



JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2025



**SAND-TA'S HERE!** What captures the joy of Kiwi summer holidays better than coming across a Santa made of sand during a beach walk? A delighted **Margaret Marsh** took the picture.

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## QUIZ CORNER

1. On a traditional Monopoly board, what colour is Pentonville Road?
2. Who wrote the novel *The Inimitable Jeeves*?
3. Which UK car maker produced the Stag?
4. In which country is the city of Trieste?
5. In which decade was Joanna Lumley born?
6. Which composer wrote music for three ballets: a) Haydn; b) Mendelssohn; c) Tchaikovsky?
7. Who was Queen of England for only nine days?
8. The Battle of Waterloo was fought in which country?
9. Which strait separates Stewart Island from the South island?
10. Who is pictured here?



■ [Answers on Page 13](#)

## IMPORTANT NOTES FOR MEMBERS

- THE **Annual General Meeting** of U3A Tauranga will take place on **Friday, 21 February**. Please see the formal Notice on [Page 8](#) of this issue. The Executive for 2025 take office at that meeting. Some key positions remain to be filled, please see [Page 11](#) for details. At the AGM, members will be invited to vote on the Constitution, which has been comprehensively revised in order to comply with the Incorporated Societies Act of 2022. You will also be asked to vote on a Resolution which, when passed, will be submitted with our application to re-register as an Incorporated Society under the new Act. Should the Resolution be lost, U3A Tauranga will be removed from the Register of Incorporated Societies. Our guest speakers will provide information about Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney. [See Page 9](#).
- Please note that the date of two of our Monthly Meetings in Tauranga will be changed this year, as the normal third Friday dates clash with the Good Friday and Matariki public holidays. These meetings will be moved to the third Thursday of the month and will take place on 17 April and 19 June. This year 2025 marks the 30th Anniversary of U3A Tauranga.
- The Annual Subscription has been increased to \$25 and is now due. Only paid-up financial members are entitled to attend U3A groups and vote at General Meetings.
- The 2025 Handbook is now available online at [U3A-Tauranga-Handbook.pdf](#)



# Welcome to 2025, everyone

**G**REETINGS,

Christmas cake is no doubt all eaten, along with the chocolates. We always say “This will be my last one” but somehow another chocolate gets consumed. I do trust that everyone has had a super time of festivities through to the start of 2025 on 1 January. I ask myself every year why it takes longer to pack away the Christmas decorations than it does to put them up. This time around, our Christmas Day was rather quiet due to two evenings in the prior week celebrating with our families early, as they were heading overseas to celebrate Christmas with in-laws in London and Sydney respectively. I have to admit that I didn’t envy the ones who went to Great Britain, as it has been so cold and much snow experienced. Brrr, not for me thanks!

It was a delight to drive along Pilot Bay and the Mount esplanade on Christmas Day, to see so many families thoroughly enjoying a picnic lunch at the beach. It was a beautiful day despite the weather warnings.

2024 was another vibrant year for U3A Tauranga. After the AGM in February, several vacant executive positions were taken up as a number of long-term members resigned their positions. For those affected it was on many levels quite a learning curve to master the fundamentals of running a large organisation such as we have. However, the very culture of U3A Tauranga meant that the “newbees” were well supported by the remaining executive members as well as the general membership, who gave very much welcomed positivity and support.

I wish to thank the following for the work each contributed to the smooth running of our organisation throughout 2024: the Executive, those in non-executive support roles, the Katikati sub-committee and the Conveners, who keep the wheels well oiled in our current 76 interest groups.

There were some changes during the year, for example the increase of the annual subscription fee to \$25 from \$20. The first increase in 30 years. Due to changes to the Incorporated Societies/ Charities Services requirements, we have had to review our Constitution to meet the new requirements if we wish to retain our current recognition as a Incorporated Society with Charities Services. The revised draft Constitution was presented to the Executive in December, where a unanimous vote approved it. Copies of the draft will be sent to members for pre-reading prior to being put to the membership vote for approval at the AGM on 21 February. If approved, a special Resolution will be put to the vote for U3A Tauranga to re-register under the Incorporated Societies Act, 2022.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the AGM. We will be celebrating our 30th anniversary with a special morning-tea. Meanwhile, best wishes to all groups that will be starting their 2025 sessions within the last weeks of January.

Nga mihi nui,  
Warm regards,

*Gail Moore*

President U3A Tauranga

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# How activist Kit turned ‘apologist’

By GRAHAM DAINTY

IN A lively, thought-provoking talk in November, **Kit Wilson** (pictured right) described his subject as *My Journey from Local Activist to Corporate Apologist for a Sunset Industry* and himself as having either “no moral centre or a lot of explaining to do”! Actively encouraging his audience to challenge him at any time, he described his background as a teacher at Katikati, a job he thoroughly enjoyed and which included conducting evening classes in the use of video cameras and film editing.



At that time, the gold mining operation at nearby Waihi was becoming a focal point of interest to residents, so Kit stood up, wrote to the US mining company concerned, and formed an action group in Katikati which attracted up to 400 members at its meetings, opposed to mining developments. The effects on the town and the prospect of young males from overseas working at the mine and living in camps was all too real ... “Lock up your daughters!”

Kit’s videos came to the attention of the mining company, Oceana, which sent representatives to make presentations to the action group and explained the implications at meetings. Any development could take up to 20 years, with no guarantee of finds and that gold then not necessarily being recoverable. The company then suggested that Kit make a video during his long holiday break – with the proviso that if Oceana was seen as “bad”, then make it for the activists, and it was perceived as “good”, then make it for the mines.

This was the early 1990s. Kit included the practical views of the activists, together with ideological and environmental aspects, making four videos for the mine company, with the money raised being split between his Katikati school and Kit himself. It was at this stage, and being impressed by the obvious awareness that Oceana had for environmental concerns, that he changed sides. The result was that he resigned from teaching in 1996.

It is a given in New Zealand that large-scale projects are seen by all sides of the population as either a degradation of the land, solely a money earner, all profits going overseas, a vital part of our economy, it will be a mess, etc. The Karangahake Gorge orange river outflow is a recent example of how public opinion soon points the finger towards the mining industry. The Tui mine involved closed in 1973 and the remaining oxides, when affected by heavy rainfall, will leach into the environment. The Golden Cross mine in Waikato closed in 1998 but then a dam made of tailings slipped and the subsequent run off into the Hauraki Gulf led to the mining company paying \$30 million. The slippage continues with treatment to monitor and control the pH, and the Waikato ratepayers paying in perpetuity.

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## ELECTION GENERAL MEETING: NOVEMBER



*Oceanagold's Martha Mine at Waihi provides employment for many people in the town.*

*Continued from Page 4*

So what protections are in place? The Resource Management Act of 1991 includes a large number of agencies with panels of experts to consider and rule on every application, a process that takes 2-3 years. There is no “fast track”.

As an example, Kit explained that one consideration was “Archie’s frog”. This tiny orange/brown creature, which has no eardrums, bears live young that live initially on their dad’s back. They live in flax and grasses in a special temperature and humidity on the Coromandel and King Country, areas which coincide with Oceanagold’s plan to develop the Waihi mine underground.

According to the geologists, Waihi North has \$4.5 billion of gold reserves, will involve two 10km-long tunnels being built under farms and forests, but with a restriction of less than 2 mm/sec vibrations when in use. (Remember the little frog has no eardrums). The tunnels will be back-filled after production ends. The Archie’s frog, meanwhile, is vulnerable to stoats, rats and pigs. The cost of moving one frog is estimated to be \$32,000. Because of the need to look after these creatures, part of the consent approval (up to the year 2050) is to fund the control of predators in the lower Coromandel.

Oceanagold is registered on the Canadian Stock Exchange, having been de-listed from both Australia and New Zealand stock markets. Are they guilty of buying acquiescence and approval? Is having a job no excuse for environmental degradation? Kit is firmly behind environmental acceptability and added an interesting comment: “What is the value to the world of tourism?” He concluded his fascinating talk by repeating his call: “Challenge us and hold us to account.”

### **Officers elected for 2025 at the Election General Meeting were as follows:**

President, Gail Moore; Vice President, Bev Edlin; Treasurer, Carol Outen; Secretary, Kay Ebden; Tauranga Coordinators, Margaret Marsh, Margaret Down, Pat Goldstiver; Speaker Organiser, Mary Stewart; Katikati Representative, Tom Robson.

To be advised: Newsletter Editor, Data Manager, one further Tauranga Coordinator, Skills Administrator, Health and Safety Officer. The Executive has the power to co-opt for these roles.

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# Port brings so much to the Bay

By STEWART CAIRNS

THE guest speaker at the November meeting of U3A in Katikati was **Rochelle Lockley** (*pictured*), the General Manager Communications at the Port of Tauranga.



Rochelle gave us an introduction to the port and the extensive activities that are all part of its day-to-day running. The port plays such a significant role in the everyday life of us all in the greater Bay of Plenty that Rochelle's address was not only topical but also of great interest.

Tauranga's port really does connect New Zealand to the world. The port is the biggest and most efficient in the country, accounting for some 39 per cent of the total trade of the country. It accounts for 70 per cent of all dairy exports, 61 per cent of all meat and 30 per cent of logs – there are some six million tonnes of logs handled annually.

The port is the biggest employer in Tauranga, encompassing some 280 permanent staff plus around 6,000 temporary and occasional staff. Due to the very nature of the business of the Port many are employed on an on/off basis. It is renowned for the efficient and very quick turnaround of the 1,400 plus visiting freight-carrying ships. Cruise ships are a significant part of the business, with each carrying approximately 4,900 passengers, who are introduced to the Bay of Plenty through the port.

It is planned and anticipated that there will be significant extension to the port facilities in the medium term, to cope with the projected increase in traffic and freight. Currently freight is delivered to the port by both road and rail. The road traffic has decreased over time and the rail input has increased commensurately, with 54 trains per week delivering and distributing freight to and from the port. There is a shortage of containers and container space nationally, with the resultant busy movement of containers to and from the port.

The forward-thinking management seeks to invest in ever more innovative and sustainable methods of minimising any negative impact the port is seen to have on the fragile eco-systems within and around the Bay. This includes the monitoring and assessment of water and air pollution, and technologically leading steps taken to mitigate these hazards and reduce the impact of carbon emission in the environment.

There are extensive and intensive bio-security protocols and facilities, including up-to-date training, with the constant awareness that the port is one of the leading points of entry for both positive and negative imports to New Zealand. This is critical for the security of the country.

The port supports many charities and is a significant benefactor regarding hospice care, sporting events and institutions, cultural events and many other important and essential entities within the Bay of Plenty. Rochelle's audience was left impressed by this forward-thinking and very efficient company.





# Is Santa really there – or not?

By STEWART CAIRNS

CHRISTMAS comes but once a year – to the relief of many! – and so it was appropriate that the November meeting, the last meeting of the year in Katikati, was the forum for an amusing and relevant playlet, written by the redoubtable **Al Mathews**, and presented by members of the **Wordsters** and the **Philosophy** groups.

Al posed the serious question as to whether Father Christmas – Santa Claus, Père Noël, Saint Nicholas or any of the many other names for him – is a reality, or is he another Schrödinger's cat-type of being? Is he really there – or not there?

There was a brief journey back to times before Christianity, when the passing of the Winter Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere was celebrated by those who had survived the year so far

– celebrated with much booze, sex and debauchery (sounds like joyous times to me, and probably not a lot different to today!). Gifts were exchanged and a good time was had by all. Then Father Christmas came on the scene – all cuddles and *bonhomie*, dishing out the goodies to well-behaved infants, and Santa Claus

became a figure of absolute reality in the modern psyche – leading to booming sales figures and probably more Bacchanalian boozing, debauchery and joyous sex!

In the words of the French Père Noël: “*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*” – the more things change, the more they stay the same. [Return to Page 2 index](#)







## NOTICE OF U3A TAURANGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025



In accordance with Section 9.1 of our 2022 Constitution, notice is hereby given that the 30th Annual General Meeting of U3A Tauranga Inc is to be held on **Friday, 21 February 2025** at Tauranga Yacht and Power Boat Club, 90 Keith Allen Drive, Sulphur Point, Tauranga, 9.45am for 10am until 12 Midday.

Issues to be voted on:

**Approve a revised U3A Tauranga Constitution**, which has been rewritten to comply with the NZ Incorporated Societies Act 2022

**Approval for U3A Tauranga to apply to re-register as an Incorporated Society** under the NZ Incorporated Societies Act, 2022

The AGM will be followed by morning tea and a guest speaker

All members are cordially invited

### MEET & GREET



**WITH A SONG IN THEIR HEART:** Members of *Singing for Joy* welcomed everyone to the Election General Meeting in Tauranga on 15 November.

### U3A TAURANGA LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

**Awarded since the Society  
was founded in 1995**

Roy Haywood	1996
Pam Haywood	1996
Dorothy Bush	2002
Les Bond	2004
Betty Clethero	2004
Jack Matthews	2008
Ken Rose	2010
Peter Simmons	2010
Warwick Kingston-Smith	2010
Thelma Cane	2012
Alan Freer	2013
Ken Gillan	2014
David Gordon	2015
Don McMillan	2017
Vivienne Mills	2018
Jean Garmonsway	2018
Lati Moodie	2021
Anne Withy	2023
Elizabeth Reeves	2024
Chris Hector	2024



Many people have Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney but it is important to review them regularly to make sure they still accurately reflect your wishes. A team from the legal firm Holland Beckett will be speaking on this important subject at our AGM on 21 February.

# Where there's a Will

MAKING a Will is essential for several reasons. First and foremost, it ensures that your assets are distributed according to your wishes after you pass away. Without a Will, your estate will be distributed according to the intestacy laws, which may not reflect your preferences. Here are some key reasons to consider making or updating your Will:



1. **Asset distribution:** You can specify who will receive your property, money and possessions.
2. **Avoiding disputes:** A Will can help prevent family conflicts by clearly outlining your wishes.
3. **Charitable donations:** You can include bequests to charities or other organisations that are important to you.
4. **Executor appointment:** You can name an executor to manage and distribute your estate according to your instructions.
5. **Tax efficiency:** A well-structured Will can help minimise the tax burden on your estate and beneficiaries.

Overall, a Will provides peace of mind and ensures that your loved ones are taken care of according to your wishes. If you are considering making or revising a Will, it might be a good idea to seek legal advice to ensure everything is properly documented.

**Estate Administration** is the process of managing and distributing a deceased person's assets according to their Will or the intestacy laws if there is no Will. Here's a step-by-step overview of what typically happens:

1. **Locate the Will:** The executor (the person named in the Will to manage the estate) will need to find the original Will and any codicils (amendments to the Will).
2. **Apply for probate:** If the estate is large or complex, the executor may need to apply for probate. This is a legal process that confirms the Will is valid and gives the executor the authority to administer the estate. The executor will file the necessary documents with the High Court.
3. **Gather assets:** The executor identifies and collects all the deceased person's assets, such as bank accounts, real estate, investments and personal property.
4. **Pay debts and taxes:** The executor pays any outstanding debts, including funeral expenses, taxes, and any other liabilities. They may need to file a final income tax return.
5. **Distribute assets:** Once all debts and taxes are paid, the executor distributes the remaining assets according to the instructions in the Will. Finally, the estate is officially closed.

Addressing the meeting on the subject of *Planning for the Future: Reviewing Your Wills and*

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# GENERAL NEWS

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*Enduring Powers of Attorney*, will be **Bill Holland** (pictured right), a Consultant at Holland Beckett who specialises in trust law and commercial and property transactions. The firm was founded by his late father, Bill Holland Snr. Bill was born, raised and educated in Tauranga. While completing his university qualifications he worked for a large Auckland law firm for two years before returning to Tauranga.

With the benefit of his wide knowledge of the city, its people and its business world, Bill acts as legal advisor to a large number of Tauranga's leading business people and for a number of community organisations. In 2012, he was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) and in 2024 he became a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CMNZ) for his services to the community.

Joining Bill will be senior solicitors **Courtney Sinclair** and **Angus Hendry**.

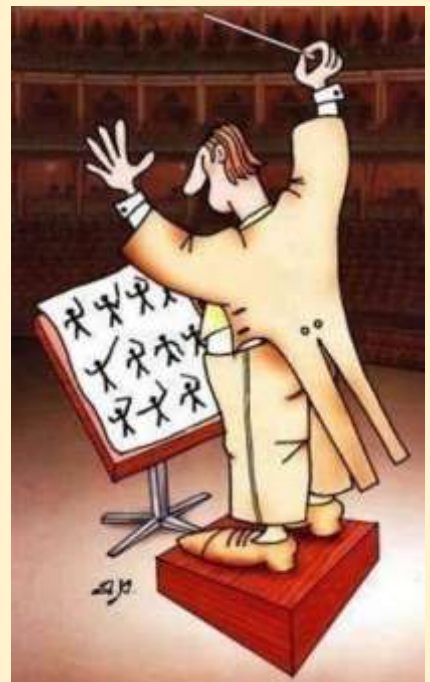


- **KATIKATI MONTHLY MEETING AT THE HUB, WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY AT 10AM**

The main speaker at the February meeting is **Sonya Korohina**, the Director of Toi Tauranga Art Gallery, who will take us through the journey of the gallery and explain where to from here.



To everyone who received a book from me for Christmas, they're due back at the library next Friday. Thank you.



I'M PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT I HAVE COMPLETED THE 1ST ITEM ON MY BUCKET LIST  
  
I HAVE THE BUCKET



I'm just going to put an "Out of Order" sticker on my forehead and call it a day.



# YOUR U3A NEEDS YOU!

We are looking for volunteers to fill the following positions:

### Newsletter Editor:

- Edit the bi-monthly Newsletter, to be published on the U3A Tauranga website and in print
- Source articles of interest to members, arrange for reporting and photographs of speakers etc at the General Meetings
- Design or coordinate the layout of text and graphics, arrange for proof-reading
- Coordinate activities of other members of the team and ensure deadlines are met
- Attend and report to meetings of the Executive, and liaise with colleagues regarding content

### Skills Administrator:

- Work with the Membership Administrator to gain contact details for new members
- Send out a confidential Welcome to U3A Tauranga Questionnaire to each new member, asking about their willingness to support various aspects of the U3A organisation using any of the skills they have appropriate to positions that become vacant
- Collate a continuous updated list and send to the designated Executive members to follow up

### Health and Safety Officer:

- Attend at least one Group Coordinators and Conveners meeting to convey responsibilities and to cover the U3A Health and Safety Recommendations
- Manage incidents and accidents
- Report to the Executive
- Prepare a monthly report of any incidents for the Secretary, to be delivered at the monthly Executive meeting
- Work with the Executive to review Health and Safety Policies every two years

As an entirely voluntary society, we rely on willing members to step forward to take on executive roles. If you can help, please contact either Gail Moore, our President, at [president@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](mailto:president@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz) or Kay Ebdon, Secretary, at [secretary@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](mailto:secretary@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz)



**Skye Colonna**, Digital Programmes Specialist at Tauranga City Libraries, writes:

WE ARE delighted to announce a new opportunity for digital learning in 2025, where we will come to you.

**Digital Outreach** aims to bring the learning to you at your own location. We understand that not everyone is able to come into our libraries to take part in our digital programmes, so we are reaching out to the community to see if you have a group that would like to learn together. Our programmes focus on building confidence and improving digital literacy in a safe and welcoming space, and we are committed to removing barriers around digital learning so we can deliver our programme free of charge.

**What we can offer:**

Our digital specialists will work with you to design a session that best fits the needs of your group. We can offer a range of different topics and session types which are based on our current digital offerings. These include:

**Digital Workshops** – A hands-on workshop/presentation on a specific digital topic. Topic examples include;

- Smartphone basics
- Library eResources (e-books, audiobooks, digital newspapers, magazines and films)
- Accessibility features on your device
- Photo and file management (including cloud storage)
- Online safety and scams

**Digital Drop-ins** – A digital specialist would be available to provide 1-1 help on people's devices for quick fixes to simple problems or issues. (Due to the nature of this type of session, 1-1 time would be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes per person and limited to six people.)

**Digital Games** – A hands-on fun workshop to discover online games and activities to improve cognitive health and wellbeing.

We are also happy to work with you if you have a specific learning need or topic that you would like support with, that isn't included above.

Each session would run between 1hr and 1.5 hours, depending on the topic covered. Due to the schedule of our current digital programmes, we are able to offer Thursday mornings or Friday afternoons to come out to your preferred location, but if those times don't work then please get in touch and we can see what we can do.

**Next steps**

If you would like to know more about this opportunity and how this could work for your group, please get in touch;

Email: [librarydigitalprogrammes@tauranga.govt.nz](mailto:librarydigitalprogrammes@tauranga.govt.nz) or [skye.colonna@tauranga.govt.nz](mailto:skye.colonna@tauranga.govt.nz)

Phone (07) 577 7177 – Make sure to mention that you are interested in Digital Outreach and either myself or a member of the team will get in contact with you.

Thank you very much, I look forward to hearing from you.

**Skye Colonna** | Digital Programme Specialist – Tauranga City Libraries | 027 2557636  
Tauranga City Council 075777000

| [skye.colonna@tauranga.govt.nz](mailto:skye.colonna@tauranga.govt.nz) | [www.tauranga.govt.nz](http://www.tauranga.govt.nz)  
<https://library.tauranga.govt.nz/>

**JOHN HILL** recalls when he and his wife plunged into the unknown and spent ...

# Two years on a tropical island

In 1984, with the Iran-Iraq War raging, I was working in the Arabian Gulf, based in Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile at home in Auckland, Barbara was seeing reports of death and destruction all around where I was working. Home on leave, midwinter, the phone rings. It's head office asking whether I would like to take over from a colleague to run the Tuvalu Maritime School. Barbara and I looked at each other and said: "YES!"



Then the questions: "Tuvalu – where *is* that? How do we get there? How long's the contract? What facilities are there? Is it safe for a small child? What will we need to take with us? And how big is it?"

The answers followed: "Tuvalu was formerly known as the Ellice Islands and you will be based in Funafuti, the capital, which is eight degrees south of the Equator. You will fly from Suva, due north for three hours in a small plane. The contract is two years, a house is provided, there are other young children at the school and you will need to take everything with you bar the kitchen sink. Oh, and by the way, the country is spread over eight atolls, totalling 26 square kilometres."

An information book arrived with details of the climate, the government, where the school was on Funafuti, the house, the furniture, my role etc, etc,

plus three closely typed pages of what was not available in Tuvalu that we would have to bring with us. We were allocated three cubic metres of space on the next available ship for everything (bar that kitchen sink).

September. We arrive at Funafuti International Airport, which consists of a 1km-long coral runway built by the Americans in 1943 and a breeze block shack, with a concrete bench for Customs to inspect our luggage. We are told, afterwards, that, before a plane lands, the fire-truck (an ancient converted Land Rover) runs up and down the runway, clearing people and pigs out of the way. It's hot, 90 per cent humidity, 34°C in the shade, and it's going to be the same every day. We walk 50 metres to the jetty, to be greeted by a smart launch with a slightly less smart crew. An hour's trip across the huge, beautiful lagoon to our new home, Amatuku Islet.

It's a coconut palm clad, coral atoll, two metres above sea level, 50 metres wide and 650 metres long. We spend the night with my colleague and his family, who are leaving in two days.

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### QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Light blue;
2. P G Wodehouse;
3. Triumph;
4. Italy;
5. 1940s;
6. c) Tchaikovsky;
7. Lady Jane Grey;
8. Belgium;
9. Foveaux Strait;
10. Carmel Sepuloni.

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# NEWSLETTER FEATURES



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A very rapid exchange of information, wives talking, Barbara scribbling copious notes, while I'm given the guided tour of the school and introduced to the staff. The next day, paperwork, hand-over, sign for the petty cash, attend morning parade to meet the students – and then it's back across the lagoon to meet my boss, the Minister of Education. It's official. I'm now in charge of the Tuvalu Maritime School!

Our house was one of five permanent staff houses, an office block, dormitories and classrooms,



all built with board and battens, open beam ceilings and fixed wood louvres for ventilation. All were painted in “institutional brown” with dark red trim. The only air-conditioned space was the store room, where the “dry” store foods were kept for use in the galley.

Tuvalu, was a subsistence economy, having few resources except small exports of copra and a Philatelic Bureau catering to the purchasers of rare stamps. The one thing it did have was people, so the school's job was to recruit young men between 18 and 23 years of age and, in one year, turn them into trained seafarers, who would then work for overseas shipping companies and remit valuable foreign currency into the economy.

In order to do this, the school had to obtain a certain international standard, so required fully qualified professionals to run it. The senior staff apart from myself, consisted of Doug, Chief Officer, and Dave, Chief Engineer, ably assisted by Mike, who was a Thames launch diesel mechanic.



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## NEWSLETTER FEATURES

*Continued from Page 14*

Doug and Dave were funded under a UK aid grant. Mike, as a volunteer, lived on a miniscule local wage, while I was being paid for by Australia, under AusAid. It should be noted that entry into the school was highly prized, as an Able Seaman could earn nearly the same as a Cabinet Minister. Tuvalu used Australian dollars as its currency.

To help me in the office, I had a fierce and formidable Storekeeper, a Gilbertese lady of impressive proportions, who doled out the stores as if she was paying for them out of her own pocket. She was married to the Coxswain, who ran the *Taikoo Nui*, an old Hong Kong harbour launch, drove our 18ft open “tinny”, trained the boys in outboard motor use – and woe betide anyone who messed with his fleet. My secretary was a charming young lady who had to teach me the ways of the Tuvalu Public Service and where the funds came from to run the establishment. The short answer was Australia funded the school but, as I had never had to devise, run and implement a budget before, she quickly became my right-hand woman. We “wombed” our way through year one, thanks to her tuition and my predecessor’s diligence.

Where did our students, aka “the boys”, come from? In short, from all over Tuvalu, from Nanumea in the north to Nuilakita in the south. The only means of transport, from island to island was a small, aged, ex-Solomon Islands Colony cargo passenger vessel, “generously” gifted by the British Government as a farewell present to Tuvalu upon their independence six years



previously. Beggars can’t be choosers, so the MV *Nivanga* (pictured left) plodded up and down the sea lanes connecting the outer islands with Funafuti on a monthly schedule, except for a six-week break annually, when she went to Suva for maintenance. It was upon this mighty vessel that the school’s Medical Officer, the English teacher and myself embarked. Radio Tuvalu, which broadcast four hours a day, would announce that

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# NEWSLETTER FEATURES

*Continued from Page 15*

eligible young men should register with their island secretary. The outer islands were so unspoilt, it was as if time had stopped still and their lives had not been affected by colonisation. Traditional housing with a central “maneapa” (meetinghouse/ community centre) was the norm, with the palm-sheltered village streets immaculately groomed. The only exceptions were the Secretary’s house, the school and the shed for the tractor and trailer, which was the only form of mechanised transport.

There were three criteria for joining the school: being between 18 and 23, having sufficient knowledge of English to be teachable, and not having a criminal record. This is where my offsidars, Vili and Siliga came in. They were both old enough to know most of the population of Tuvalu, one having been at the birth of the boys’ parents and grandparents and the other having taught the same. Between them they quickly weeded out the over age, the under age, the “bad” boys and the under educated. The simple English language exam was then undertaken in the island school room, with their relatives peering through the open windows. And so, over the course of a couple of weeks, we recruited another year’s intake. Barbara came with me on the last recruitment drive. She was less than impressed with the accommodation on board *Nivanga* – the Queen Mary it was not. And so we returned to the Amatuku and the daily routine.

What did life on a tiny coral atoll look like? What was the routine? Where did we shop, grow food, socialise, relax or take a break? *All will be revealed in part two of this article, which will be published in the March issue of the Newsletter.* **John Hill is the Convener of History A.**

20 years later and all of these things fit in your pocket.



**BE GRATEFUL THAT NO MATTER HOW MUCH CHOCOLATE YOU EAT, YOUR EARRINGS WILL STILL FIT.**

We found them like this and nobody knows what they've been up to...



## ANAGRAMS

**Dormitory** Dirty room  
**Election results** Lies, let's recount  
**Snooze alarms** Alas, no more Z's  
**A decimal point** I'm a dot in place  
**Presbyterian** Best in prayer

stop killing  
Ducks  
to make  
Duck tape



IF "Plan A"  
Didn't Work.  
The alphabet has  
25 more letters!  
Stay Cool.





# NEWSLETTER FEATURES

## Have camera ... will travel

STEVE Subritzky has been keeping fellow members of U3A Tauranga entertained for some years now with accounts of his travels. His destinations have ranged from the tropics to Antarctica and just this year he completed an 11,000-mile (17,700km) road trip across 30 US states and into eastern Canada, as well as a trek around Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, India and Nepal including, of course, taking a look at Mount Everest. He diligently records his travels in a digital diary as well as acquiring a prolific collection of photographs.

If you would like to share Steve's adventures, you can do so free of charge on his website [www.subritzky.info](http://www.subritzky.info) or at <https://www.subritzky.info/home/my-travels>

A few of the many pictures Steve took on this year's travels are featured here:







# Enthusiastic group is flying high

OUR **International Affairs** group (pictured) saluted the approach of Christmas 2024 amid the wings and tailfins of Tauranga's celebrated Classic Flyers Aviation Museum.

"We were privileged to be surrounded by the fine old planes, expertly curated by the Classic Flyers team," says Convener Ian Morrison, adding that the gathering was a fitting finale for a year in which the group had consistently aimed high.

"For most of the last half decade we've linked-up regularly via Zoom with distinguished guest speakers, drawn primarily from New Zealand's universities. But we've recently extended our reach to include guests from far beyond our shores – including, notably, Anand Menon, Director of the think tank UK in a Changing Europe, and Professor of European Politics and Foreign Affairs at King's College, London.

"This eminent scholar, with a high profile in the UK media, seems to have thoroughly enjoyed chatting to a bunch of ageing New Zealanders about British and European politics, so much so that he joined us again a few weeks later for a follow-up talk, which proved equally enlightening.

"Another very welcome overseas guest was the Paris-based UK writer and political commentator, Samantha de Bendern (*pictured right*), who had just returned from a visit to embattled Ukraine. A further notable guest was Professor Jacques Rupnik, Research Director at Sciences Po, France's leading institute for political studies, who offered a highly informed and nuanced account of the rise of Far Right parties across Europe," Ian adds.

*Continued on Page 19*



Stay up to date with the online Handbook at [U3A-Tauranga-Handbook.pdf](#)

## GROUP NEWS

*Continued from Page 18*

More recently, the International Affairs group has held its second “Transpacific Conversation”, linking up with members’ friends in the United States, to discuss the outcome of November’s presidential election.

“Donald Trump’s pending return to the Oval Office has also been the subject of a very thoughtful session led by Dr Paul Buchanan, the international relations, defence and security analyst, who is a familiar presence on New Zealand’s media and who is also a frequent and respected guest at our meetings.

“With war, disorders and uncertainty apparently ricocheting across our planet, it seems more important than ever to be able to draw on truly expert opinion to help us understand what’s going on. Our online sessions are proving invaluable in this respect.

“But it’s also good to have the occasional get together ‘in the flesh’, to just relax and chat. Our gathering at Classic Flyers was our first non-Zoom event for some time but certainly won’t be our last,” says Ian.

International Affairs is open to new members. For further information, please contact Ian at [jottings@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jottings@xtra.co.nz) [Return to Page 2 index](#)



**HISTORY MAKERS:** History A, who study British history, and History B, who specialise in European history, got together as usual for their joint year-end meeting on Wednesday, 11 December. They heard a lively talk from History A Convener John Hill on his experience of living in Tuvalu, before enjoying a finger-food buffet lunch at Bethlehem Shores retirement village.





*Jean Garmonsway was presented with a Luxe Cinema voucher by the members of Shakespeare A at a Christmas lunch on 9 December, in appreciation of her work on behalf of the group. Jean will be handing over the role of Convener to Neil Murphy when the group resume in February.*

# Year goes from Bard to better

The **Shakespeare A** group continues to bring together those with a passion for the Bard's works, delving into the plays, exploring his life and times, and fostering a sense of community through lively discussions and social gatherings.

The year kicked off in February with a much-anticipated Pot Luck Lunch, where members gathered to share delicious homemade dishes and catch up after the holiday break. As always, the social aspect of the group was as important as the academic, providing an opportunity for long-time members and newcomers alike to bond over food and fellowship. Conversation flowed freely, with everyone excited to dive back into the world of Shakespeare.

One of the standout events of the year was a visit to Auckland Central Library, where members had the rare opportunity to meet with the Rare Books Conservators and view some of the most treasured works in the library's collection. The highlight of the day was a private viewing of Shakespeare's *First Folio*, printed in 1623. But this surprise outing turned into an extraordinary experience when members discovered that not only the *First Folio*, but also the *Second*, *Third*, and *Fourth Folios* (published between 1632 and 1685), were on display for them to examine. It was a rare opportunity to see the progression of Shakespeare's works in print and how his legacy was preserved over time. The library also brought out additional rare volumes for the group to

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## GROUP NEWS

*Continued from Page 20*

admire, including a first edition of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and two exceedingly rare books by the visionary poet and artist William Blake. These treasures provided a fascinating glimpse into the literary history of the time.

In another exciting development, Shakespeare A collaborated with the **Shakespeare Zoom** group for a special presentation by Renee Orr, one of the Rare Books Conservators at Auckland Central Library. Renee gave an engaging talk on several prized volumes dating from the Tudor period, some of which are crucial to understanding the literary and historical backdrop of Shakespeare's plays. Especially as one of the plays we were studying was *Henry VIII*.

Among the books discussed were Edward Whitchurch's *The Byble in Englyshe* (1541), Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), and Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587). Holinshed's *Chronicles* is of particular interest to Shakespeare enthusiasts, as it is believed to have been a key source for many of Shakespeare's history plays.

During the year, the group focused its study on two plays: *Measure for Measure* and *Henry VIII*. While it might seem that two plays over the course of the year is a relatively small number, the group's approach is one of deep engagement, often stopping DVDs mid-scene for lively discussion. Whenever a member brings up a point of interest or relates an observation, the conversation can take on a life of its own, extending the study time considerably. This thoughtful, reflective pace allows members to really engage with the text in a meaningful way.

The group's combination of scholarly study and social gatherings continues to foster a vibrant community of Shakespeare lovers, united in their passion for one of the world's greatest playwrights. Although Shakespeare A currently has no vacancies, you can apply to join a waiting list. Shakespeare Zoom, meanwhile, is open to new members who enjoy meeting exclusively online. See the Handbook for contact details.

*Jean Garmonsway*

### COORDINATORS' REPORT compiled by Margaret Marsh

#### TAURANGA

**New Group:** Yoga 2. Co-conveners: Catherine Geeves, 021 415 660 and Jan Morrison, 027 242 1869. Tutor: Jess MacMillan, teaching Hatha Yoga Venue, Baden Powell Centre, 46 Harrisfield Drive, Hairini. Meetings: Weekly on Tuesdays, 9.30-10.30 am. Cost: \$7 for venue and tutor.

**Groups seeking new members:** Buildings & Cities, Camera Club, Current Events D, Festival & Foreign Films, Opera Appreciation.

**Groups closed:** Apple Mac Support, Current Events B, Te Reo Maori.

**Groups in Recess:** Opera Appreciation will re-commence in February. French Conversation 2.

**Change of Convenor:** Festival & Foreign Films: The temporary Convener is John Russell, 07 562 3467. History of NZ: The new Convener is Mary Elders, 027 143 9867. Shakespeare A: The new Convener is Neil Murphy, 021 117 7001.

**Change of group information:** The Camera Club will meet at The Vines Village Theatre on the first Monday of the month, 9.45am–12 noon.

#### KATIKATI

**Suggested new group:** Speakers Group.

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# Scientists put brains to the test

THE final meeting of **Science 1** for the year was held in December. The group met at Robin's home for a TED talk introduced by Marc, titled *A Brain Implant that Turns Thoughts into Text*. This was followed by a quiz relating to physiology, biology and chemistry topics.

The photo shows members of the group deep in thought and, discussing the quiz questions.

After the meeting, we made our way to Thai Thani in Papamoa for a lovely lunch – a nice finish to the year.

The Science group has been meeting for about 12 years now and we are all ageing gracefully! A couple of new people have joined the group this year and we are open to having one or two more members. It would be advantageous to have some knowledge of science, as we all contribute to the meetings with prepared talks with or without PowerPoint, activities, relevant news topics, or talks about scientists and their work. Contact details are in the Handbook.

Our group meets once a month in members' homes, where we have a cup of tea or coffee and time for interaction before the meeting starts. We are looking forward to getting together again in February.

**Vivienne Mills, Convener**



## GREAT HOLIDAY READS

It's that time of year when we ask our book lovers' groups to tell us about great reads they enjoyed and which they recommend. Once again, they responded magnificently.

### CAFÉ BOOK LOVERS 3

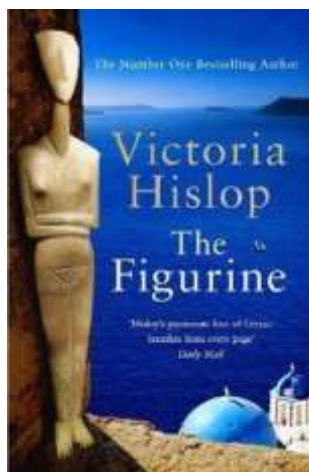
AT OUR last meeting of the year in November, we discussed special books from our lives. These were not just books read in the past year, but also those that have stayed with us over time. We found that people's ideas about summer reading differed greatly. What is a light read for some is not for others! We hope this list, written by people in our book club, gives some useful ideas to explore for summer reading. While each of the books below is fiction, its context and characters show how authors use intriguing research to set the scene.

#### ***The Son In Law* (2013) by Charity Norman**

This is a compelling, moving and ultimately optimistic story of one man who will do almost anything to be reunited with his children – and the grandparents who are determined to stop him.

#### ***Pet* (2023) by Catherine Chidgey**

This is a page-turning summer read. It is set in a school but about so much more, with good character portrayal of both adults and children. Who is to blame when things go missing?



#### ***The Figurine* (2023) by Victoria Hislop**

This is a well-researched novel, which explores ancient Greek artefacts and widespread looting from archaeological digs. The story is told through the eyes of a young woman who has inherited an apartment in Athens from her grandparents.

#### ***The Land of the Lost* (1902) by William Satchell**

This novel gives an idea of life on the kauri gum fields of Northland in bygone times. There is a love story here, while another can be found in *The Greenstone Door* by the same author. The latter novel is set after the Treaty of Waitangi and on into what are sometimes called the great New Zealand wars (or Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa).

#### ***A Prisoner of Birth* (2008) by Jeffrey Archer**

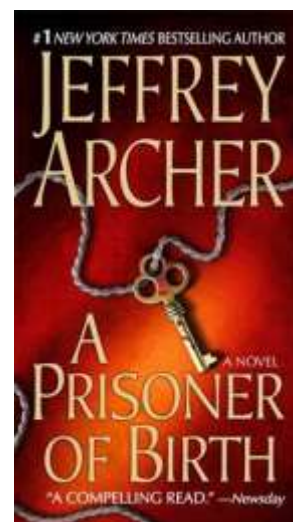
A working-class man is wrongly accused and convicted of the murder of his best friend on false evidence from the murderer. The story follows the trial and subsequent fight by the protagonist and his fiancé to clear his name. There are plenty of unexpected twists and turns.

#### ***Kataraina* (2024) by Becky Manawatu**

This is the sequel to her previous novel *Aue*. It gives a back story for Aunty Kat, the Te Au whanau and their ancestral land. Like *Aue*, it is tragic but also ultimately hopeful. Reading *Aue* before *Kataraina* is recommended because the context is important.

#### ***A Death in Cornwall* (2024) by Daniel Silva**

This is the latest in his long line of spy thrillers featuring Gabriel Allon. This is one of his best, as it's less violent than many of his previous ones.







## GREAT HOLIDAY READS

### ***The Dictionary of Lost Words* (2020) by Pip Williams**

The book covers the origins and compiling of the first *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Told through the eyes of a fictional young woman, it weaves the fascinating history around the compiling of the OED. What words were seen as suitable – or left out? Williams' latest novel, *The Bookbinder of Jericho* (2023), tells the story of very different Identical twins who are both book binders at Oxford University Press at the beginning of World War 1.

### ***Black Beauty* (1877) by Anna Sewell**

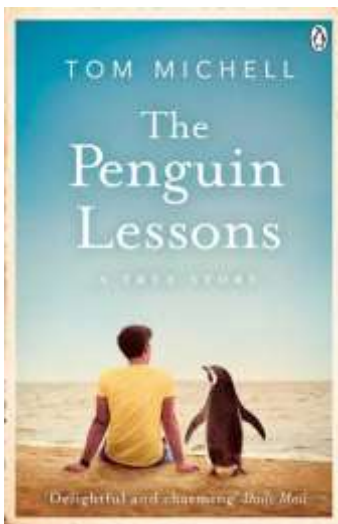
This novel is a children's book as well as a guide to horse husbandry, stable management and humane training practices for colts. A horse's life is traced through different owners and many difficulties but ends in good spirits. Reacquaint yourself with a classic book, set in slower times, reminding us of the loyalty and devotion of our animal friends.

### ***Brooklyn* (2009) by Colm Tóibín**

In this historical novel, a young working-class Irish woman immigrates alone to Brooklyn, New York, in the 1950s. She works hard and marries an Italian, but is still connected with her home country. In the sequel, *Long Island* (2024), the same young woman leaves her Italian family to return to Ireland, but trying to pick up her lost life with an old flame turns out to be more complicated than she had anticipated.

***Compiled by Lise Claiborne, Convener***

## CAFÉ BOOK LOVERS 1



### ***The Penguin Lessons* by Tom Mitchell**

Everyone loved this true little story about a South American penguin befriending a teacher and the lessons learnt. A film due to be released in 2024, may be already out or on the way.

### ***The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese**

This is a long read but most of us found it quite enlightening. Set in the beautiful state of Kerala, India, it is the story of a family, spanning three generations. An Oprah Book Club winner. Magnificent.

### ***Go As a River* by Shelley Read**

Another generational family story set among the beauty and wilderness of the Colorado mountains. Unforgettable and deeply moving.

### ***The Women* by Kristin Hannah**

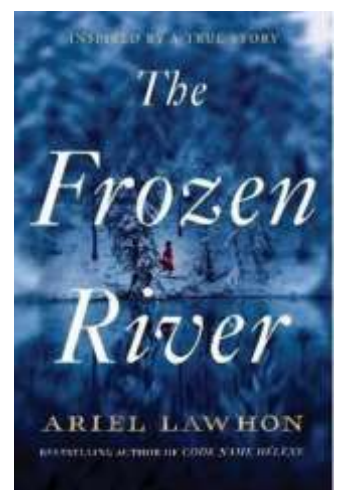
Unforgettable story of a combat nurse serving on the front line in the Vietnamese War and the trauma and heartbreak experienced.

### ***The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon**

Set in the snowbound village on the Kennebec River in the US, a body is found entombed in the ice. This is a story of murder and mystery, but also a story based on true events in the remarkable life of a midwife, Martha Ballard, in the 18th Century.

### ***Mr Pip* by Lloyd Jones**

This book, by a New Zealand author, is based in the 1990s on a true story about Matilda, a 13-year-old living in war-torn Bougainville. She is

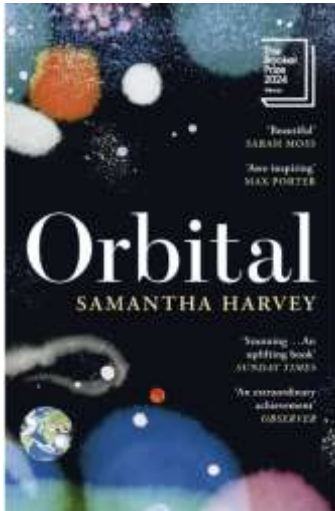




# GREAT HOLIDAY READS

influenced by Mr Watts, who bases his teaching on *Great Expectations*, but she struggles to make sense of her life among the killing and mayhem. Mixed reviews but a good read and an interesting and unexpected final chapter. **Pat Goldstiver, Convener**

## BOOK LOVERS 1



First on our list will have to be this year's Booker Prize winner, ***Orbital* by Samantha Harvey.**

A fascinating small book about the six people in the International Space Station orbiting Earth. The 16 chapters are the 16 orbits that happen over the 24-hour period. Beautifully written and quite lyrical.

Also recommended, ***Home Truths* by Charity Norman, *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon, *Water* by John Boyne** as well as his following book, ***Earth*.**

Final recommendation would be ***Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese**, set in Southern India. This book is currently being shared and read by our members. **Irene Clothier, Convener**

## BOOK LOVERS 3

***The Hidden Girl* by Lucinda Riley; *The Nine Lives of Kitty K* by Margaret Mills; *Revolutionary Road* by Richard Yates (set in America in 1950s, a very good story); *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* by Claire Tomalin (biography, an academic study with lots of footnotes and bibliographies, etc); *What Are You Doing Here?* by Baroness Floella Benjamin (autobiography); *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr; *The Horse Dancer* by Jojo Moyes (636 pages, enjoyed every one!); *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver; *Heart of Coal* by Jenny Patrick; *Still Life at Eighty* by Abigail Thomas; *The Long Call* by Ann Cleeves.** Happy reading, everyone!

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**Vivienne Gaudin, Convener**







# Treat yourself to a Fat Rascal

WITH a Yorkshire origin, Fat Rascals are biscuits which come in various shapes and sizes. First documented in the early 18th Century, they were originally a form of tea cake, containing butter and cream.

They could easily be baked in a covered pan among the ashes of a peat fire.

Mentioned by Charles Dickens, they could have been a means of using leftover pastry, sprinkled with currants and rolled into flat cakes before baking. Alternatively known as turf cakes, the recipe used plain flour, baking powder, butter and currants.

If you have ever visited Yorkshire, and particularly the town of Harrogate in the north, you will probably be familiar with its most famous tea shop, Betty's. That is where a widely known version of the Fat Rascal was introduced in 1983.

It had now become a plump, fruity scone with a face made from cherries and almonds. It quickly became Betty's best-known and best-selling bakery product, selling over 350,000 in a year.

Betty's tea rooms were, interestingly, not established by a Betty but by one Frederick Belmont, an immigrant from Switzerland. He had been travelling all over Europe, honing his confectionery and patisserie skills, and arrived in the UK having lost the address of his destination.

All he remembered was that it was near Bradford. A stranger showed him the right train to take to get up to Yorkshire and his adventure began. He opened his first tearoom in Harrogate in 1919.



*Betty's Tea Rooms in Harrogate (left) and some tempting Fat Rascals, seen through the shop window (above).*

Stay up to date with the latest information at [www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](http://www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz)





## How to make your Fat Rascals

### Ingredients

100g butter; 250g plain flour; 75g currants; 50g mixed peel; 1 teaspoon baking powder; 75g caster sugar; 150ml sour cream; 1 egg, beaten.

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C. Grease a baking sheet.
2. Rub butter into flour until it resembles breadcrumbs.
3. Add rest of dry ingredients.
4. Add sour cream and mix to a stiff paste.
5. Roll out to one inch thickness and stamp out 3-inch rounds.
6. Arrange on baking tray and glaze with beaten egg.
7. Place two blanched almonds and half a glace cherry on top and flatten down.
8. Bake 15 to 20 minutes.
9. Store in an airtight tin. Will last upwards of four days – if you are able to wait that long!

You can look back at Carol's articles and recipes in previous issues of the Newsletter here: [Newsletters - U3A Tauranga Inc](#)

## YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS ... *More nostalgia from Margaret Marsh*



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## THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT U3A

**U3A Tauranga** offers a wide range of interest groups, some of which are based in Katikati. For more information regarding the Katikati groups contact Jenny or Allan Mathews at [katikaticontact@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](mailto:katikaticontact@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz). Members are welcome to apply to join any of our groups, full details of which are regularly updated in the online Handbook. Just click on the link on our website [www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](http://www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz). Members are also welcome to attend General Meetings in both Tauranga and Katikati. **If you wish to become a member of U3A Tauranga**, you can complete the online application at [Application Form | U3A Tauranga \(infoodle.com\)](#).

## Newsletter

**Next issue: Mar-Apr 2025** Deadline for material is 24 February. We welcome your articles at [newsletter@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](mailto:newsletter@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz)