

U3A CAPE TOWN CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2016-2017

Like last year, though we had an overall successful year, there were some bad moments e.g. when student unrest prompted UCT to close down the Baxter at very short notice in September and October - and we must be prepared for that to happen again this year - what's the betting it's the same time over exams? We do our best to inform everyone via Yahoo and we contact the Retirement Homes where we know we have members, but there are still people we can't reach, so we do urge those not yet on e-mail that if there is student unrest please find out if the Baxter meetings have been cancelled.

There was also some confusion because in May the Baxter was fully booked up with school drama productions and couldn't accommodate us, so offered 2 meetings in June on 1st and today, so June 1 attendance seemed a bit thin.

Although we are disappointed that our paid-up membership seems to have declined very slightly, we still have the biggest membership in the Western Cape as we discovered at the Western Cape Forum which Atlantic Seaboard kindly hosted last Thursday. And to the envy of all the other U3As we certainly do offer the most courses - currently 80+ per month. And for that we have to thank **Sylvia Schrire** who is tireless in her efforts to secure new courses.

Leonard Suransky is chairing a very inter-active discussion course on **Current Affairs** when the participants also do research and present their findings to the group. **Maureen Archer's Mind Your Language** is also interactive and popular. There are too many courses to mention but I do strongly urge you to leave your comfort zone and find out what a wealth of stimulating activities Cape Town U3A has on offer.

Not only does Sylvia Schrire organise the courses - which also often means finding suitable accommodation - she also chooses the speakers and currently she has a list of about 70 to choose from - once again the envy of other U3A speaker-seekers!

Some of the Baxter talks this year have been on grim topics e.g. ***The worst epidemic in South Africa's history : the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918*** given by **Dr Howard Phillips**, Another natural disaster we are living through is the drought which was the subject of **Professor Jenny Day's** rhetorical question ***Does South Africa have a Water crisis?*** Another potential disaster was discussed by **John Matisonn** in ***South Africa's rapidly changing politics : where are we heading?*** Then earlier this month we commemorated ***The Russian Revolutions : February and October 1917.***

On a lighter note (literally) **Richard Jewson** from Fine Music Radio entertained us with ***All That Jazz*** and **Mark Jennings**, the Manager of FMR informed us about the radio station. **Dr Dean Allen** entertained and enlightened us on ***Empire, War and Cricket : Logan of Matjiesfontein.*** And we continue dealing with local matters today when **Laurine Platzky** will talk on ***Spatial Integration in a post-apartheid city.***

The smooth running of Cape Town U3A and avoiding major disasters (we hope) is due to the hard work of the committee behind the scenes. I have already mentioned Sylvia Schrire who really is THE key person not only in Cape Town but also Gugulethu U3A. Our communications depend on our capable Administrators **John and Sherlayne McFarlane** who are responsible for Yahoo, so we do urge all on e-mail to apply to join Yahoo - you have to apply, we cannot automatically do it for you. That way you receive all our communications, such as newsletters, updated course lists, monthly bulletins on forthcoming speakers and topics in our U3A as well as neighbouring U3As. John, Sherlayne and Silvia are all going overseas this weekend so we wish them bon voyage and a well-deserved holiday. Our finances are in the most trustworthy hands of **Eddie Landsberg** and **Angie Lumgair**, so our annual subscription remains unchanged. **Allen Lang** has taken over our website from Cora Ovens' whose eyesight has deteriorated that she felt she had to give up. Allen would like to expand the website, so please do check it out. **David Gamsu** is Front of House at the Baxter and organises a number of local outings - and welcomes suggestions for suitable venues. **Derick Rule** organises longer tours and is always at the Baxter with the latest information. His tours are always booked up and thoroughly enjoyed so many members make repeat visits. **Avril Galp** is our resident artist who designs the forms and vouchers we give to our speakers. You will see her at each Baxter meeting writing out beautiful membership cards. We are delighted to have 2 new committee members : **Jeanie Hareb**, our secretary, whom I've introduced, and **Jenny Mostert** is Newsletter Editor, and a most competent successor to

Clyde Broster who (like Avril) writes out membership cards most beautifully. The committee includes **Paul Faure** whom we are pleased seems to be enjoying better health - and I would like to thank them one and all for their hard work.

We also need to express our appreciation to **Kath Green** and **Peter Lawson** for the very well-organised and varied Summer Socials which were most successful and highly appreciated. Kath is also a regular and willing helper in writing out receipts and membership cards. So a big thank-you to Kath for that task - as well as to all the other willing helpers who come month after month - **Christine Assam, Mary Debrick, Gnessa Glazer, Di James, Angie Lumgair, John and Sherlayne McFarlane, Jenny Mostert, Fran Pocock and Ernie Wynne.**

We would also like to thank **Wouter van Warmelo** for taking the photos of our speakers, so we are able to keep a record of them and remind you at our AGM. Thanks also to **Alan Dunnell** for projecting these and other images.

Those who do not have e-mail rely on snail mail and we have regular mass mailings so we would like to thank and express our appreciation and gratitude to **Charlotte Thomas** who organises them, and thanks also to **Murray Wilson, Jenny Sieglar, Lilian and Gunther Barthlet, Cynthia Winstanley and Sybil Havenga** for their invaluable help.

But above all, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to all our **course leaders** who are indeed the lifeblood of Cape Town U3A. Thank you again to all who have worked so hard in putting the courses together, arranging talks, hikes, outings, etc. Your efforts really are appreciated and you are invaluable in making Cape Town the success it is.

Compiled by Eve Dunnell
June 1917.