

# **U3A Christchurch Central**

## **'University of the Third Age'**

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### **Newsletter 1, February – March 2026**

**2026 AGM –Tuesday, 3 February, 10:30 am, Phillip Carter Auditorium,  
Te Puna o Waiwhetū Christchurch Art Gallery**

**Agenda:** Apologies, Minutes from 2025 AGM, Annual Report, Financial Report, Election of Officers, General Business

#### **The following nominations have been received:**

President: Sue Allard, Secretary: Marilyn Downward, Treasurer: Maxine Macaulay

Membership Coordinator: Sally Lewis

Committee: Yvonne Ekdahl, Gay Charlotte, Rosemary Anderson, Jan Bierman and Roma Finlay

A nomination form for officers and committee members is attached. Please contact the current Secretary, Rosemary Anderson, [rosemaryh.anderson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rosemaryh.anderson@xtra.co.nz) or phone 027 552 8146, about any additional nominations at least 24 hours before the AGM and bring the nomination form (signed by the nominee and the person nominating them) to the AGM. We are looking for new members to be part of our committee.

**U3A Membership fees, 2026** - A motion was passed at the U3A committee meeting on 28 October 2025, that the fee for the annual subscription be \$100 for 2026. Proposed by Sue Allard, seconded Yvonne Ekdahl, passed. This motion from the committee will be voted on at the AGM

#### **AGM Speaker: Erica Rankin, Head of Libraries & Information, Christchurch City Council**



In December 2025, Erica Rankin started as the Head of Libraries & Information, with overall responsibility for leading the planning and delivery of public library services for Christchurch City and Banks Peninsula. She brings 34 years of experience to the role, including a number of years as a Community Libraries Manager, during which time her portfolio included: Te Kete Wānanga o Aranui, New Brighton, Parklands, Fendalton, Ōrauwahata: Bishopdale, Papanui, Redwood, and Shirley libraries.

Erica took two years out from her Community Libraries Manager role in 2017-18 to be the Establishment Manager for the Tūranga build project. Her work involved liaising with the design and build teams, as well as overseeing and weaving together the various internal workstreams needed to get the building ready to become operational. Tūranga is now the largest public library in the South Island and has won or been a finalist in a number of architectural and engineering awards.

## Course 1 - Potpourri

10 February – 10 March 2026

Course Organiser: Anne McMurtrie



**10 February: Dr Maureen Montgomery, Adjunct Associate Professor, University of Canterbury and author**

**“Gilded Prostitution”: Transatlantic Marriages and the British Peerage, 1870-1914**

William T. Stead, a famous crusading British journalist, who made his name exposing the white-slave traffic between Britain and the Continent, described the marriages of American women into the British peerage as “gilded prostitution . . . when there is no love in the matter” in his 1902 book, *The Americanization of the World*. He decried the idea that American women were looked upon as “a means of replenishing the exhausted exchequer, a kind of financial resource”. This is the starting point for my presentation on this topic which has continued to fascinate novelists and television scriptwriters for over 150 years.



**17 February: Alanna Chapman, 27 Seconds Wine**

**Wine as a vehicle for change**

Alanna is the co-founder of 27 Seconds Wine. After encountering modern slavery while travelling, Alanna and her husband were inspired to create a wine label that raises awareness and generates funds to support organisations working in this space. Alanna will share the highs and lows of the journey so far, and the lessons learned along the way.



**24 February: Prof Renwick Dobson, Principal Investigator of the Biomolecular Interaction Centre based at the University of Canterbury.**

**Fake burgers and diagnostic devices**

Renwick will present their work on two fields of research: 1) the rise of cellular agriculture as a new source of protein and 2) development of diagnostic devices for the wine industry, workplace drug testing and Alzheimer's.



**3 March: Gail Gillon FRSNS FASHA (Ngai Tahu), Founding Director of the Child Well-being Research Institute, University of Canterbury**

**The Better Start Approach - Evidence of accelerating children's early literacy development.**

Gail's presentation will show how effective literacy teaching is a pathway to more equitable education outcomes. The Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) is an integrated classroom literacy programme. The approach is based on years of research trials investigating the most efficient, effective methods to support success in children's reading, spelling, writing, and oral language development.

**Hospitality:** U3A tradition is providing morning tea in the foyer prior to presentations in the Phillip Carter Auditorium. We have some cups for you to use, but we appreciate it if you bring your own. A big thank you to Yvonne Ekdahl and those who assist her at the tea/coffee table.

**Visitors are welcome:** \$5 per session. Visitors must sign the visitors register at the membership desk.

**Cell phone use during presentations:** Members are reminded that, while they may use their cell phones to take notes during presentations, they should not take photos of the presenter or any of the slides presented as the distribution of this material requires the consent of presenters. All phones set to silent.

**Interest groups:**

U3A Christchurch Central has two interest groups - the **Walking Group** and the **Art Appreciation Group**

For the Walking group contact Sue Allard [sue.allard@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sue.allard@xtra.co.nz) , and for the Art Appreciation Group contact Anne McMurtrie, [annemcmurtrie@xtra.co.nz](mailto:annemcmurtrie@xtra.co.nz), 027 537 5128.

### **The U3A Art Interest Group**

The next U3A Art Group visit will be at Christchurch Art Gallery 20 February at 10.30am. We will have a guided tour of the exhibition - The Life and Work of Raymond McIntyre. Contact Anne McMurtrie by text or email if you would like to join the group visit.

### **Course Dates 2026:**

**Course 2:** 17 March – 14 April, **AI Uncovered**

**Course 3:** 5 May – 2 June, **Rewilding Canterbury**

**Course 4:** 16 June – 14 July, **Electrifying New Zealand**

**Course 5:** 28 July – 25 August, **Political Challenges**

**Course 6:** 8 September – 29 September, **Innovative Companies (ChCh)**

**Course 7:** 20 October – 17 November, **Potpourri**

**Final session:** 24 November