



Mt Aspiring U3A

Newsletter

November 2020

Number 30

Next Meeting	Thursday 26 November 2020 at 1.45 pm
Venue	St John meeting room, 4 Link Way
First Speaker	Jessica Eyers, 'The benefits of a Passive House'
Main Speaker	Robert Aitken, 'Consumers, Consumption and Caveats'

Speaker Profiles

Jessica Eyers, Sustainable Building Consultant and Architectural Designer, will explain what a Passive House is and the benefits for occupants and the environment.

Jessica has a master's degree in Environmental Architecture and is a Certified Passive House Designer. She and her husband completed the first strawbale certified Passive House outside of Europe. She is currently working on the first certified 'Passive Build' community building in Aotearoa - the new Luggate Community Centre.

Associate Professor **Robert Aitken**, Head of the Department of Marketing, University of Otago. He teaches consumer behaviour, advertising, branding, communications and media-related marketing issues. Currently his research focuses on two major areas: marketing to children and marketing in relation to sustainability and consumption.

Robert is also active in the community, with connections to Age Concern and Consumer. He was recently elected president of the Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy.

A Word from our President

Many of us were moved by the stories described by Cassandra Treadwell at our October meeting - the challenges to keep young African women from repeating the centuries old traditions of genital cutting, young brides, large families and almost inevitable poverty; replacing these through "education", not only through learning but by providing role-models and the glimpse of new horizons. If you would like to make a "Christmas gift" donation to support Cassandra, please visit her website: www.sotheycan.org

John and Jill Blennerhassett have invited us back to their "Olive Grove" in January (Thursday 21st) for a picnic and music festival with Allen Hogan and "Three's a Crowd". This event over the last two years has been blessed with wonderful summer weather, overlooking the lake and seduced by the jazz - but remember to bring your sand-fly protection. More details in the December Newsletter.

University life is not all about lectures (in theatres or via Zoom) or self-directed learning, and we are planning several field trips to broaden our knowledge. Ian Hall, and local historians Jenny and Steve Moss, will lead a coach trip up the Matukituki to Mt Aspiring Station - they will select a day for later summer and give plenty of warning in advance.

Mike Corkery will lead an expedition to find a once highly productive whisky still hidden in the Lammermoors; this is not just about tasting "moonshine" but visits country where those early Otago visitors along the "Dunstan Trail" came seeking their fortunes - we will post details.

Our November meeting is our last for 2020 in what has been an interrupted and sometimes frightening year; this meeting will provide intrigue and challenge. Details of our speakers are included elsewhere and we look forward to seeing you there.

Cheers,
Allan B MacLean

October's Speakers

Gorilla Encounter. Mike Elliot recounted his and Liz's four-day visit to Uganda. Having taken a flight from Entebbe in an 8-seater plane, a 4x4 drive, then a steep walk with guides, they were lucky enough to observe at close quarters families of gorillas in their natural forest habitat. The animals were not at all shy - the young ones were playing; the adult males were impressively large and muscular. There is a move to educate the local people to appreciate the gorillas and the benefits derived from visiting tourists.



At the end of his address Mike presented our President with a gavel and sound-board that he personally crafted from the wood of a 100-year old yew tree felled at Fork Farm, the Hunt family farm at Maungawera. In expressing his appreciation, Allan agreed that this must be passed on to successive Presidents of the Mt Aspiring U3A for their continuing use.

Does International Aid Work? In a most moving address, **Cassandra Treadwell** outlined the background to her setting up, twelve years ago, 'So They Can' - an organisation that aims to provide quality education to children living in poverty in East Africa. Since then money has been raised, schools built, local teachers trained, and goals met and refined. While education is core, emphasis is placed on the wellbeing of children, the empowerment of women, and community health and development - all within conditions laid down by local authorities.

On one of her trips to Kenya Cassandra visited a refuse site where orphaned children try to eke out a life while competing with pigs and vultures. Equally harrowing were stories of girls as young as nine being sold by their families as brides, enduring multiple pregnancies and being afforded no human rights: some of those who run away are supported as much as possible by So They Can. Education is seen as the only way to break the cycle: for the girls it offers a better life, for the families the knowledge that by working the girls can provide them with ongoing support.

Covid-19 has affected the programme and additional measures have been introduced to protect the students.

There are several ways that we as individuals can offer support to this organisation: to learn more refer to the website www.sotheycan.org



If you would like to read Cassandra's presentation on Google drive, contact John Binney who will give instructions as to accessing it. johnbinney@iinet.net.au

Study Groups

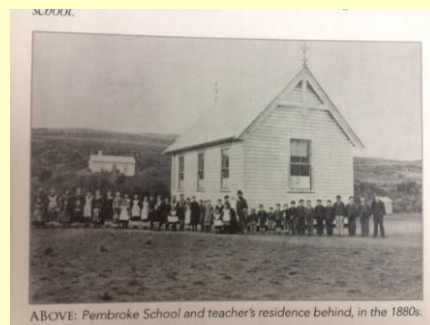
Local History Group 2

We are a small group looking at the local history of the Upper Clutha area.

There is room for a few more, and to bring these new members up to speed we could revisit the first three topics at the end of the series.

Our meetings will look at the development of Wanaka, Albert Town, Hawea, Luggate, Makarora, Cardrona, Matukituki and Tarras, as well as some early Maori history and explorers.

Convenor: Steve Moss steve151moss@gmail.com

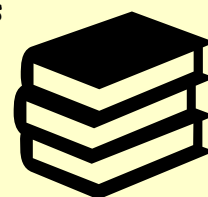



ABOVE: Pembroke School and teacher's residence behind, in the 1880s.

Book Group

The Book Group meets monthly, rotating our meetings around each other's homes. We each report on a book of any genre that we have read, be it a novel, non-fiction or text. The range always surprises, and we find it stimulates us to seek out an author or a genre that otherwise we would not read.

New members are most welcome - contact Barbara Lindsay lindsay_barb@extra.co.nz



	<p>Astronomy Study Group From left to right: Penny Hartley, Martin Unwin, Richard Paxman, John Binney (convenor), Beryl Wayatt and Brian Gilbert.</p> <p>At a recent meeting John gave a presentation on the fate of giant and super giant stars, for which we awarded him three halos!</p> <p><i>Photo: Sandra Binney</i></p>
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Our "Whisky Appreciation Group"

Allen Hogan and I have found 15 discerning, curious and otherwise thirsty members to meet somewhat erratically since February but to explore the facts and myths surrounding whisky. Some might suggest that the phenolic, disinfectant and medicinal properties of

"Laphroaig" have been superior to Trump's alternative of bleach and has kept us Corona-virus free over the "Lock-down" and winter.

We have studied the ingredients, barley, water (hard or soft), yeast and the mysteries of peat; the centuries-long tales of illicit stills and whisky smuggling; the interventions of the exciseman; the regulated production of malt whisky in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the approval given by Royalty. We have listened to the rise of powerful whisky Barons such as John (Johnnie) Walker, The Dewars, James Buchanan, the Haigs and Peter Mackie, and how blended whisky replaced brandy in the drawing rooms of the Victorians. We plotted their rise, and falls, the impact of war and taxes, of Temperance campaigns and American Prohibition. We visited Ireland, conducted by one of our group thoroughly versed in the ways of the Irish, of their potheen and their whiskey. Another member took us to post-Revolution (18th and not 21st Century) America with its Kentucky bourbon (Woodford Reserve, or alternatively, try Jim Beam) and the Tennessee Sour Mash eg Jack Daniels.

We are currently touring the Scottish Islands. We started with Islay and next week visit Arran and Jura; Skye and Orkney to follow before returning to firm ground at Campbelltown and descending to the Lowlands.

We are planning a visit in Central Otago to the site of a once illicit still that dates from the time of the gold rushes - let us know if you would like to visit, and when we re-start our next round, you can join our Group by contacting Allen Hogan at ajhogan05@yahoo.co.nz

Slainte

Allan MacLean

Notice Board

Our January 2021 meeting is to be replaced by a repeat of the successful jazz experience in the wonderful lakeside setting of Jill and John Blennerhassett's property at 280 Mt Aspiring Road. This will be held on **Thursday 21 January**.

The February meeting will be held in the St John meeting room on the usual fourth Thursday, **25 February 2021** at 1.45 pm.

It has been suggested that the **March 2021** meeting take the form of a day trip by coach to Mt Aspiring Station in the Matukituki. At the upcoming meeting your interest in joining in a trip of this type will be sought by a show of hands.

Your Committee is looking for a suitable person to undertake the task of Treasurer - this would not be onerous but requires a person with a good understanding of numbers. Please make contact with anyone on the Committee.

Members' Forum

Those of you who are garden lovers will be delighted that, having enjoyed the blossoms, daffodils etc, the roses are now starting their long flowering season. Wanaka seems to be the perfect environment for them.

Jacqueline du Pres was the first to make an appearance in my garden.



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Mt Aspiring U3A Committee and Contacts

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