

Newsletter July-September 2021



Meeting Arrangements



Monthly Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the Month at 2.00pm

at Cloudy Bay Funeral Services, Boyce Street, Blenheim Please enter through the main doors from the carpark, not off Boyce Street.

Monthly Meeting Dates and Speakers

August 9 Margaret Western, Charlotte Wood, Refugee

Resettlement

September 13 Cressida Bishop, Millennium Art Gallery

October 11 Steve Vallance, Johns Kitchen

Afternoon Tea Roster

August 9 Play Reading Group 2

September 13 Poetry Appreciation Group

October 11 Photography Group

Committee

President	Gwyneth Lowe	578 8878
Vice President/Editor	Helen Hannay	578 1574
Secretary	Paul Stanley	579 2521
Treasurer	Angus Welsh	577 9114
Catering	Jackie Hall	579 3355
Historian	Jacqui Buttle	579 4821
New Members	Lyn Coates	578 5273
Speakers	John Craighead	578 7359
Groups Co-ordinator	Ann Moore	927 3754

Honours Board - Life Members Doug Stafford, Jacqui Buttle, Charles Riley, Ann MacDonald, Murray MacDonald, Lindsay Moir.

President's Report

Kia ora, Greetings to you all

A golden Marlborough morning after days of grey gloom - sun coming through the last of the leaves on the trees which all light up beautifully at this time of year - each making their own statement.



Into June and approaching the shortest day but U3A keeps bowling along with increasing numbers of guests and new members - it is great to have so many interesting groups to belong to, interests to share and friendships to foster.

This year's New Zealand Garden Bird Survey run by Landcare Research looks like fun. Paul has emailed information to all members with internet access and others who would like to participate can contact him or myself for details.



A birdbath outside my kitchen window provides endless entertainment and it is fascinating to watch the different species interacting - big birds bathe first but then the little ones "gang up" and cavort like kids in a swimming hole.

We are making good progress with tracking outstanding subs and leaders are assisting in this with follow ups at group gatherings. The aim is to have an up-to-date membership list so no-one misses out on communications - be they email or mail outs.

There are still a lot of name tags floating around looking for owners - if you are not a regular at monthly meetings perhaps conveners can collect on your behalf.

Keep well, keep warm, keep smiling. "A smile costs nothing but gives the world".

Best wishes to all Gwyneth



Notice of 2021 AGM



Notice is given that the

Annual General Meeting of Marlborough U3A

will be held on

Monday October 11 at 2pm

at the Cloudy Bay Funeral Services premises

Boyce Street, Blenheim

All members are encouraged to attend



Club Notes

Thank you to all who have now paid your annual subscription. At only \$10 per annum this is one of the lowest rates among U3A groups in NZ and we feel is very good value.



A reminder when paying by direct credit the bank deposit number is: ANZ 010 598 0033084 01

Please ensure you include your name when making payments by internet banking.

Don't forget participation in our Interest Groups is only open to Financial Members of Marlborough U3A.



Our deepest sympathy to members who have lost dear ones during the year. Please don't hesitate to reach out for support if you are feeling down. You are not alone.

Get well wishes to all our members who are not feeling well or are in hospital. We hope you will soon be feeling better and back with us again before very long.



Meed a Ride?



If you are driving to the monthly meetings or to any of your groups, please check if anyone you know needs a ride. Some members are struggling to get to meetings because of health or transport

difficulties and it would be so kind if you could help (and kinder to the environment of course).

92 members and visitors attended the **April** meeting and were entertained firstly by Stella Wadsworth, who gave an entertaining account of her involvement with U3A Marlborough since 2004, starting with her attempts to join courses in Writing and Poetry. She has been an enthusiastic member of multiple groups since then, loving the personal interactions with the different members of each. Stella is currently a member of 11 separate groups.

Paul Stanley filled in the remaining time before tea with a vivid illustration of the size of the container ship Ever Given which had recently blocked the Suez Canal by showing an image of it superimposed - to scale - on SH6, extending from the Boyce St/ Nelson St roundabout to past Countdown.

Guest Speaker:



David Aires, the River Operations Engineer from MDC, gave a most informative presentation on the proposed Wairau River Regional Park, extending from the Waihopai River confluence to past Spring Creek.

He explained how the Council or the Crown own most of the land between the stopbanks

- the 'Floodway Reserve' - and how that land could be used for multiple purposes without interfering with the main aim.

A very interesting map from 1859 showed about 1/3 of the river flow of the Wairau flowing out of the main stream at what is now Condor's Bend and joining the Opaoa River as it flowed through Blenheim; the land between the two river channels was a large island: Fox's Island.

In times of flood, the ancient Opaoa was a major contributor to the flooding of 'The Beaver' and the large rock-reinforced groyne at

Condor's Bend was crucial to reducing the risk (later major works to further reduce the risk were the creation of 'The Diversion' in 1965, and Taylor Dam at about the same time - each the largest such feature in NZ). There are now 180 km of stopbanks in the area altogether,



and a clever feature where the diversion leaves the river at Tua Marina by having an erodible bank separating that flow from the main river flow (the main river needs to maintain a fairly high flow in normal times to prevent deposit of suspended sediments if the flow is too slow). In time of flood the separating bank is designed to wash away and allow a much higher proportion of the total flow to go down the diversion and straight out to sea.

The emphasis now is on preserving the special nature of this part of the Wairau River, as one of the major examples of a braided river left in the country, without exacerbating the flood risk. That entails:

- ⇒ preserving the stopbanks from damage caused by overenthusiastic 4WD drivers;
- ⇒ planting natives and valuable exotic wood species in suitable areas to reduce the incidence of weeds;
- ensuring flat areas are planted with low growth crops which would not impede the flow rates if the river spread beyond its natural banks in flood, and
- ⇒ discouraging use of the land for dumping the latter an ongoing battle!

All of those aims are compatible with, and potentially enhanced by, turning the area into a Regional Park, as has already been done successfully at Waimakariri, Kaitoke and Ashley Rivers, among others.



The **May** meeting saw 98 members and visitors attending another entertaining meeting.

Our first speaker, Steve Thornton, gave a brief resume of his early teaching career - where his first job was at the most expensive private school in the world: Millfield Independent School in Somerset (current fees £14,000,per term!) - where he was teaching technical subjects to pupils from a totally different social background from himself.

Skating over the intervening 50 years to the present, where now 'retired' he and his wife Jenny are working as volunteers tutoring RSE workers. He said that the experience of the past three years have been among the very best of his career in education, with well-mannered and self-disciplined students who really want to learn so as to better themselves and their communities back home.

The terms of the RSE scheme include free provision of this training under the Vakameasina (which translates as 'Treasures we carry together') scheme funded by the NZ Aid Programme.

The workers hail from Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Most of his trainees come from Vanuatu which has a population of 300,000 , many of them living in isolated communities on some of the 80+ islands, where few have any electricity, safe drinking water, or sanitation and most of the houses have woven vine walls, roofs thatched with leaves and dirt floors

Education is also very limited and the whole situation is complicated by the existence of 105 separate languages! There are three main common languages - Bis-Lama, French and English - which means that for many of the workers English may be their fourth language. Steve sprinkled a few Bis-Lama expressions in with his talk: the one he is most used to hearing in "Plis talem moa slo" (Please can you say that again, a bit slower.)

He brought his talk to an end with a quick run through what he teaches in his ten week 'building and plumbing' course which aims to train to the level where they can ably assist a skilled worker.

Some of the skills are learned by designing and building a model house, with properly framed walls, a corrugated roof, water collection from the roof and a pump powered by a solar panel to pump the water to a header tank. Steve had brought a nearly-finished model with him, which attracted a great deal of attention afterwards.



After afternoon tea our Guest Speaker, Larry Robbins, visiting from Auckland, gave an inspirational illustrated presentation about the work of 'Mercy Ships' - a faith-based charity he has been involved with both in an organisational role and as an on-board



volunteer for many years. They operate the world's largest non-government hospital ships, they are crewed almost entirely by volunteers, who not only are unpaid, but also pay for their own flights and for their board and lodging on board! The only paid staff are the security team, who are all ex-Ghurkhas.

The current ship - Africa Mercy - is a converted Danish ferry with a



crew of 450 consisting of the Captain and key mariners, surgeons, dentists, nurses, physiotherapists, and the support staff needed to look after all those numbers. The ship has five operating theatres, 80+ ward beds, the ability to set up dental surgeries ashore and top-class technology to support their work. She is to be joined later this

year by a brand-new purpose-built ship, the Global Mercy, which is much bigger and better equipped and will take over entirely when Africa Mercy reaches the end of her useful life (she's already 40 years old).

Their work is focused on the coastal states of West Africa, where many of the world's poorest nations are concentrated, with virtually non-existent health facilities. Over 30% of the world's preventable deaths occur because of the inability to access timely health-care, and they are concentrated in that region.

The modus operandi is to send an advanced team to the chosen country a year in advance and negotiate the terms of the visit. Key non-negotiable terms are that treatment is to be available to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, wealth and social status and that the ship's medical teams will be the sole determiners of who gets treated. When the ship arrives in port - normally for a ninemonth stay - potential patients are assessed and booked in for

treatment, starting with those who will need the longest recovery times on board.



Much of the work is orthopaedic and or plastic surgery, with a special emphasis on treatment of deformities of the face and jaw - the Chief Surgeon is an American who is a world-leader in that field and has been with the organisation for many years: he works on board for about seven months every year, then goes back to the States for a brief respite and to do enough

private work to fund his next stint!

Larry's talk included details of some of his personal experiences on

board, with before-and-after pictures of some of the patients who had been treated. Many of the 'befores' were highly gruesome examples of what can happen when conditions get left untreated for years; the 'afters' showed people who had been given their lives back. He finished with pictures of the graduation party for a group of women who had been aboard towards the end of the period for treatment for



child-birth related conditions which had left some of them in pain and doubly-incontinent for decades. Treated at the end of the period because the treatment was relatively simple and recovery fast, the graduation party showed them all with their new dresses and hats provided at the end of the treatment and huge smiles - a fitting end for a very effective presentation which left few dry eyes in the audience.



We had said in advance that we would make a donation to Mercy Ships based on what was collected at tea-time; afterwards the Treasurer and Secretary were almost besieged by people wanting to top up their contributions. Our donation ended up as \$540!

The meeting was deemed to be one of the most informative and stimulating ones we have held.

Paul Stanley, Secretary

From Your Catering Co-Coordinator



We have now had several afternoon tea responsibilities in our new premises and I just wanted to thank those participants for their enthusiasm and willingness to be of service. Mathematically each group is only going to get a turn approximately once every three and three quarter years, a comforting fact to store away.

I remember pointing out that serving afternoon tea to your fellow U3A members was one of the most important things you could do for them and I am so delighted to be involved with people doing this with such a spirit of endeavour. It can be quite daunting for some to be involved, just know whatever you can contribute is much appreciated. We are an ageing resource and we need to look out for each other.

Some things to bring to your attention:

- We ask for a gold coin donation to cover our supply costs and to make the contribution containers more visible they will be labelled.
- The "Boss" of the group on duty needs to familiarise themselves with "How The Dishwasher Works" by reading the instructions above it on the wall. Some of us do not have or use one but it is part of the wonderful kitchen technology available to us which we need to respect.
- Your group may decide to change personnel over at "half time" when it comes to restoring order again. This depends on the numbers you have available for duty of course.

To quote **Lord Baden Powell**: "We never fail when we do try to do our duty, we always fail when we neglect to do it".

So – having had nothing but total co operation from everyone involved so far it has made my new job a lot of fun, especially getting to know you, and thank you in anticipation of more delight with those to come.

Jackie Hall

Course Coordinator's Report

Greetings to you all

We all know that Covid-19 has been a terrible scourge around the entire world. However, here in little old NZ we have done better than most in controlling the disease. U3A members here have been able to get out more, and enjoy life by interacting and enjoying learning.

There was a another silver lining to this pandemic for U3A members in that the Great Courses organisation slashed 90% off many of its DVD lectures which allowed us to buy seven new programmes where we would normally only have been able to afford one or two.

Over the past year we have bought The Celtic World, From Monet to Van Gogh, Museum Masterpieces of the National Gallery, Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense Fiction, How Winston Churchill Changed the World and The Decisive Battles of World History combined with History's Great Military Blunders and the Lessons They Teach.

The first five of these courses have proved to be very successful and the participants have enjoyed learning more about things they are interested in. The Battles and Blunders course is starting later this month and I'm sure will prove to be just as popular.

Understanding Genetics has begun with a cosy group. There are many other DVD courses we have available in our filing cabinet. Please peruse the list in this newsletter to see if there's one you would like to participate in and let me know.

There has been a suggestion that we start up a small Chess group. Anyone who is interested in this please let me know.

I would like to thank all the conveners for organising the courses and the members who provide their homes for groups. Without your help we would not be able to deliver these interesting programmes to our members.

Mauruuru nui mo to tautoko (thank you for your support)!

Ann Moore Courses Coordinator <u>anncm09@gmail.com</u>)

Small Group Study Resources

U3A Marlborough has the following resources for our small groups. The DVD courses are usually seen as a series of lectures which can engender much discussion among members. Some are currently being used but others are available for new groups to start up. If you are interested in any please let our Course Coordinator, Ann Moore, know.

- ♦ 102 Classical Music DVDs
- ♦ European Art History
- Continents on the Move
- Foundations of Eastern Civilization
- ♦ Everyday Engineering
- ♦ Geological Wonders
- Masterpieces of the Imaginative Mind
- Masterworks of Early 20th Century Literature
- Maya to Aztec: Ancient Mesoamerica Revealed
- My Favourite Universe
- Renaissance Italy
- The American Civil War
- ♦ The Great ideas of Philosophy
- ♦ The Great Tours From Athens to Istanbul
- ♦ The Great Tours England, Scotland, Wales
- The Odyssey of Homer
- ♦ The Shakespeare Collection
- Understanding Genetics
- Voyage of Charles Darwin
- The Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense Fiction
- How Winston Churchill Changed the World
- Museum Masterpieces
- Monet to Van Gogh
- ♦ The Celtic World
- The Decisive Battles of World History combined with History's Great Military Blunders and the Lessons They Teach.



Interest Group Happenings



Current Issues Discussion Group

After a few stops and starts with Covid 19 the group is back to meeting monthly.

The guest speaker for April was Jane Vial talking abut Literacy Aotearoa in which she discussed the topic of "How can you get a driver's licence if you have literacy problems?" This is a bigger problem than most of us are aware of. Jane proved to be an excellent speaker.

Every year we try to have a meeting in one of our local towns. For our May gathering we travelled to Ward where we had a superb morning. We met in the Ward hall which has just been reopened after earthquake repairs, where we were hosted by Sally and Rob Peter and two other speakers who were farmers in the Flaxbourne area.

Much of the discussion was about the changing landscape and farming practices. It seems that most farmers are involved in conservation on their land. The new water scheme will be approved and in action in the next year or two.

We also heard that tourism is important in the area. The Peter family own Cape Campbell including the lighthouse. The cycle trail will soon come through Ward bringing more business to the town. We all know what has happened at Ranfurly and Middlemarch.

Ward is part of a Small Town Scheme supported by Marlborough District Council. The new Heritage Centre will be built on land next to the school and there is a plan for local walkways and pocket parks.

By the end of our visit we all understood the pride they have in their town and wider community and most of us ended the morning with lunch at the Flaxbourne Cafe.

Contributed by Lindsay Moir, Convener

Interest Group Happenings

The Secrets of Mystery and Suspense Writing Group



In the 3 sessions we have held so far, the history of this genre has been established with Edgar Allan Poe taking the honours as founder of the genre. We've looked at the roles of the detective, the criminal and the sidekick.

We have learnt that Miss Marple and Sherlock Holmes solved mysteries using structured deductive methods while others, such as Sam Spade and Phillip Marlowe, used brute force to bring down the villain.

From this basis our focus will be drawn outwards to the writers of varying ethnicities and nationalities, to gender influences and to the social norms and beliefs that lie behind the writing. Like no other genre, Mystery and Suspense reflects the changing attitudes to crime, politics, social justice and many other aspects of our lives. This series takes us on a journey through time to explore all of these.

We meet in Witherlea on the third Wednesday of each month at 10am. There is room for one or two more members so if you are interested please contact Jenni on 021 133 0582. We can provide a catch-up DVD to get you up to speed.

Contributed by Jenni Walker, Convener

Ukulele Group

We have a small enthusiastic group of ukulele players who enjoy their twice monthly sessions. Currently we meet at Maureen East's Hammerichs Road studio, next to her home, which is an ideal venue for the group. Our sessions include playing and singing a range of songs. If you enjoy a good "sing-song" and have a ukulele you will qualify for our group.

Contributed by Neville Lawson, Convener, 021 480 073.

Interest Group Happenings

Museum Masterpieces: The National Gallery London

Our U3A Group, of ten members, meets at 2pm, on the third Monday of each month at the home of Gloria and Bob Mitchell. We are treated to informative and interesting lectures by a delightful presenter, Professor Catherine B Scallen. We have room for another four members if anyone is interested. Please contact Wendy Cannan at 027 3483283 or email wendyrussellcannan@gmail.com if you wish to join us. At this stage we have completed 8 lectures out of 24.

The course serves as a history of painting in Western and Central Europe from the late medieval period to the start of the 20th century. We follow the sequence that the National Gallery recommends through the division of its spaces into four areas: the first for painting from 1250 to 1500, the second for 16th century painting, the third for 17th century painting, and the fourth for painting from the 18th century to the turn of the 20th century.

Last month we explored "The High Renaissance in Central Italy" and "Titian and his Venetian Contemporaries". This month we are viewing "Venetian Masters - Tintoretto and Veronese", and "Painting for the Courts, c.1515 - 1575".

To view some of the paintings we have looked at I suggest you Google <u>nationalgallery.org.uk</u> This delightful website includes "Highlights from the Collection".

Paintings we have already viewed include:

- Lecture 2 "The Wilton Diptych" English or French?
- Lecture 5 "Venus and Mars" Sandro Botticelli
- Lecture 5 "Baptism of Christ" Piers della Francesca
- Lecture 6 "Samson and Delilah" Andrea Mantegna
- Lecture 6 "The Doge Leonardo Loredan" Giovanni Bellini
- Lecture 7 "The Virgin of the Rocks" Leonardo Da Vinci
- Lecture 8 :Bacchus and Ariadne" Titian

Enjoy exploring and don't forget, we welcome up to four more members to our group.

Contributed by Wendy Cannan, Convener

Interest Groups and Contacts

Please get in touch with the listed Group Contact Person if you are interested in joining any of the following groups - they will advise you of any vacancies.

Armchair Travel: 4th Friday of each month at 10.00am. **Contact** is Wendy Cannan, 027 348 3283.

The Decisive Battles of World History combined with History's Great Military Blunders and the Lessons They Teach.

4th Thursday of each month at 10am. **Contact**: Angus Welsh, 577 9114

Books and Authors Group 1: 2nd Thursday of each month. **Contact** is Jackie Hall. 579 3355.

Book and Authors Group 2: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Wendy Cass, 578 9144. Vacancies

Card Making: 1st Thursday of the month at 10.00am. Contact is Gloria Mitchell, 577 7833. Vacancies

Classic Films Group 1: 4th Thursday of each month at 2.00pm. **Contact** is Bruce Dale, 578 9672.

Classic Films Group 2: 3rd Thursday of each month at 1.30pm. Contact is Murray MacDonald, 579 4844. Vacancies

Classical Music: 1st Monday of each month, at 10 a.m. Contact is Ann Moore. 9273754. Vacancies

Current Issues: 1st Tuesday of each month at 9.45am. **Contact** is Lindsay Moir, 578 5262.

Documentary Films: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 10.00am. **Contact** is Lindsay Moir, 578 5262. **Vacancies**

From Monet to Van Gogh: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2 pm. **Contact** is Marilyn Cowe, 022 648 8692.

Interest Groups and Contacts

Garden Group: 1st Friday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Jan Richardson 578 0989.

Understanding Genetics: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10am.

Contact is Paul Stanley, 5792521

Great Tours - England, Scotland & Wales: 2nd Wednesday of

each month at 2pm.

Contact is Gill Buttle, 578 4821.

Great Ideas of Philosophy: 4th Thursday of each month at 2.pm. **Contact** is Paul Stanley, 579 2521.

History: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Margaret Fairhall, 578 2507.

Life Writing: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Lis Davys, 579 3167.

Luncheon Plus: 2nd Thursday of each month at 11.30am.

Contact is Rhondda Tannock, 021 113 6185.

Mah-jong Group: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at

2.00pm.

Contact is Evan Wood, 578 2093, evin42@hotmail.com

Marlborough History: 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10.00am.

In Recess - a new Coordinator is required please.

Memory Lane Music: Last Thursday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is John Best, 578 0595.

Museum Masterpieces: 3rd Monday of each month at 2pm.

Contact is Wendy Cannan, 579 4946.

Play Reading Group 1: 4th Monday of each month at 9.30am.

Contact is Margaret Jarman, 578 8805.

Play Reading Group 2: 4th Tuesday of each month at 9.30am.

Contact is Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.

Interest Groups and Contacts

Poetry Appreciation: 2nd Friday of each month at 2.00pm.

Contact is Jan Poswillo, 578 9834 or 021 142 6931.

Photography: 1st Monday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Charles Riley, 578 0109.

Scrabble One: 1st Monday of each month at 2.00pm.

Contact is Pam Taylor, 578 8816.

Scrabble Two: 3rd Thursday of each month at 1.30pm.

Contact is Lorraine Jensen, 027 365 862.

Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense: 3rd Wednesday of each

month at 10 am.

Contact is Jenni Walker 021 133 0582.

The Celtic World: 1st Thursday of each month at 2pm.

Contact is Gloria Mitchell 577 7833.

The Odyssey: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Helen Hannay, 578 1574.

Ukulele: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 10.00am.

Contact is Neville Lawson, 021 480 073.

Water Colour Painting: 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at

9.30am.

Contact is Gavin Kerr, 572 7238.

Wine Appreciation 1: 3rd Friday of the month, usually at 11am.

Contact is Murray MacDonald, 579 4844. Vacancies

Wine Appreciation 2: Last Friday of each month at 11.30am.

Contact is Juliet Kirke, 578 0692.

Winston Churchill: 3rd Friday of each month at 10am.

Contact is Ann Moore 927 3754.

Writing for Grandchildren: 1st and 3rd Mondays at 9.45am.

Contact is Gladys Sloss, 578 3191.

Return Address:

8a Purkiss Street Springlands Blenheim 7201

