quite well and I remembered practically everything there, except that I wrote Moved, Seconded, Carried against each item, but forgot to write "Questions". I think the answer to the question "Can you list the changes made to the old Constitution?" is that the new Constitution is a new document which incorporates most of the old Constitution rather than a changed one.

As well, I neglected to write a Preparation Sheet for After The Speaker, and so forgot completely to thank those People Responsible for the End of Year Function. The tables were beautifully decorated, the food was tasty and plentiful, the new layout with conversation and seating areas a brilliant idea and the wine delicious. So, belated, sincere and heartfelt thanks to Barbara Langguth, Gil Naden, Jenny Merrington, Shirley Grayson and John Cowan. Barbara's car got stuck in the stacking system (disabled by a fire system test) and so some of the food was delivered by the caterers, Cornwall Park Bistro, which was very kind of them.

The new committee is: John Goodman, President, Vivianne Child, Secretary, David Rae, Treasurer, Agi Ryan, Margaret Davidson, Shirley Grayson, Lesley Elia, Jocelyn Goodman, Judi Higginson, Miles Shephard and Anne Greville. Kind farewells and grateful thanks to those resigning from committee: Gay Williams, Maureen Putt, Chris Hawley, Judith Stewart and Rose Tait. Barbara Langguth and Honor Houldsworth have very kindly agreed to continue with Hospitality, Chris Hawley and Maureen Putt are jointly chairing the Speakers Committee and Chris Dee is in charge of the Website and appears to be still running the AV.

Following the AGM and before the EOY Function, James Duncan from MOT gave us part two of his Trams of Auckland trilogy. It's another of those things you don't know you're interested in until you hear the talk. James is a fluent and interesting speaker and coped brilliantly with the slight hiccup with the AV system, where the screen above the control desk (which he could see) showed the next slide while the main screen (which we could see) showed the previous one. Fortunately, we know what caused the problem, and it wasn't My Fault.

And, more good news, I have a certificate which says that U3A Meadowbank Inc has been re-registered as an Incorporated Society under the 2022 Societies Act. Thank goodness that's all over, finished, done and dusted. In the end, it was almost painless.

Unfortunately, there is good news and there is sad news. I have to report two deaths.

- Estelle Rose, wife of our first President, Stan, died on 24th November, aged 93, "dearly loved wife of Stan for 73 happy and wonderful years". Estelle was a member of the first committee, apparently in charge of "Catering and hall".
- Sadly, our 15th President and current member, Kathryn Schollum, died on 8th December. She joined U3A Meadowbank in 2005 and the committee in 2014 and took over as Vice President, before becoming President in 2015. The decision to increase the membership to 300 was made during her Presidency. She was a member of the History and Science and Technology groups, and widely known and liked. Our condolences to her friends and family.

At the time I am writing this, there are 11 shopping days to Christmas, but I do not know when the newsletter will be sent out, before or after Christmas. Whichever it is, the committee joins me in wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year, (probably retrospectively). We look forward to seeing you in January.

Best wishes,
John Goodman

Your Committee 2026



November Meeting



Our main speaker, James Duncan, from MOTAT and (right) with John and Chris Dee



A warm welcome from our November greeters and (right) some of the organisers of our end of year feast!



Who's Who for Monday 19 JANUARY 2026 meeting: 9.45 a.m. for a 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: Books & Authors

Mini Speakers: Vivienne Child -Art History and Chris Dee - Our New Website

Guest Speakers: Drs Fahima and Arif Saied, CEO New Settlers, Family and Community Trust (NFACT): and Senior Refugee & Migrant Advisor (MSD).

“Journeys of Resettlement: Insights into Refugee Wellbeing and Community Leadership in Aotearoa”



Dr Arif Saied and Dr Fahima Saied are Afghan-born medical doctors who resettled in New Zealand more than two decades ago. Both retrained as counsellors and have since become respected community leaders, drawing on their lived experience to support refugees and new settlers across Aotearoa.

Dr Arif Saied currently serves as a Senior Refugee and Migrant Advisor at the Ministry of Social Development and is the President of the Refugee Council of New Zealand. His work spans community wellbeing, employment, social engagement, violence prevention, and youth development.

Dr Fahima Saied is the CEO of the New Settlers Family and Community Trust (NFACT), a charitable organisation supporting newly arrived refugees and migrants nationwide. She holds an MBBS from Afghanistan and a Master of Counselling (First Class Honours) from the University of Auckland and is a registered counsellor with NZAC. She is a committed advocate for social justice, equal rights, and inclusive communities.

Who's Who for Monday 16 FEBRUARY 2026 meeting: 9.45 a.m. for a 10 a.m. start at St Chad's Church, 38 St Johns Road, St Johns 1072.

Greeters: Books & Authors

Mini Speakers: Gay Williams – Poetry and Jill Wilson - Saints & Sinners

Guest Speaker: Dr Stephen Child

Topic: New Zealand's Private and Public Healthcare System: Why all the negative media and what does it mean for me?

New Members

A big welcome to our new members, Susan Rowntree, Sonia Faulkner and David Steele.

Best wishes for many enjoyable experiences at U3A Meadowbank!

City Mission Appeal

We will be holding our annual appeal for the City Mission in February.

The need this year seems to be greater than ever.

Please bring non-perishable food items...tins and packets...to the **February** meeting.



U3A Meadowbank has always given generously to this cause... let's make it a bumper year

Our Certificate of Incorporation

Congratulations and many thanks to John Goodman and others from the committee who put in many hours of work to achieve this.



Group News

History Group



The New Zealand History group enjoyed a special day on December 8. Allan Davidson, who lived at St John's Theological College for 27 years and who has also written a book about the history of the college kindly offered to take us on a tour there.. And what a beautiful place it is. We felt very far from the busy rush only a street away .We explored the beautiful Selwyn Chapel, built in 1847, the cemetery where the age of those buried was a sombre reminder of the precariousness of life in early New Zealand and then went to the beautiful modern

library. Here are found thousands of volumes on theology and church history, plus a huge archival collection. The oldest book there dates from the 14 hundreds! We finished our tour in the old dining hall.

Thank you, Allan, for such an informative glimpse into our history.

Foodie Group



Alexa Johnstone



Alexa with the foodie group.



Foodie Group food. Yum!

The Foodie group has just had the privilege of spending a morning with Alexa Johnston, the author of "Ladies a Plate" and "A Second Helping", both now sadly out of print. Alexa, who is also an art historian, talked to us about the genesis of her books, which are a celebration of the New Zealand tradition of home baking. She is a highly entertaining and knowledgeable speaker.

A quote from her book A Second Helping:

" I believe we need to stop saying "I've been good today" when what we mean is not that we've visited a lonely elderly friend or given time to a community project but that we have resisted eating a piece of chocolate cake.

My advice is this: Make the chocolate cake yourself, take some to a friend and enjoy eating it together."

Happy New Year from the Foodie Group!

Books of the month

Over the holiday period book lovers will be reading many books that have been 'beside the bed' or 'in a pile just waiting'.

We are so lucky to have access to so many great books - bought from our wonderful Auckland book shops, borrowed from the loan table at our U3A meetings, or 'on hold' in the library.

One source you may be interested in is from the 'Women's bookshop' where Carol Bleu and staff host the enjoyable 'Ladies Literatea' each year.

This year, 2025, the following books were presented by their authors.

The list is set out below:

TRACY FARR

Tracey used to be a scientist – now a writer. This is her third novel

'WONDERLAND' Set in Miramar includes the amusement park 'Wonderland' which moved to Auckland for a year in 2013. Tracy said she had taken liberties when writing fiction and included in her novel the scientist Marie Curie 'the lady'. The story is of a fictional family – the Lovelocks, and their triplets, and uses three voices to tell the story. Mattie Lovelock, the triplets, and Marie Curie. Carol said this was one of the best books she had read in a longtime.

I have it 'on hold' at the Remuera Library (one of 100s!)

NADINE HURA

A first book of essays 'SHOWING THE SUN' Stories of climate change through indigenous eyes. We need to understand the science – and ask the questions. It is in three parts – Western science, Spiritual Connection, and relationships.

EMMA NEALE

A poet, novelist and Editor this book of poetry called **'LIAR, LIAR, LICK, SPIT'** won the 2025 Ockham Award for poetry. It is centred around lies, untruths, and why we deceive. Emma read eight of the poems

I bought this book to share with our U3A poetry group

JOSIE SHAPRIRO

A second novel by Josie **'GOOD THINGS COME AND GO'** Set in Waiheke and Los Angeles the book is about three friends – a love triangle, risk, and skateboarding. I have read her first book 'Everything is beautiful and everything hurts' about a runner, and have this second book 'on hold'

KIRSTIE SENIOR and SOPHIE GILMOUR

FATIMAS – a recipe book. Kirstie and Sophie both worked in cafes when studying at university and loved food. Kirstie started Fatimas in 1995 – 30 years ago. There are now three stores in Ponsonby, Takapuna, and Commercial Bay.

The book was started 18 months ago, and has 100- recipes. Kirsty and Sophie shared stories of the hardship for women in leading change, and the importance of respect for women in business. They now employ 50 staff, mostly women

Their recipes often began with dinner parties, and they focus on food as the hero, the eating space feeling comfortable, the food flavourful and androgenous, and responding to people – family friends and customers

I have bought the book for my grandson Ollie who wants to be a Chef, and is coming from California to attend the Cordon Bleu schooling Wellington in 2026.

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KAARINA PARKER

FULVIA – power at any cost'

Kaarina is a model and author, has studied history, and has written this first book about power – especially the power of women.

Power in story telling can lead to real change. Her heroine FULVIA is Mark Anthony's wife but no one has ever heard about her, and Kaarina needed to do a lot of research for this story!

A woman whose ambition included defying rules and norms. The challenge is to balance historical truth, justice, and make Fulvia seem real. Kaarina has visited Rome to see the places Fulvia went.

I have this book 'on hold'

LUCY O'HAGAN'

"EVERYTHING BUT THE MEDICINE – A DOCTORS TALE" Lucy was a great presenter – a GP tackling health inequity and sharing the human stories based on her experience. The book took eight years to write! and includes 60 pieces set in five parts with lots of self-disclosure. The five parts include: Who is the Doctor who wrote this book; Patient stories; The Health System; Doctor stories – 'burn out' ; and more stories.

I have this book 'on hold' with many hundreds of others!

FRANKIE McMILLAN

'EDDIE SPARKLES BRIDAL TAXI' Frankie has written several books - this book includes short stories about the curiosity of everyday life – the absurdity of life!

SONYA WILSON

'SPARK HUNTER' and 'THE SECRET GREEN' Sonya was a news reporter before a writer. These children's books (for ages 9-90!) explore the wonder and magic of Fiordland. The forest is the star, and the books are full of mysteries – the last place of the Moa, are Moose still there. The 'Sparks' are mystical creatures you need to look for to preserve their precious natural environment

Sonya is also the organiser of the charity 'Kiwi Christmas books' The books were available for donation at this event which made this easier for both Janet and me.

DAME FIONA KIDMAN

'THE MIDNIGHT PLANE: SELECTED AND NEW POEMS' Poet novelist, activist, and feminist, Fiona has contributed to the literature of Aotearoa for over 50 years. This book includes the best poems from her last six books. She also read to us a poem called 'kai' that she wrote too late to be included in this book, but is addressed to Erica Stanford, Minister of Education regarding her decision to not allow Māori words in some young children's books

Happy reading

Gay Williams

Events in Auckland

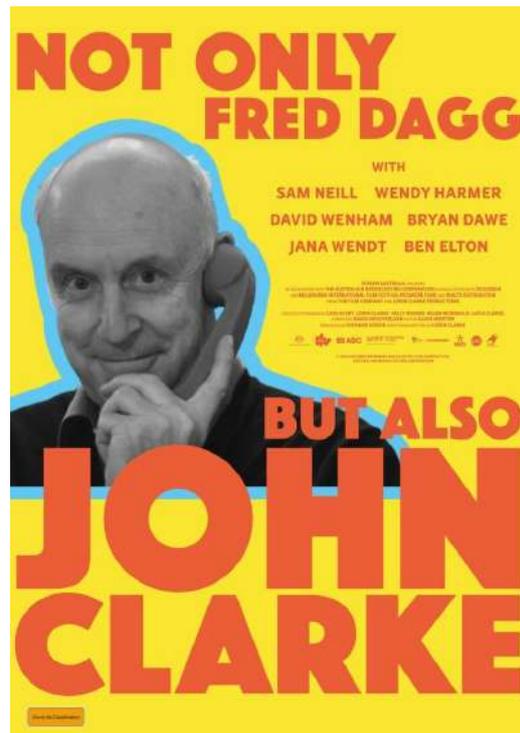
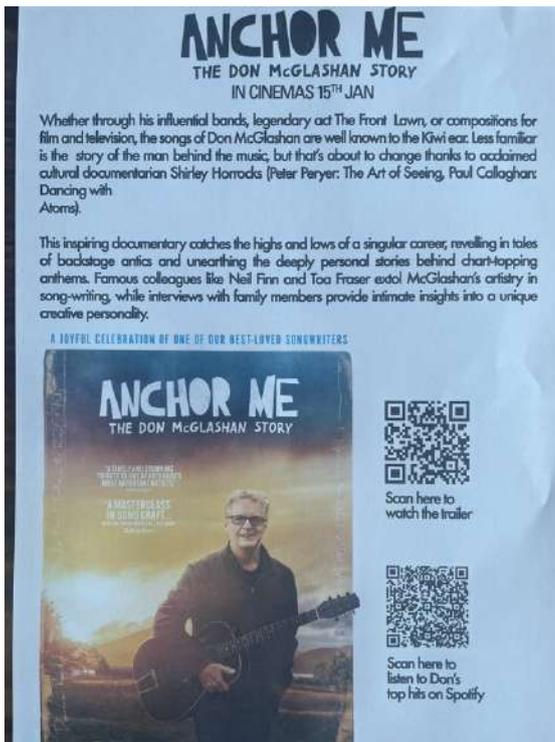


Candlelight Concerts in Auckland

ASB Waterfront Theatre: Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express
7 – 22 Feb 2026



At the Movies



NB: Don McGlashan & The Others will be playing at the Hamilton Arts Festival Sunday 1 March 6.30pm – 7.45pm

Currently playing in cinemas

If you change your personal details, OR LEARN OF THE BEREAVEMENT OF A U3A MEMBER, please email the change to u3ameadmemb@gmail.com. Please include YOUR full name, physical address, phone number and email address.

TO CONTACT COMMITTEE MEMBERS please use the gmail addresses below:

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Next Monthly Meeting: Monday 19 January at 10 am at St Chad's

Don't forget to send in your U3A news to include in the next newsletter. We rely on your contributions.

Deadline for the FEBRUARY newsletter items is THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2026. Expect receipt confirmation.