



HOBSONVILLE NEWSLETTER

Apologies / Contact email: u3a.hobsonville@gmail.com

Web: <https://hobsonville.u3a.nz>

MARCH 2024 MEETING

Thursday 21st March, 10am

Hobsonville Bowling Club, Memorial Park Lane, off Hobsonville Road

Morning Tea: History & Discoveries

Hosting: WW I & II

Mini Speaker: Book Group II

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our financial year is coming to an end (31st March) and we are looking for nominations for Officers and Committee Members. Please put your thinking caps on and let us know your suggestions. Also, this means subs are due, the committee recommends that the subs remain unchanged at \$35 per person. These need to be paid by direct credit by the end of this month and our bank details are as per the notice included in this newsletter. If paying by Direct Credit causes you a problem, please speak to Tiina or myself and we will try and help you. If you have decided that you do not wish to renew your membership, please let Tiina know as soon as possible, so that we can admit more people from our waiting list.

A suggestion has been made that we all add our emergency contact name and phone number to the back of our U3A name badge. This will mean in the event of an emergency we can quickly contact someone on your behalf. If these details are on the back of your badge it will be private but immediately accessible if required whilst you are at our U3A meeting. Therefore, please bring those details with you to the next meeting and write it on the back of your badge.

Just a plea from our SIG Convenors – Please RSVP their meeting invitations. Most of them are not good at telepathy, and they do need to know how many are coming to your meetings. So please answer those emails.

The parking is slowly improving and we will still have Nigel and Rob out there to help. Please follow their directions.

*Bronwen King
President*



ANNUAL SUBS — NOW DUE

SUBSCRIPTION: As recommended by the committee
\$35.00 per person for the 2024/25 financial year

Please pay by Direct Credit to U3A Hobsonville. Bank Account: 12 3085 0503478 00 ASB Westgate
(Please ensure that your NAME is shown on the transfer) We no longer accept cash or cheques

If your preference is to have your monthly newsletter sent by post
please ADD \$17 to the fee above

GUEST SPEAKER



Michael Wynd is a Historian at the Royal New Zealand Navy's Museum in Devonport, Auckland. His role is to maintain a research library and archives, and conduct historical research into New Zealand's naval history as well other aspects of the military history of the nation. The subject of his speech is: Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

ADVENTURE WALKING Convenor: **Graeme Johnston**

Just nine walkers braved the summer heat for the first outing of 2024. Assembling at Birkenhead Leisure Centre, we walked first through Birkenhead War Memorial Park, emerging via eighty-six steps onto Parkhill Road and heading downhill. One helpful member observed that going down inevitably leads to climbing back up. That was proved true when, after a short bush walk through Ridgewood Reserve and another downhill stretch on Eskdale Road, we faced a long uphill slog through Eskdale Reserve. The saving grace was that most of the uphill sections were in spectacular bush, with many superb specimens of forest trees and bush affording cool shade. **Next Walk:** 3rd Monday **Time:** 10am. **Venue:** TBA. **VACANCY**



Birkenhead War Memorial Park

BOOK GROUP Convenor: **Karen Willmott**



Last month our group read: *Sisters Under the Rising Sun* by Heather Morris, women in POW camps - 5 stars; *Khaki Town* by Judy Nunn, discord between soldiers - 4 stars; *The Armour of Light* by Ken Follett, events in 1792-1824 - 3.5 stars; *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver - 5 stars; *The Wind Knows My Name* by Isabel Allende - 4 stars; Rachel Joyce trilogy *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, to see Queenie, *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy* and *Maureen Fry and the Angel of the North* - all 5 stars; *That Green Eyed Girl* by Julie Owen Moylan, one apartment in 1955 and 1975 - 4.5 stars; *This House of Grief* by Helen Garner, non-fiction book on murder trial in which a father was accused of drowning his three children - 3.5 stars. **Meetings:** 3rd Thursday **Time:** 1.30pm. **FULL**

ARTS & THEATRE Convenor: Anne Denton

What a range of events our members have enjoyed already this year. Kinky Boots - the movie, so different from the stage play seen last year:

Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure" showcasing the tension between men and women: Hyperspace at Auckland Theatre Company stirring memories of the 1980's - Gloss and aerobics. APO with unusual featuring of viola. **NOTE: Next Meeting:**

MONDAY 25 March. **Venue:** Greenwich Gardens. **Time:** 10am. **VACANCY**



BOOK CLUB II Convenor: Liz Van Brink



Australian authors this month. Cloudstreet by Tim Winton was a fascinating read but a bit hard going. Too close to real life for the reader. Thus it is unfinished but likely to be a 5/5. Tiger Men (4/5) by Judy Nunn about Van Diemen's Land kept the reader completely absorbed. Well researched and written about the cut throat world of international trade. Also by Judy Nunn, Sanctuary (4.5/5) and it is another gripping read about a rickety dinghy running aground on a barren island off the coast of Western Australia. Dust of the Land by J H Fletcher (5/5) followed the life and trials of one woman on the red frontier of Australia. Distant Voices by John Pilger (5/5) is a serious publication about East Timor. **Next Meeting:** 1st Thursday. **Time:** 10.30am. **Venue:** Hobsonville Point. **VACANCY**

COMPUTER GROUP Convenor: Nigel Dempster

Last month, we had an interesting meeting where we talked about what fascinating things that were coming up this year in the world of technology. We also had an interesting talk from David to keep us on our toes. Also, popups were talked about, and we discussed some popular websites. Next meeting we are hoping to get an up-to-date presentation from a guest about AI and how it is developing quickly. If you would like to join our happy group and have a laugh and hopefully learn something, please feel free to come along. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Thursday. **Time:** 1.30pm. **Venue:** Summerset Cinema, Hobsonville. **VACANCY**



CRAFT CREATORS Convenor: Judy Peace



Over the last few months our group has had fun and challenges making Glurps, Muppet-like hand puppets that are quite adorable once completed. At our last meeting, we had the Grand Gathering of Glurps. We also completed another 12 calico dolls for Starship Children's Hospital. The dolls are given to a child about to undergo



a procedure to demonstrate on the doll an idea of what will be happening for the child. Our group meets at a member's home. **Next Meetings:** 2nd and 4th Wednesday. **Time:** 9.30am. **VACANCY**

CURRENT AFFAIRS Convenor: Judy Lewins

Current Affairs



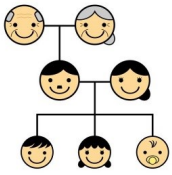
We had very diverse topics to discuss at our first meeting of 2024. The news of the delays in signing off by the council and the insurance payouts for those red stickered properties caused angst. We learnt of the history of the settlement of Israel and the dreadful situation in the Israel and Palestine now, and the Ukraine and Russian war. Electric cars and lithium, immigration and emigration, and finally the nationwide changes to recycling. Thank goodness for afternoon tea! **Next Meeting:** 2nd Thursday. **Time:** 1.30pm. **VACANCY**

EAT AROUND THE WORLD: Convenor: Jan Edmonds

Gojo's Ethiopian Eatery, New Lynn is not open for lunch during the week, so we booked for 6:30pm. Stepping inside to colourful murals on the walls, messob (woven) tables convinced us the food would be authentic, and it surely was. We ordered 5 dishes to share – “would we like those on one platter?”. Well, yes, we would and did, but, we wimpy westerners could not bring ourselves to just eat with our right hands as is traditional, and settled for plates and forks. Injera, a type of flatbread, with lamb and beef dishes covered the dish. We finished with Ethiopian coffee, served in delicate pottery cups. It was a pleasure to see this family owned eatery full of customers when we left around 8pm. **Next Meeting:** 1st Thursday. **Time:** 1.00pm. **VACANCY**



FAMILY HISTORY Convenor: Shared by all members



There was an air of enthusiasm amongst the members at our first meeting of the year. It was good to be back in research mode! We shared any research we had done over the summer break as well as our goals for this year. These goals were varied - wanting to research workhouses of Ireland, finish authenticating and tidying a maternal family tree, sorting, labelling and storing family photos, completing writing family stories, while some of us identified that sorting through and filing copious amounts of paper was a priority! **Next Meeting:** 2nd Tuesday. **Time:** 1.30pm. **VACANCY**

FOOD FOR FUN Convenor: Marilyn Page

The theme was Germany. After a meeting where we discussed German life and history, we proceeded to lunch. We commenced with a starter of Bratwurst sausage wrapped in bacon and a delicious sauce. The entrée, was an enjoyable herring and potato salad, followed by mains of beef schnitzel with mushrooms, a Bavarian potato salad with gherkins and dill, a red cabbage salad, and a schnitzel dish with red peppers and tomatoes, The desserts were a frangipani and raspberry tart with raspberries and cream, followed by yummy chocolate balls, The wine served was a Gewurztraminer. Iced water was also appreciated. There was plenty of discussion about the food, their components and recipes, and general topics. **Next Meeting:** Last Tuesday. **Time:** 11.30am **FULL**



GOLD CARD TRIPS Convenor: Tiina Delacey



First trip in 2024 was to Helensville. Simple journey - just a bus to the stop near Pak'n'Save Northwest and from there the bus to Helensville. Bus even stops at Parakai. Then our normal fortifying coffee which we purchased from The Real Bread Project across the road from The Helensville Pioneer Museum - with cake for some. Quite a bit of time was spent at this interesting museum, even had a guided tour. Hospice shop visit was next followed by a 1.1km riverside walk to the township. The corrugated state of the art toilets were a must stop for me. Then lunch followed by a quick visit to another op shop. Trip home was a scenic tour through Kaukapakapa and Silverdale. An eventful trip in many ways. **Next meeting:** 4th Wednesday. **Time:** 9.30am **VACANCY**

HISTORY AND DISCOVERIES Convenor: Linda Nixon

Famous Inventors from 19th century was our topic this month. The group in their research had focused on Edison, Tesla and Darwin. It was sad Tesla died penniless but wow, we are still using his inventions today. These famous men were way ahead of their time. So, plenty of interesting facts were discovered and shared. The April meeting topic will be early immigration prior to the 19th century. **Next Meeting:** 1st Wednesday.



Time: 1.30pm. **VACANCY**

INTERNATIONAL FILMS Convenor: Claire Brickell



It's too early in the year for film festivals to be happening in New Zealand, so the group watched a Berlinale 2024 film festival press conference where the screen writer, producers and actors answered questions about the world premiere of their film based on Irish writer Claire Keegan's book "Small Things Like These". It was interesting to listen to their comments of a film not yet released in NZ. The

commitment of the team to their roles in making a film that depicts the social structure of Ireland in 1985 was very strong and commendable. All our group agreed that this film will be a 'must to watch' when it is released here in New Zealand. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Tuesday. **Time:** 10am. **VACANCY**

ITALIAN COOKERY FOR MEN Convenor: Alessandro Laryn

In February our featured Italian region was Sardinia. We



Seadas - dessert

prepared two traditional dishes: *fregola with clams* (couscous with clams), a tasty fishermen's dish; and *seadas*, a dessert with an unusual combination of honey and pecorino cheese, typical ingredients from a Mediterranean island. The group

meets in West Harbour. **Next Meeting:** 3rd Wednesday **Time:** 10am. **VACANCY**



MAHJONG Convenor: Bronwen King



We have all now slotted back in to the swing of things and Mahjong is back into our fortnightly cycle. We are merrily punging and chowing and Twittering the Sparrows with gay abandon. Non mahjongers will be scratching their heads and think we are all mad but we are happy in our madness so that's all that matters. We have 2 sessions each month with the venue to be notified. **Next Meetings:** 2nd & 4th Monday. **Time:** 12.30pm. **FULL**

MUSIC SEEKERS Convenor: Jan Bickerton

An eclectic mix of music was provided by a member of the group to start the year off and, to get us into the mood, *God Save the Queen* by Bryan May was the opening number. It was a challenge to remain seated but we did and settled back



to enjoy the program that included songs by Crosby Stills – *Teach your Children*, Joan Baez – *Forever Young*, Chris Knox – *Not Given Lightly*, Simon & Garfunkle's famous *Kathy's Song*, Mark Knopfler, Queen's *Love of my Life*, Mutton Birds, Christine McVie, Dave Dobbyn's *Welcome Home*, Cat Stevens, Chicago, Rolling Stones, Elton John's *Funeral for a Friend* and many more with accompanying videos each creating amazing film footage to enhance the song and music. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Friday. **Time:** 10am. **Venue:** Summerset Cinema, Hobsonville. **VACANCY**

NEWS AND VIEWS Convenor: Helen Chipper



What can you believe, is becoming very important in the new AI world we are entering. Goggle AI Gemini has an interesting black race bias. Good news - an AI site can change your singing voice to be super star quality or read you an audiobook with various character voices. Other topics discussed were facial recognition / data privacy and impact of NZ imports or exports via Red Sea etc. It is time to seek new media platforms for a wider and balanced world news as TV 6pm is limited. Two hours over refreshments sharing and listening is just super for the mind. **Next Meeting:** 4th Tuesday. **Time:** 10am. **VACANCY**

PÉTANQUE Convenor: Carol Denton

Our new year has started with a glorious day for playing Petanque. After all of the very hot days over the last couple of weeks in early February, our Friday opened with a nice cloud cover which helped to keep us cool. It was great to get out on the courts again with our fun loving team and get our eyes and arms back into getting that boule closest to the cochonnet (jack). As the day warmed up, so did our games and it was very nice to retreat to the cool atmosphere in Soljans Cafe for a welcome cuppa. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Friday. **Time:** 10am. **FULL**



SCIENCE Convenor: Geoff Beresford



Pukaki Crater, Manukau

We were out in the field for our February meeting viewing some of the South Auckland volcanoes - Puhinui, Cemetery, Kohoura, Crater Hill and Pukaki Lagoon. These were all wet explosion craters with no scoria cone. Puhinui was only recognized as a volcano in 2011. Cemetery Crater is hard to spot because the SW motorway cuts it off from the nearby cemetery after which it is named. Kohoura Park, Papatoetoe, is well worth a visit. Three of the craters are a wetland area with a board walk. Crater Hill was not to be seen because the view point is blocked by new housing.

The best was last, Pukaki Lagoon is a perfect circular crater with a great view from the tuff ring. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Wednesday. **Time & Venue:** TBA. **VACANCY**

SUNDAY BRUNCHERS Convenor: Bronwen King

A most enjoyable brunch was enjoyed at King's Garden Centre, St Lukes on February 11th. Come March 10th we will have been to The Coffee Club, Pine Hill. This is a new Coffee Club and looks all new and shiny. Hopefully the food is delicious and enjoyable. However, basically we meet for the meal sharing and good company so everywhere is good. Our April venue is still to be sorted. As always, new members are welcome. **Next Meeting:** 2nd Sunday. **Time:** 9.30am. **VACANCY**



WINE APPRECIATION Convenor: Linda Meehan



At our first meeting this year we tasted 'The Last of the Summer Wine' - two bottles of Sauvignon Blanc and three of Rosé. These were paired with thoughtful tasting morsels, which added to lively discussion, and raised the question, 'Is this a wine I would enjoy on a summer day?' The answers were as varied as the wines we tasted. Did we find summer in a glass? I think we did, each of us in our own way. **Next meeting:** 1st Tuesday. **Time:** 1.30pm. **FULL**

WORLD WARS I & II Convenor: David Thompson

We watched a documentary on the largest Battleship ever built, the IJN Musashi, a Japanese Yamato-class battleship, which boasted immense firepower with nine 18.1-inch main guns. Launched in 1940, it saw limited action before its tragic demise. During the Battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944, relentless American air attacks inflicted heavy damage, sinking Musashi with over 1,000 lives lost. After afternoon tea, we reviewed the 'May 1942 Battle of the Coral Sea' which marked a turning point in the Pacific War. Though both sides suffered losses, including the American carrier Lexington, Japan's aggressive expansion was halted. This first carrier battle, fought entirely by aircraft, inflicted significant damage on Japan's carrier fleet, hindering their offensive capabilities and boosting Allied morale. **Next Meeting:** 3rd Wednesday. **Time:** 2pm.



Venue: Summerset Cinema. **VACANCY**