

U3A CAPE TOWN CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2015-2016

Although this has been another successful year for us, there have been some bad moments e.g. when, because of student protests, UCT closed down the Baxter in October and we had 2 days' notice to inform everyone that the meeting was cancelled. And in November, again at short notice, our scheduled speaker got flu and lost his voice.

But we coped and can report that our numbers continue to grow (currently about **1710**) and so do the courses on offer about 70. Just as was mentioned last year there is tremendous demand for **Wine Appreciation** and **Bridge** and we would dearly like more course leaders and teachers. We are delighted that another **Bridge** course is starting next month in Constantia.

Music Appreciation is being relaunched in Norfolk Place and **Investment Club** has just started in Rosebank.

Among the new courses we had in the past few months were 2 very topical ones one on **Xenophobia, Migration & Ethno-nationalism** and the other on **Terrorism Today: the ISIS Caliphate challenge** both led by **Leonard Suransky** who also spoke at our AGM a year ago on **The sources of the curse of Xenophobia**.

The number of courses we can offer is the envy of many other U3As and we owe a big debt of gratitude to **Sylvia Schrire** who organises both courses and speakers. We have had a variety of speakers and topics.

One of our most successful meetings was in March this year when we finally had the talk which had been cancelled in October and **Dr Eric Goemaere** of **Médecins sans Frontières** spoke about his experiences with **Doctors without Borders**. We were particularly pleased with the generosity of the audience so that more than R18,000 was raised - the most we have ever collected. This was rounded up to R20,000 to a very deserving cause. Last month **Professor Anwar Mall** spoke about **Religion and the practice of religion in the Age of Science**. **Professor Pierre de Vos** enlightened us about **The role and powers of the Public Prosecutor**. To balance all those courses on wine, there was a talk on **The cup that cheers : the history of tea**.

The arts were well represented this year : **Rosalind Malindrinos** spoke on **The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood : Victorian avant-garde**; **Barry Smith** talked about and **Grant Brasler** demonstrated that **The Organ** is indeed **The King of Instruments**. **Rodney Trudgeon** taught us **How to listen to a symphony** which he illustrated by playing Mozart's Symphony in G minor. And we ended 2015 with something completely different : **Adam Schroeder** a young and most talented magician now studying at UCT.

The smooth running of U3A Cape Town is due to the hard work of the committee behind the scenes. I have already mentioned **Sylvia Schrire** who not only organises our speakers and courses, but also does the same for Gugulethu U3A. She really is indispensable. Fortunately, she now has an assistant, **Linda Rose**, who is providing invaluable help with technical assistance such as sending out mass messages on cell phones. **John and Sherlayne McFarlane**, our joint Administrators, are responsible for Yahoo, the only mass e-mail communication we use, so if new members do not respond to the invitation to join Yahoo, they will not receive newsletters, course lists, notices and monthly bulletins on forthcoming speakers and topics for neighbouring U3As as well as our own courses. Our finances are in the most capable hands of **Eddie Landsberg** and **Angie Lungair** so thanks to them, we have a surplus, so for the 6th year in a row our annual subscriptions remain unchanged. **Cora Ovens** runs our website most competently. We are delighted that **Allen Lang** has now been persuaded to rejoin the committee as we urgently needed someone with his computer skills to back up and (if need be) take over Yahoo and the web-site. **David Gamsu** acts as Front of House at the Baxter and organises a number of outings but would welcome suggestions of

where members would like to go. **Derick Rule** has extended his tours outside the borders of South Africa to Namibia where the luxury train tours were immediately booked out. So he is now looking into the possibility of further tours across the borders. **Avril Galp** is our resident artist designing the forms and vouchers we present to speakers and is busy at each Baxter meeting writing out membership cards. **Paul Faure** is far from well and battles with a bad back so we do appreciate the fact that he makes every effort to come to the Baxter and to committee meetings.

The very successful and varied Summer Socials were organised by **Kath Green** who is already making plans for 2016-2017. Kath also helps to organise block bookings at Artscape as well as writing receipts. So a big thank you to Kath for all her hard work. **Clyde Broster** does an excellent job of the newsletter and also does the Minutes of the AGM - and writes out membership badges. We are very grateful for all his work. And a big thank you to all the other willing helpers writing out receipts and membership cards : **Christine Assam, Mary Debrick, Gnessa Glazer, Di James, Jenny Mostert, Fran Pocock.**

Thank you also to **Wouter van Warmelo** for taking the photographs of our speakers which you saw as you came in and thanks also to **Alan Dunnell** for projecting them.

We also need to acknowledge those who work behind the scenes dealing with the mass mailing in particular **Charlotte Thomas** who organises it, but thanks also to the regulars : **Murray Wilson, Jenny Sieglar, Lilian** and **Gunther Barthlet, Cynthia Winstanly** and **Sybil Havenga.**

But above all a very big thank you to one and all of our **course leaders** who are the lifeblood of U3A. Thank you again to all who have helped out in any way, Your efforts really are appreciated as you make Cape Town U3A the success it is.

Compiled by Eve Dunnell