



Supporting
Lifelong Learning

Howick Inc.

PO Box 39035

Howick 2145

June 2021



COMMITTEE 2021/2022

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GERALDINE ROSE

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ROSEMARY OVENS *Almoner/Welcomer*

COLLEEN RIGBY *Speaker Convenor*

Next General Meeting:

Monday June 14 2021: 9.30 at Howick Bowling Club*

Speaker: *Dr Niven Brown*

Ten-minute speaker: Short Story

Tea Group: *Opera 2*

Subscriptions can be paid by direct debit to: U3A Howick Bank account number 12 3040 0556154 00 and put your surname in the reference slot. Fees remain at \$20.00 *If you are unable to use Direct Debit, please give your fees in cash to Joni Burgess at a General Meeting.*

Editorial:

I watched on TV recently a well-known celebrity who visited New Zealand to do a show. He spoke of being quite overwhelmed to go into a café and sit amongst a crowd of people talking, laughing and hugging with not a mask to be seen. He said he felt as if he had stepped back in time – to a past and simpler way of life – as if we were marooned on a peaceful island as history rages around us. Sometimes I feel that ageing is a rather similar experience. Where we were once immersed in history, we have now slowed down and have become in some ways marooned observers rather than participators. It has all become rather confusing. What is true and what is “false news”? Is that rather odd email message really from my friend, or am I being hacked? How do I “clear my cache” so that my missing texts will re-appear? I have to say, though, that I really appreciate the company of thinking older people, whose minds remain curious and open, and whose long lives have wisdom along with the inevitable confusion of life in the modern world. And U3A gives that in abundance. I really value the rich life experiences and wisdom of all the U3A members I meet.

May Speaker: Mick Clout



Professor Mick Clout gave us an interesting and professional talk about the importance of biodiversity in New Zealand and about his work and research with the Kakapo. He pointed out that New Zealand was the last land mass settled by humans and has a unique biodiversity which is currently under threat.

There have been two phases of settlement in New Zealand. Maori settlement in medieval times led to forest clearance and two introduced species – the dog and the kiori (rat). European settlement in the 1800’s saw 2000 species introduced, causing major threats to indigenous wildlife.

The kakapo, which Professor Clout has been studying, is particularly under threat. These herbivorous birds are flightless and have a long lifespan but low reproduction rate. They breed every 2 to 4 years stimulated by mast years especially in rimu forests. This heavy fruiting provides food for the birds but also attracts increased numbers of predators such as rats and stoats. Kakapo lay only 2 eggs, and the females raise the chicks. This makes them vulnerable to predation, and their numbers have become dangerously low.

Between 1949 and 1977 only 18 birds were found. There were no females. In 1977, several kakapo were found on Stewart Island, including females. The birds were taken from Stewart Island to predator-free islands, and a kakapo recovery programme was set up. This involved monitoring with radio transmitters, nest protection, extra food and hand-raising of chicks.

Supplementary feeding started in 1990. The birds thrived but didn't improve the female ratio. Researchers worked out that, as male nestlings need more food, females in good condition tend to raise males. Experiments proved this. So the researchers decided to feed only if the female weighed less than 1.5 kilos, and once the eggs were laid, feeding could be increased. As a result of this work, adult survival rate increased from 46 to 99% and the chicks' survival was also up.

The kakapo population is now 204. Most of the chicks are raised on predator-free islands and new islands are being cleared. Ten percent of islands are currently pest-free and we could get to 50% in a decade. Several inhabited islands are under management but not under control. Some mammals have become resistant to 1080 and interactions between mammals are not completely understood. Predator free New Zealand remains a distant goal.

To end his talk, Clout looked towards the future of conservation in New Zealand. Can we control possums? Will the public support the control of cats? Will climate change affect biodiversity? Should we have more reserves? Can we protect our fishing waters? There is clearly a lot more to be learnt.

June Speaker: Dr Niven Brown

Dr Niven is an outreach coordinator for the Auckland Astronomical Society. He is passionate about sharing the beauty of the night sky and the wonders of the universe with people. He has a PhD in Mechanical Engineering and has been a member of the Auckland Astronomical Society for 10 years.

His talk is entitled:

"Our place in the stars"

It is an interactive presentation that takes the audience on a journey from planet Earth to the beginning of time and space. We will get to understand space and why things are astronomically big. If there is time and it is sunny, we will have the opportunity to look safely at the sun through a solar telescope after the meeting.

From the Committee:

We still need a second person as back-up "technician" to set up audio-visual equipment at general meetings.

Please contact any committee member if you think you might be able to assist in this role.

- Our July meeting will be a bring-a-buddy day. If you have a friend or acquaintance who may be interested in joining us, this would be the day for them to come along.
- Colleen Rigby, our "tech wizard" has created a facebook page for our U3A. For those of you who are on Facebook, the search link is Howick U3A. Interested people are also able to go on our webpage – the link is <https://www.howick.u3a.nz>
- We are pleased to let you know that Colleen Rigby has been nominated as vice-president. Members will be asked to ratify this position at our June General meeting.
- If anyone wishes to add their mobile number to the membership list please email Joni Burgess and she will update her membership list.

Membership

We welcomed four new members in May and two members will be admitted at the June meeting.

Out and about

- "The Life of Galileo" by Berthold Brecht, Waterfront Theatre, 22 June to 2 July. There is a special performance for visually impaired audiences on Sunday 4 July, where there will be a described performance and "touch tour". Details on: asbwaterfronttheatre.co.nz
- NZ Opera: The Marriage of Figaro, Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre, 8 to 13 June. Book through Auckland live
- Free Concert – New Zealand Youth Orchestra 25 June, 8pm, Aotea Centre. Book through Ticketmaster
- Chamber Music – Quartet for the end of time – Concert Chamber, Auckland Town Hall 30 June 7.30pm. Book through ticketmaster
- "Let it Beatles", Wintergarden, Civic, 26 June and 3 July. Book through Ticketmaster.

Groups (yellow shading = full)	Date 2021	Venue	Topic	Convenor
Anthropology 1 3 rd Thurs 10 am	17 June	BM Theatre	How we treat children – Joni Burgess	J Leyland 534 4034 Betty Reid 534 9895
Anthropology 2 4 th Mon 10 am	28 June	4A Paton's Road	Hallstall Culture DVD	Margaret Heatt 534 9131
Architecture 1 st Fri 10 am	4 June	12 Daria Place	Architecture Awards – Bevin Cornwall	June Lamborn 535 8069
Aviation and Aerospace 1 st Wed 10 am	2 June	BM Theatre	Potpourri	Clive Bolt 534 2946
Book Discussion 4 th Thurs 1.30	24 June	12 Liston Crescent	Books	Joni Burgess 537 4834
Civilisations 3 rd Mon 1 pm	21 June	55 Rodney street	Women in ancient Egypt, Women rulers, Gill M and Margaret N.	Cora Young 534 8623
Comparative Religions 4 th Monday 1.30pm (new)	28 June	55 Rodney Street	Origins of Judaism and Buddhism	Margaret Nicholls 536 6709
Current Affairs 1 st Tuesday 2pm	1 June	11 Shelly Beach Parade	Changes to NZ Health System	Jan Naish-Wallis 534 4438
Earth and the Universe 4 th Tues 10 am	22 June	BM Theatre	Cosmology for the Layman	Clive Bolt 534 2946
Famous & Infamous 1 1 st Thurs 10 am	3 June	1 Lodge Lane – Pakuranga Pk Village	Potpourri	Gill Muggleston 534 9863
Famous & Infamous 2 3 rd Thurs 2 pm	17 June	4A Paton Road	Princess Alice of Battenburg – Margaret N; Jewish contribution to NZ society, Jan N-W	Allan Reid 534 9895
French 4 th Fri 1 pm	25 June	74A Aberfeldy Avenue Hland Pk	Charlemagne	David Dwerryhouse 534 4829
History 3 rd Tues 10 am	15 June	BM theatre	Hadrian, Citizen of the world – Sheila Russell	Judy Lee 535 8547
History of New Zealand 2 nd Thurs 10 am	10 June	BM Theatre	Potpourri	Alan La Roche 534 7366
Literature 3 rd Wed 10 am	16 June	32 Butley Drive	Witi Ihimaera – Angela Cullen	Judy Wilson 576 6340
Military History 2 nd Thursday 2pm	10 June	4A Paton Road	Vladimir Putin – Peter Becroft	Allan Reid 5349895
Movies 2 nd Mon, 12.30 pm	14 June	2/21 Drake Street, Howick	Discussion of movies seen BYO lunch	Margaret Nicholls 536 6709
Nature Walks and Talks 2nd Fri 9 am	11 June Meet 8.45	Meet at St Kentigern College Car park		June Poole 021583893
Opera 1 2 nd Tues 9.30 am	8 June	BM Theatre	Il Trovatore	Jean Denholm 534 6844
Opera 2 4 th Tues 1.15pm	22 June Meet 1pm	BM Theatre	Verdi, Il Trovatore	Geraldine Rose 537 1917
Philosophy 1 st Mon 10 am	7 June	55 Rodney Street	Ways of living life	Christopher Nixon 535 5309
Science. 4 th Wed 10 am	23 June	BM Theatre	Pot Pourri	Jim Hine 534 4259
Sunday Discussion 2nd Sun noon	13 June	Dannemora Gardens Cafe		Joan Clarkson 537 6397
Travel 1 st Wed 10 am	2 June	159 Pah Road Cockle Bay	Francesco's Venice contd.	David and Adrienne Teape 5336103
World of Art 1 3 rd Mon 10 am	21 June	BM Theatre	Michaelangelo, Love and death	Garry Law 271 6505
World of Art 2 3 rd Tues 1.30 pm	15 June	BM Theatre	Alphonse Mucha	Philippa Wilson 5342558
World of Music 4 th Wed 1.30 pm	23 June	2/21 Drake Street	Presenting Carmen contd. <i>Ngaire</i>	Ngair Taylor 534 8538
Writing 2 nd Tues 1.30 pm	15 June (3 rd Tues)	144/795 Chapel Road (BM Village)	It had been a long day	Marian Heywood 534 1159

