



Supporting  
Lifelong Learning

**Howick Inc.**  
PO Box 39035  
Howick 2145  
**JULY 2019**  
**Final Edition**



**COMMITTEE**  
**2019-2020**

**DAVID DWERRYHOUSE**  
*President/Membership/Ten-minute Speakers*  
**MARGARET NICHOLLS**  
*Immediate Past President/Director of Studies*  
**CORA YOUNG** *Secretary/Auckland U3A*  
*Network Liaison*  
**JONI BURGESS** *Treasurer*  
**CHUA HUCK CHENG** *Newsletter Editor*  
**WARREN YARDLEY** *Guest Speakers*  
**ROSEMARY OVENS** *Almoner/Welcomer*  
**MARY KENNEDY** *Minutes Secretary*

**JULY 8 MEETING**

**9.30 am, Howick Bowling Club (DOWNSTAIRS)**

**GUEST SPEAKER: Fiona Jeffcoat: Experiences of a long-distance walker**

**TEN MINUTES: Short Story**

**TEA ASSIST: Anthropology L**

***NOMINEE FOR VP UNVEILED***

GERALDINE Rose, convenor of the Opera 2 group, was introduced by President David Dwerryhouse at last month's meeting as the nominee for Vice President. This ends a long search for the position to be filled. Her nomination will be voted on at the July 8 meeting. Ms Rose used to be an opera singer who has performed in Europe and Australia. She lived a good part of her life in Germany, where high art is an integral part of national life. Among her recreations is pool, at which she has played competitively.

***NEW STUDY GROUPS PROPOSED***

TWO new study groups, Film and Singing, have been proposed. President Dwerryhouse, the Film proposer, said movie viewing will alternate with critical discussions. The Singing group will be a revival as one existed until it was disbanded two years back. Lana Ashley, the proposer, said it was not intended that a performance choir be formed. The activity was aimed at promoting emotional and physical wellbeing and learning skills like breath control. Director of Studies Margaret Nicholls and Ms Ashley will meet prospective members during tea break.

***LIMITED PARKING***

PARKING will be tight as two groups will be meeting on July 8 at Howick Bowling Club (we have been allocated the downstairs hall). Members could carpool or have someone drive them to the meeting.



**WANDERLUST**

Fiona Jeffcoat (picture) will talk about her walking adventures on the age-old Camino de Santiago pilgrims' trails in Spain. She had seen the film, *Six Ways to Santiago*, and wanted to live the experience. She has taught school in Howick and Hong Kong, interspersed with her travels. China was home for several years. She caught the travel bug early when, as an 11-year old, she was taken on a family caravan trip through Europe which lasted six months. Educated at Auckland University and St Andrew's University in Scotland, she had also done a brief stint in the New Zealand Army. She is now training to be an arts therapist.

**NEXT MONTH:** Lt-Cdr Kane Sutherland will speak on current and future operations of the NZ Navy.

### ***STUDY GROUP ATTENDANCE***

A SUMMARY of study group attendance data is presented in the table below. Yellow shading indicates groups are full. This is Director of Studies Margaret Nicholls's evaluation report:

“Thank you to all the convenors who supplied attendance data for their groups. This is useful information as it helps to establish a baseline for overall group participation and to identify trends in group size, either in growth or decline. Convenors can then discuss possible reasons and how to respond to the trends. Forming a new group, merging with another, changing the focus, temporarily suspending, or disbanding, are all options that can be discussed with group members. It is rare that a group cannot be continued and I thank those willing to support their groups with attendance, participation and contributions to the tasks within each group (convenors, presenters, reporting, communication, venue, teas, etc.)

An overview of the data identifies that most groups are running well and attendance is generally constant. A few groups are variable, with some members attending irregularly, but still viable. A few groups have low numbers and need to be monitored. (The Writing group is low deliberately.) There have been two convenors' meetings during the year and suggestions to keep groups interesting and tasks shared have been implemented with good results. Poetry and Aviation and Aerospace are new groups this year. “

	<i>Number of members</i>	<i>Average attendance</i>
Anthropology H	15	10
Anthropology L	9	4
Architecture	17	11
Aviation & Aerospace (new group)	10	
Book Discussion	13	9
Civilisations	17	8
Earth & the Universe	17	10
Famous & Infamous 1	11	7
Famous & Infamous 2	19	10
Famous & Infamous 3	10	7
Forum	12	8
French	16	8
History	18	10

History of New Zealand	18	11
Literature	13	8
Opera 1	16	12
Opera 2	14	7
Philosophy	16	10
Poetry	7	5
Science	13	8
Sunday Discussion	7	5
Travel	17	9
Walks and Talks	26	10
World of Art 1	19	13
World of Art 2	18	14
Word of Music	14	9
World War II	15	7
Writing	6	5

### ***SEMINARS ON RETIREMENT VILLAGE LIVING***

THE Commission for Financial Capability (CFFC), a government agency, is conducting seminars on retirement village living in September. Legal and financial aspects will be discussed. These sessions will be useful general information for members, not only for those considering moving into a retirement village. Early registration for these free events is recommended: **Sept 17 at St Heliers Community Centre, 100 St Heliers Road**, and **Sept 19 at Auckland Bridge Club, 273 Remeura Road**. Start time 10.30 am for both events, tea served at 10. Another session is scheduled for Henderson but this is probably too distant for Howick members. To register call Paul Nicolini of the CFFC on 021 565321 or email paul.nicolini@cffc.org.nz.

### ***PASSING***

WILLEM van Rheenen and Bruce Dowd, husband of Joan Dowd, passed away last month.

### ***REPORT ON LAST MONTH'S TALKS***

#### ***JANE HARDING:***

#### ***BABIES AND AN UNSWEET LIFE***

THERE were sharp questions from the floor after scientist-paediatrician Jane Harding completed her talk last month on the health outlook for newborn babies with low blood sugar levels (neonatal hypoglycaemia):

- Is there a causal link to autism if the child's brain development is impaired or delayed?
- Might disrupted brain growth lead late in life to degenerative conditions like Alzheimer's?
- Are children born to a woman who has diabetes quite certain to end up diabetic?
- Relative roles of breastfeeding and formula feeds in early-infancy care?

- Low or high glucose count: What's the metabolic difference and how does it impact a child's growing years? (Not asked, but quite likely on the minds of members with grandchildren.)

Professor Harding is principal investigator in groundbreaking research at the Liggins Institute of Auckland University, a world leader in studying physiological variables in infant development. She handled questions as a scientist would, trusting only evidence-based findings. As hers was a charts-and-data presentation to acquaint the lay public with work that does not receive as much financial backing and publicity as it ought to, the interest shown by U3A members in arcane scientific investigation goes to the heart of the challenges this country's research community faces.

Hypoglycaemia and dementia? Answers will be a long time coming, to paraphrase her, as this area of research might be considered an outlier. A good deal of research internationally is not primed for looking into distant imponderables; a hierarchy of priorities dictates that money expended should produce useable (read: immediate) outcomes.

Yes, she said in enumerating the work of the institute, biomedical research is expensive but not conducting research is more expensive in the long run. Implicit in this truism is the consequences of neglect: future healthcare charges on the public purse and productivity lost through illness and worker absenteeism. For all the important work it does, however, the institute surprisingly receives less than adequate funding. It relies on donations and has to compete with research peers for grants from the Health Research Council, a Crown agency which decides which research proposals to back, and regional entities. It has even sought funding support from an external source (American). That it was granted was a strong validation of Liggins's work as research funds seldom cross borders.

This was how Prof Harding framed the vital contribution to New Zealand's public health that investigating the link between infant metabolism and cognitive development will bring. The outlook of infants at risk of low blood sugar count is worrying: 15 per cent of births could be afflicted and the risk rises sharply for premature babies, under- and over-size ones and those born to diabetic mothers.

If not treated, normal brain development could be adversely affected. Within a few years cognitive impairment would become evident in poor literary and numeracy skills. For the message to sink in, Prof Harding specified reading and mathematics as vulnerabilities. The phrase brain damage is used in papers she has published in such medical journals as *The Lancet*. It could not be more stark. Physical development could also be impaired, as in a child growing not upwards but sideways.

Where the Liggins has triumphed -- and underscored the cost savings to the nation achieved through early intervention -- is in a simple, inexpensive method of rubbing a dextrose (sugar) gel into the cheek of a baby within hours of birth. This could well obviate the need for intensive care, which is frightfully costly at \$1,500 a day. At the risk of over-simplification, what this means is that a \$2 sugar rub could potentially prevent brain damage and save the country hospital care costs running into millions. The next step: investigate this treatment as a preventative in reducing the incidence of low-sugar infants.

Prof Harding received her DPhil at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar after medical school in New Zealand, and has done post-doctoral work in the United States. One imagines her as the archetypal scientist in lab coat patiently teasing out results, collating data and writing papers for peer-reviewed journals. But she mentors too, as the Liggins Institute is also an incubator for future scientists. Some 70 student-researchers are currently working towards their PhD degrees.

- Go to [www.givingtoauckland.org.nz/liggins](http://www.givingtoauckland.org.nz/liggins) if you wish to make a donation to the Liggins Institute.

### **JUDY WILSON:**

#### ***A SONG TO MY COUNTRY***

IN HER traveller's tale of a trek from Cape Reinga to Bluff, completed over four summers, Judy Wilson offered up a hymn to Aotearoa much in the manner of globe-trotting travel writers and documentary-makers humbled by New Zealand's natural beauty. They are blown away, then they want to get the message out. Mrs Wilson's verdict after journeying through woods, grassland, glaciers, mountain passes and picturesque farm country: "The beauty of our country takes my breath away."

Gorging on views was not all there was for her. For those seeking to immerse themselves in the culture and history beyond the visage – not just to be able to say 'I split New Zealand down the middle' -- the experiences gained are almost spiritual. This was what moved Mrs Wilson and her husband Geoff as they did a staggered trek of the Te Araroa Trail. She quoted her husband as saying in his travel log: "The trail gave me an awareness of my country. It was an involvement experience... you get a deeper understanding of yourself and your country."

The Te Araroa Trail is an endurance trial distinct from the world-famous walks of the South Island, most of which can be completed in a few days. The distance is a daunting 3,000 km from tip to tip across the full spectrum of the country's natural and man-made endowments well off the beaten track, as well as urban

crossings through Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington. Opened only in 2011, this is growing to be a marathon challenge for foreign backpackers who typically complete the trek in four months, said Mrs Wilson. (Some of the braver ones presumably also attempt the cost-to-coast Outback drive in Australia to claim an Australasian double – and tell friends about it.)

Mr and Mrs Wilson didn't want to rush it. They covered 20-30 km a day. Husband Geoff did the manly stuff, walking most of the way. The wife was more of a supporting act -- part-walk, part-drive, part-cycle, part-sightseeing. Rendezvous with Geoff at pre-arranged spots in mountainous sections could be several days after a parting. This was how she would feel as Geoff got off the car on some mountain road or stream to proceed on foot: "I'd wave a nervous farewell to my beloved as I watched him disappear into the bush, knowing I'd not see him for days." (Mobile phones aren't of use in the wilderness.) But have no fear, The Man always emerged at the appointed time on the appointed day, grinning but tired and grateful to be handed a cold beer and a roll.

Mrs Wilson had her own moments of delight when her partner was off solo. In the Tararuas she went looking for kiwis with the help of a local guide, and she found little blue penguins in their nests. Of the kiwis, she said: "Watching them dig their long beaks into the leaves and earth, with the night-time smell of the earth and the bush, was very special for me." This was communing with the soul of the land.

She had a special fondness for the Tongariro Crossing, one of the more strenuous parts of the trail. She conceded that doing the Tongariro at age 65 was not being smart but the elation she felt completing it was "worth every ache I endured". Another was the Queen Charlotte Track. And Cape Reinga, the starting point of the trail and a sacred Maori site every self-respecting New Zealander says he/she will visit some day. So much to savour.

As for accommodations on these extreme ventures, a memorable treat was a couple of nights spent at The Hermitage, the venerable hotel at Mt Cook village that is often mentioned in international travel guides. Disclosure: Her husband reached the summit of Mt Cook in 2003, so this was a commemoration, a reliving, of a deeply satisfying personal triumph.

Mrs Wilson's adventure had its unexpected turns. She was driving alone on some high country sheep-station road when she felt pressured by an impatient driver behind her, whereupon her car struck a rock and burst a tyre. Bikers who came to help couldn't resist asking what a lone woman was doing in a place like that. If only they knew.

## **OUT AND ABOUT**

++ **HOWICK Little Theatre** has two productions in July. **The Book of Everything** is on until July 27. Matinee on July 14. Adapted from a children's book by **Guus Kuijer**, it is directed by **Alex Gleed**. **Eating The Wolf**, a reimagining of the Little Red Riding Hood fantasy, follows on July 31-Aug 3. It's a comedy directed by **Le Niddrie**. Online bookings on [iticket.co.nz](http://iticket.co.nz).

++ **MANUKAU Concert Band** opens **Howick All Saints Church's Thursdays@Seven winter concert series** on July 25. Performance time 7 pm, entry by door donation. Next concert Aug 1 (programme pending).

++ **HARLEQUIN Musical Theatre** (563 Pakuranga Rd, behind the Howick-Pakuranga Recreation Centre) presents **Company**, a musical comedy, on July 27-Aug 10. Music and lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**. Seniors concession \$30 from [iticket.co.nz](http://iticket.co.nz) or call 361 1000. Show lasts 2½ hr. See [harlequintheatre.co.nz](http://harlequintheatre.co.nz) for showtimes.

++ **SCHUBERT'S Symphony No 8 (Unfinished)**, an ennobling, poignant piece of music, tops the **Auckland Philharmonia's** July 25 programme at the Town Hall, 7.30 pm. The concerto after intermission is **Beethoven's 4<sup>th</sup> Piano Concerto** with Spaniard **Javier Perianes** as soloist. Conductor **Giordano Bellincampi**. Tickets from the APO's Town Hall box office or call 6231052.

++ **FRENCH FESTIVAL** partying and family excursions at **Shed 10** and **the Cloud (Queen's Wharf)** on July 11-14. Besides the wine and cheese and all manner of French eats (but of course), there will be movie screenings, bands, petanque and the Tour de France cycle race carried live/delayed. Entry charge \$10. Details on [frenchfestival.nz](http://frenchfestival.nz)

++ **THE VALKYRIES**, second of **Wagner's** four-opera **Ring cycle** about gods and mortals, power and love, hatreds and resentments, will be shown at the **Monterey** on July 29 and Aug 4. From the **New York Metropolitan Opera**. Warning: it lasts 5 hours. Wagner's score and the fantasy story line are absorbing, so U3A opera followers more attuned to Mozart and Donizetti may want to see if they couldn't enjoy heavy dramatic stuff. U3A opera groups are not likely to screen Ring operas because they are just too long.

Group (yellow denotes full)	Date	Venue	Topic	Convenor
Anthropology H 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 10 am	July 18	BM Theatre	<i>10 Types of Humans</i> Cora Young	Jennie Leyland 534 4034 Betty Reid 534 9895
Anthropology L 4 <sup>th</sup> Mon 10 am	July 22	Cora Young's 55 Rodney St.	Same as above	Margaret Heatt 534 9131
Architecture 1 <sup>st</sup> Fri 10 am	Aug 2	Phillipa Wilson's 12 Daria Place	<i>Built on Water</i> Philippa Wilson <i>South Australia</i> Jean Denholm	Malcolm/Dilys Booth 534 3604
Aviation and Aerospace 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed 10 am	Aug 7	BM Theatre	<i>Lockheed Skunk Works</i>	Clive Bolt 534 2946
Book Discussion 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs 2 pm	July 25	Margaret Smith's 25 Centre Ct, PPV		Margaret Smith 576 3206
Civilisations 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon 1 pm	July 15	Cora Young's 55 Rodney St	<i>Roman Roads in Britain</i> Peta Carnell and Margaret Nicholls	Cora Young 534 8623
Earth and the Universe 4 <sup>th</sup> Tues 10 am	July 23	BM Theatre	<i>Type 1a Supernovae</i>	Clive Bolt 534 2946
Famous & Infamous 1 1 <sup>st</sup> Tues 10 am	Aug 6	Nancy Edwards's 17 Masefield St	<i>Kevin Milne</i> Peter Garrick	Peter Garrick 535 4085
Famous & Infamous 2 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs 2 pm	July 18	Dilys Booth's 3/47 Orangetown Dr	<i>The Invisible Woman</i> Dilys Booth	Ray Lewis 535 5628
Famous & Infamous 3 1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs 10 am	Aug 1	BM Village		Gill Muggleston 534 9863
Forum 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fri 10 am	July 19	Beverley Luxton's 1 Village Dr, PPV		Beverley Luxton 576 9625
French 4 <sup>th</sup> Fri 1 pm	July 26		<i>Film Festival movie at The Civic</i> <i>10.30 am</i>	David Dwerryhouse 534 4829
History 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues 10 am	July 16	BM Theatre	<i>Marie Antoinette</i> Colleen Williams	Judy Lee 535 8547
History of New Zealand 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs 10 am	July 11	John Peat's 130 Point View Drive	Potpourri	Alan La Roche 534 7366
Literature 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed 10 am	July 17	Richard/Moira Burns's Apt 470 BM Village	<i>Scottish Myths and Legends</i>	Judy Wilson 576 6340
Nature Walks and Talks 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fri 9 am	July 12	Meet Fencible Dr by the old library building	<i>Down Moore Rd into Domain,</i> <i>W'ton, Ridge, to Stockade Hill</i>	Alan La Roche 534 7366
Opera 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues 9.30 am	July 9	BM Theatre	Donizetti's <i>The Elixir of Love</i> Luciano Pavarotti	Jean Denholm 534 6844
Opera 2 4 <sup>th</sup> Tues 1 pm	July 23	BM Theatre	Puccini doublebill: <i>Il Tabarro and Gianni Schicchi</i>	Geraldine Rose 537 1917
Philosophy 1 <sup>st</sup> Mon 10 am	Aug 5	BM Theatre	<i>Getting Better at Living Life</i> – Discuss	Chris Nixon 535 5309
Poetry 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues 2 pm	July 9	Colleen Williams's 1/139 Clovelly Rd	<i>Poetry From Our Schooldays</i>	Beth Voogd 534 7468
Science 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed 10 am	July 24	BM Theatre	Potpourri	Jim Hine 534 4259
Sunday Discussion 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun noon	July 14	Uxbridge Arts & Culture cafe		Joan Clarkson 537 6397
Travel 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed 10 am	Aug 7			Warren Taylor 021 534348
World of Art 1 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon 10 am	July 15	BM Theatre	<i>Art of Spain</i>	Garry Law 271 6505
World of Art 2 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues 1.30 pm	July 16	Jean Denholm's 2/21 Drake St	<i>Pavement Artists</i> Jean Denholm <i>M.C. Escher</i> Heather Watson	Heather Watson 274 4747
World of Music 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed 1.30 pm	July 24	Jean Denholm's 2/21 Drake St	<i>Vladimir Ashkenazy</i> H. Watson <i>A Trumpet Soliloquy</i> R. Ovens	Ngaire Taylor 534 8538
World War II 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs 2pm	July 11	Malcolm Booth's 3/47 Orangetown Dr	<i>Resistance</i> – all contribute	Allan Reid 534 8538
Writing 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues 1.30 pm	July 9	Marian Heywood's 1/8 Aylmer Court, Eastern Beach	<i>Once The Wind Had Dropped</i>	Marian Heywood 534 1159

