



PO Box 57-042, Mana 5026

August 2018 Newsletter

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Founded 1991

Note from the President

Kia ora koutou Greetings to you all

In this winter time I hope you have warded off any winter ills and also enjoyed the time of Matariki, the star cluster know as Pleiades in the Northern Hemisphere, a time to celebrate the Maori New Year.

As 2018 moves on I am conscious, as your new President, of the support I receive from Carolyn and Pat, your secretary and treasurer respectively, and am aware that their term of office comes to an end this club year. Jocelyn, who does a sterling job with catering, is also due to retire from the committee. Having jumped in at the deep end with the previous president moving to Whanganui it seems to me we need to be well prepared to form the new committee in 2019. I would like to hear from anyone interested in filling any one of these roles next year and also invite them to a committee meeting to gain an insight into the tasks. A strong steering committee is vital to the successful running of our club. As the position of the president, secretary and treasurer is limited to a 3 year term it is not a case of once on never getting off. It is not too onerous and meetings are relaxed and include a morning tea.

Our seminars this year have been full of interest and groups are running well. I would, of course, love to encourage more members to enjoy our opera afternoons. My best wishes to you all. May you continue to enjoy the friendship and stimulation that U3A offers.

Aroha nui na, Irene Swadling

Third Quarterly Meeting **Thursday 16 August**

North Baptist Church, Discovery Drive,
Whitby

Doors open 1:20 pm

Dr Burton King



Dr King is a general surgeon with an interest in breast cancer surgery. He is head of The Breast Centre at Bowen hospital. He is a past Examiner in General Surgery for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and a former lecturer at The Otago medical school. He trained in trauma surgery in South Africa and breast cancer surgery at Oxford.

Dr King is a Major in the Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corps and has served in Iraq. He has published on breast cancer surgery, trauma, and general surgery. He has had a lifelong interest in Shakespeare and Joseph Conrad.

The title of his talk is "Shakespeare on Political Violence and Warfare" drawing on some of his experiences in Iraq with the New Zealand Defence Force. Brush up on your Shakespeare in preparation for what promises to be a fascinating talk.

Second Quarterly Meeting

At our May quarterly meeting we were treated to a lively, informative talk about electoral systems, with particular reference to MMP in New Zealand. Nigel Roberts, an emeritus professor of political science at Victoria University of Wellington, took us beyond our own shores, speaking of governments where election results were similar to our own where Jacinda Adern's Labour party is now leading a new government despite receiving fewer votes in the election than National. His wide experience, including those as a political commentator, and his knowledge of systems both here and overseas, made it a very worthwhile talk which held everyone's attention. Thank you, Nigel Roberts.

Fourth Quarterly Meeting and AGM

Thursday 15 November

Keep Thursday 15 November free for our fourth and final quarterly meeting for the year. John



Ansell will be our speaker. He will speak before our AGM and his book *Dances with Words* will be available to buy. A shared lunch will be at 12.35 with the talk at 1.30 followed by the AGM. John is an entertaining speaker and is sure to make us laugh. Known as Martinborough's poet in residence, he had a career

in political and radio advertising. The Martinborough Star newspaper described him as follows:

A polished and amusing public speaker who relishes any opportunity to exercise *dances with words*, revealing the use, abuse, origins and absurdity of the world's craziest language.

John believes that we don't make enough of our language, we don't think enough about it, many of us are terrible at explaining things, and we lack good paper manners. He is an advocate of plain English, making every word matter and avoiding bureaucratic and unnecessarily academic writing.

A man of words, John uses and exercises them with great skill. Meaningful, original, zany, abstruse, erudite, obscure, every one of John's words is purposeful and chosen to express precisely what he intends to convey.



Winter Seminar Programme

Venue: **St Andrew's Parish Hall,
Steyne Avenue, Plimmerton**

Staying Safe Workshop

On Monday 28 May twenty-one of our members came along to the St Andrews Church Hall in Plimmerton for our first seminar for the year on a cold winter morning. Jennifer Jameson ran a workshop about staying safe on the roads. The workshop is a refresher about traffic rules and safer driving practices. We began by filling out a questionnaire about our driving experience and habits. Jennifer referred us to websites such as <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/driving-safely/senior-drivers/> for information about how to apply for a licence after turning 75, and <http://rightcar.govt.nz/> for advice on buying a car. She also mentioned that the AA will provide free safety checks for members' vehicles, as well as one hour free driving sessions for people over 74 providing useful reminders and helping confidence on the road.

Jennifer then led a discussion about the importance of assessing traffic conditions and keeping a look out for the actions of other road users. She stressed the importance of monitoring what's going on around us as we drive, avoiding distractions and anticipating.

Jennifer also showed us an informative DVD on safe driving practice which provided, in particular, helpful explanations of recent changes in rules for intersections.

Transmission Gully

On Monday, 25 June, Belinda Mackenzie-Dodds spoke to a full hall of 41 U3A members about the Transmission Gully project. It was fascinating to hear about the complexities of designing the main highway and feeder roads. Water is a major challenge for the engineers, both groundwater and the need to manage run-off from rain. The scale and scope of the project is massive: Belinda told us that the fill moved for the project would fill the Westpac Stadium 9 times over! It was also interesting to hear about the strict environmental conditions which the joint venture company must meet: this entails significant re-alignment of stream beds, the creation of wetlands, and the remediation of degraded waterways. In some instances the construction of the roads will lead to an enhanced environment along the corridors. Members asked a number of questions, reflecting the keen interest in the project, particularly about the gradient of the highway and the environmental impacts.

Our next Seminar on Monday 20 August at 10 am

Porirua Library manager, Brian Anderson, will tell us how we can make the most of our library. He will take us through the development of the library, how it has changed, and about the services for the public, and in particular for seniors. This is a valuable opportunity to find out how we can make the most of one of our community's most important, but often undervalued, facilities.

Our final seminar on Monday 17 September at 10am

A speaker from the Outreach and Information Group within Statistics New Zealand will talk about its work, including how the information gathered from the recent nationwide Census will be used. We will also find out what other surveys are carried out and how that information is used, and learn how to use Statistics New Zealand's online data and information.

Do you write non-fiction?

Entries are now open for the 2018 Timeless Wisdom International Writing Challenge.

This competition brings together writers aged 60 and over from around the world, with a focus on non-fiction short stories which share some of the wisdom that can only be acquired through age.

Selected entries will be collated into up to four books according to themes, and published in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand by Exisle Publishing, an established mainstream publishing house with over 25 years of publishing experience.

This is a fantastic opportunity for both new and practised writers to share a powerful message with thousands of readers, see your name in print, and contribute to a beautifully produced book that your friends and family will treasure.

Entries close on 28 September 2018. You can find more information about the competition by following this link <https://exislepublishing.com/writing-challenge/>

The 2018 programme for the Science Interest Group with Peter Evans

Following on from a talk in July by Colin Brown about nuclear energy the current programme is:

13 August: Third part of series by Brian Cox In Search of Science. Great Inventions.

27 August: Peter Phipps. Electrogravities.

10 September: Alice Roberts Are humans still evolving? Paul Nurse, president of the British Royal Society, on the state of science and the anti-science pressures.

Contact Peter (Phone 233 9690) if you are interested in joining this group.