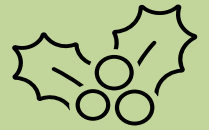




Mt Aspiring U3A



Newsletter



December 2020

Number 31

The Jazz Concert will replace the January 2021 meeting (see separate flier)

Next Meeting Thursday 25 February 2021 at 1.45 pm

Venue St John meeting room, 4 Link Way

December 2020: President's Thoughts for 2021

Many will look back on 2020 as a year of frustration, missed opportunities, threats to well-being and for an unfortunate few, the year when SARS-CoV-2 caused death and bereavement. We, in New Zealand, were fortunate compared to almost every other country in the World, where the coronavirus spread without check and many lives were threatened or taken. We did not suffer as our grandparents had done just over 100 years ago when the "Spanish" flu followed the soldiers home from Europe and by late 1918-early 1919 had caused 9000 deaths, up to half the number of young men and women who had been killed over the previous four years of World War II.

While plans for international travel have been put on hold, we have had opportunities and even encouragement to travel within our own borders again. During lock-down we have tackled DIY challenges and re-vitalised ideas that were otherwise sitting on the back-burners. When we were allowed out to mix and socialise again we fell upon Study Groups and our monthly U3A meetings with enthusiasm and almost insatiable curiosity - we embraced our fellow man and our U3A group was stronger for it.

It is almost inevitable that in 2021 when the vaccination becomes available and the borders are opened there will be an exodus from NZ as we stretch our wings to visit friends and family overseas. Remember that ageing immune systems may not respond to vaccination in quite the same way that younger people do. I don't want to be the person who makes you hesitate to go abroad in 2021, but recognise that we have an energetic group here who will provide you with friendly company and intellectual stimulus - tell your friends.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,
Allan B MacLean.

Last Month's Speakers

Jessica Eyres spoke about the benefits of passive houses, both to their occupants and to the environment. It is unfortunate that the New Zealand building code sets such a very low benchmark: so rather than being something for builders to aspire to, it should be seen as a base standard to improve on.

She referred to the YouTube clip 'Passive House in 90 Seconds'.

In addition to the savings in energy and the impact on the environment, passive housing offers huge health benefits to its occupants and as such its standards should be extended to community housing.

Factors contributing to an effective passive building include the following: good windows (triple glazing), thermal bridging (minimising weak junctions), form factor of building (a measure of compactness), reduced infiltration (no leaks), a heat recovery ventilation system, and adequate insulation.

With Jessica's involvement in the building of the new Luggate Hall, this will become the first passive community building registered in New Zealand.

Robert Aitken, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, University of Otago, spoke about his roles as Board Chair of the Consumer Organisation and Chair of Age Concern.

While it is not Government funded, the Consumer Organisation sees its role as reaching a new group of people and highlighting the important relationships between marketing and consumption. It is still carrying out product tests and these can be found on its website consumer.org.nz

Although we are conscious of 'buyer beware' and are covered by the Consumer Guarantees Act, we can all identify with the many false claims and misleading information put out by makers and sellers of products. We pay some of the highest prices in the world for products such as fuel and food.

Examples of misleading claims regarding product performance include sunscreens, the supermarket monopoly in New Zealand, Ribena, Air NZ (refunds vs credits), Airbnb, Nurofen, and extended warranties (Harvey Norman and Noel Leeming).

Some important issues have widened to become social and environmental issues eg free-range eggs.

In trying to get producers on board, Consumer supports the 'Consumer Trusted' badge, that fulfils a range of criteria.

Consumer also encourages people to check out their cheapest power option on 'Powerswitch' on the Consumer website.

'Built to Last' has been created as a measure of making a reasonable assessment of how long an item will last.

Study Groups

Science Group



The Science Group

Imagine a time when every household is self-sufficient in energy generation and storage, and discuss the difficult and tantalizing path towards that goal. *From left to right:* Geoff Tomkins (co-convenor), Peter Alderson, Piet Beukman, Ron Horner (co-convenor), Peter Wheen, Ellen Forch.

Photo: Richard Paxman

Book Group

There has been some interest shown in starting up a second Book Group to meet in the early evenings, a time to suit those with work or other commitments.

Contact Barbara Lindsay if you are interested lindsay_barb@xtra.co.nz

A review from the **Book Group:** 'JUGGLING' by Barbara Trapido

Barbara Trapido was born (1941) and educated in South Africa and went to live in London in 1963; she now lives in Oxford, UK. She has been a full-time writer since 1970, publishing seven novels; three were nominated for the Whitbread Prize. *Juggling* (1994) was a sequel to *Temples of Delight* (1990); the teenagers of the earlier book are now parents in *Juggling*. The book tends to follow the structure of a Shakespearean comedy - "All that tempest and treachery ... And how bravely the characters wisecracked as they fell through the air". This is a coming of age story; the key characters are Christina and her adoptive sister, Pam: they differ in appearance and personality. Christina is small, fair and "has an edge", while Pam is tall, dark with a beautiful voice. It was "not possible to quarrel with Pam whose sweetness neutralised discord" (a far more interesting way of saying that she was a good girl, I felt). Trapido cleverly uses contrasting adjectives to portray the two girls - Pam is always "pleasing and appealing", Christina always "stoking and provoking".

The girls meet two friends - also mismatched - Jago and Peter. Jago is tall, handsome, intelligent and a leader amongst his peers, an "arbiter of inclusion and exclusion". Peter, in contrast, exhibited a "quietude and muted emotional response" but was chosen as a friend by Jago. The book develops as the lives of the four intersect through to adulthood.

The theme of juggling is used by Trapido. In a concrete sense, it is used through Christina's childhood observation of, and meeting with, a juggler; later learning the skill of juggling herself. It also alludes to the Elizabethan meaning of juggle i.e. to play tricks, cheat or deceive. The characters all juggle the events of their lives, keeping the balls in the air in the manner of a Shakespearean comedy and Trapido herself, in the capacity of author, has taken on the role of a skilful juggler.

Walking Group

Some members of Jill's walking group (Lois, Jill and Marly) enjoyed a walk around the lagoon in AlbertTown recently ... while others were spotted walking that same day much further south (Georgie, Barbara and Margaret).



Notices

There is no meeting in December

The Jazz concert replaces the ordinary January meeting (see separate flier)

An Afternoon in the Country

Our March 2021 meeting will be on **Wednesday 24 March** (note the change from our usual meeting day) and we will take a trip to the historic Mount Aspiring Station. Your committee is finalising the details of the trip which will be advised in the next Newsletter, but please mark your diary.

It is likely that places for this visit may be limited so keep the date clear!

First Speaker

At our monthly meetings we begin with a First Speaker who is usually local and speaks for 20 minutes. Often these speakers are Mt Aspiring U3A members. We have covered many topics in the past informing members of local issues, events, and community organisations.

If you would like to speak in this slot we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Jenny Moss at jennykaymoss@gmail.com
or phone 021 550-107

Members' Forum

This is a section devoted to contributions from members: these are personal opinions and in no way reflect the views of, or are endorsed by, the Mt Aspiring U3A. Contributions are limited to 200 words.

Christmas is Coming



*God not another bloody carol!
For here I am, stuck at the mall.
It's like shooting fish in a barrel,
And here comes that clarion call.
Come spend your dosh here with us
The real message seems lost in the fuss
What happened to joy to the world
With indecent haste flyers unfurled
Images that make us insecure
Are thrust in front of our eyes
"Is there no way we can find us a cure?"
"Are we to suffer more presents of ties?"
For how do you satisfy both
the joy of receiving and giving.
When surrounded by adverts of froth
While just getting on with the living.
Surely an offer of help or support
Would be more in the spirit of Yuletide
Than another hanky or bottle of port
So why don't we try it this time.*

Allen Hogan



Your Committee wishes you a Merry
Christmas and a Happy New Year



Mt Aspiring U3A Committee and Contacts

President/Venue Liaison	Allan MacLean	a.maclean@ucl.ac.uk
Vice-president/First Speaker convenor	Jenny Moss	jennykaymoss@gmail.com
Past President/Archivist	Richard Paxman	paxmanr0@gmail.com
Secretary/Publicity	John Binney	johnbinney@iinet.net.au
Treasurer/Membership	Helen Horner	hr.horner@gmail.com
Main Speaker Convenor	Ian Hall	ianwhall@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Barbara Lindsay	lindsay_barb@xtra.co.nz
Greetings	Penny Hartley	pninahartley@gmail.com
Study Group Convenor	Allen Hogan	ajhogan05@yahoo.co.nz
Committee Member	Randolf Holst	wanaka52@xtra.co.nz