



# Mt Aspiring U3A

## *News Letter*

*August*

*2020*

*Number 27*

<b>Next Meeting</b>	Thursday August 27 1,45pm
<b>Venue</b>	St Johns Room 4 Link Way
<b>First Speaker</b>	Jenny Moss 'Skirt Tales The Sequel'
<b>Main Speaker</b>	Cassandra Treadwell ' Does International Aid Work?' An Empirical Analysis

### **Speaker Profiles**

**Jenny Moss** was part of the Wanaka Women's Suffrage Committee in 1993 that published the first 'Skirt Tales, 100 Stories of Woman in The Upper Clutha.' Recently a sequel to this book has been published by the same committee. This book has 80 stories of women in The Upper Clutha and continues to give us insight into the role women have played in developing the community we live in today.

### **Cassandra Treadwell**

Executive Director/CEO

Cassandra gained her masters in medical law and ethics from King's College, London University. She is a Fellow in Medical Law and Ethics at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney.

She spent a year in Argentina on a student exchange when she was 16. Cassandra worked at an orphanage and was confronted for the first time with third world poverty. This experience ignited her determination to work in overseas aid to make a sustainable difference to poverty. Cassandra gains so much from the people in the communities she works with. They teach her to be grateful for what she has got rather than complaining about what she has not got. They also love and live life.

Cassandra has four children: Mia, Tess, Tai, and Roko. They live in Wanaka, New Zealand where they all enjoy the outdoor lifestyle the country offers.

*Please note, because of Covid 19 Alert level 2 concerns, you will be notified if our August meeting needs to be cancelled. As offering afternoon tea may not be possible you might like to consider bringing your own water bottle. We will ask everyone to sign in.*

## PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS, AUGUST 2020

Kia Ora.

It was with considerable relief and not a little excitement that Mt Aspiring U3A were able to re-convene for our monthly meeting and AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July – a gap of some months since our last meeting in February. The minutes of the AGM are summarised elsewhere, but I am delighted to take over the role of President, and welcome Randolph Holst and Ian Hall on to the Committee. We thank Gaynor Corkery for the many and various roles she has filled over the last two years, and Helen Horner who stays on the Committee but hands over the role of Treasurer and Membership Secretary after most efficient service. At the meeting we presented to Richard Paxman a Ceremonial Gavel, made by Simon King: Richard, as our Founding President, addressed the long delays that some of us were experiencing in joining U3A by creating his own, based on his experiences in Auckland. His formula was to hold a monthly meeting with mini and major speakers, and encourage “Study Groups” to be formed with enthusiastic participants covering a breadth of subjects. We are grateful for his vision and enthusiasm in breathing life into it. How will it grow with a new team at the helm? Certainly we are different to the Upper Clutha U3A but not exclusive, and we encourage Wanaka and District Residents who would like to join both – some of our Study Groups have reached the end of their cycles, and will start again; others would welcome new members and ideas. We will follow Richard’s formula of having a mixture of local and external speakers, but we will use other formats to engage and expand our membership. We are grateful to St Johns for their support and use of their facilities; larger membership may require us to enquire elsewhere.

Those of you there to hear Chris Rudd speak on “Fake News” would have appreciated the advantages of attracting quality speakers on relevant topics. Ian Hall now has the remit of finding speakers for our meetings, and we are exploring ways of remunerating them for their visit to Wanaka. If you have suggestions for future potential speakers, please let Ian know.

Just when we thought that the remainder of 2020 was uncomplicated, SARS CoV2 coronavirus has re-emerged within a North Island community. Currently we are at Level 2 which restricts meeting size and requires “social distancing”, but we are hoping that, at least in the South Island, we will be able to resume life again after 26<sup>th</sup> August and hold our monthly meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Please be advised by your Study Group leaders whether the holding of group meetings will be affected. As residents in this “at-risk” community, do everything to observe sensible behaviour, and maintain personal safety.

Cheers,

Allan B MacLean

## **Our July Meeting**

Last month we held our AGM. Members have been circulated the AGM Minutes, Financial Report and Presidents Report. Full contact details for our new committee can be found at the end of this newsletter.



Richard Paxman was our inaugural Mount Aspiring U3A President when we began in May 2018. Richard had previously been a member of Pakuranga U3A so when he realised the Upper Clutha U3A had a very long waiting list he set about calling for those interested in starting up a second U3A group in Wanaka. Richard has served his two years as President and now in accordance with our constitution takes up the position as Immediate Past President.

Allan Maclean, our newly elected President thanked Richard for all his contribution to Mt Aspiring U3A as inaugural President and in recognition of this, presented him with a wooden gavel, mounted with a plaque.

## Our July Speaker

An address by Chris Rudd, University of Otago

Putting FAKE NEWS into a larger context. The question to be asked - is globalisation a threat to democracy?

It is an important part of our democracy that the media is free and independent: this gives us quality information that we can evaluate and trust, for example in relation to an election.

Journalism is a profession. During the 1990s we had the introduction of the internet and by 2000 interactive media was still controlled by news agencies and governments.

However, during 2003/4 we saw the rapid growth of social media - Facebook (1.6 billion daily users especially older people), YouTube, Twitter, Whats App, Instagram and Snapchat (the last two used primarily by young people). This was more a generational change than a life cycle one. News organisations now rely on social media content and the gate-keeping role of journalists is absent - they are no longer needed. Anyone can set up a social media site and with the personal expression of likes and dislikes, false information is created. Truth has become a popularity contest of likes and dislikes. There has been fake news spread about Covid19, inoculations, Hilary Clinton etc: it may or may not be deliberate; but it spreads rapidly ("gone viral").

A lot of people use Twitter (with just 240 characters) as their source of news. Many people allow social media sites to influence their thinking and or use media to suit and reinforce their existing beliefs and prejudices. Therefore, we see differing interpretations of the same statements. While we need social media to be democratic, it has in fact facilitated the spread of fake news. Globalisation has primed people to be more receptive to accepting fake news, especially the culturally and politically marginalised. Trump has mobilised the marginalised. The moderates are being isolated and perhaps not bothering to vote, therefore hollowing out of democracy.

There is no commercial value in quality information. Governments are now trying to control media: in seeking ways to regulate the multiple sources of news, Germany and France have introduced legislation that transfers power into government hands

In conclusion it is not so much social media that is the problem. It is how it is used.

Thankyou Barbara Lindsay (our new Newsletter Editor) for this summary of Chris Judd's talk.



### **Mt Aspiring U3A Study Group**

Please find attached the latest Study Guide Schedule. In Mount Aspiring U3A we are always on the lookout for new Study Groups. If you have an interest/ hobby/ area of expertise you may like to consider forming a new study group. Our study groups are all organised differently in terms as to how knowledge and skills are shared. You may for instance like to organise a series of workshop type meetings that may run only for a few sessions. If there are areas of study you would be interested in learning more about but are not currently on offer please let us know.

Allen Hogan is the new Study Group convenor. [ajhogan05@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:ajhogan05@yahoo.co.nz)

### **Members Contributions**

Richard Paxman

“There’s a very fine line between quantitative easing and monetizing the deficit.”

Sharon Zollner: Chief economist, ANZ Bank

Well, at last, there’s something we can all agree on.

## From The Editor

Kia ora

In Mount Aspiring U3A we like to share our learning experiences around so you will see changes in our new committee roles. Barbara Lindsay will be our next newsletter editor. We are a team and we work well to support each other.

'Whiria te tangata' 'Weave the people together.'

Nga mihi

Jenny

## Mt Aspiring U3A Committee and Contacts

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Ian Hall, Allen Hogan, Randolf Holst, Penny Hartley, Barbara Lindsay, Helen Horner, Allan Maclean, Jenny Moss

Absent John Binney      Photographer Richard Paxman