



# Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

February 2024

## Welcome to the new U3A IG Coordinator

I'm Jane Malthus, a U3A board member, and I have volunteered to take over from Andre Smith as Interest Groups coordinator. I am a member of the U3A walking group, although I'm a 'sleeping' member at the moment: firstly, because my voluntary position at Otago Museum clashed with Thursday walks, and now, because I am working on a book about the Eden Hore Dress Collection and need every morning minute to focus on that. I walk later in the day instead!



I went to the Singing Group's December performance and loved the enjoyment and passion everyone showed in singing and socialising together, and I know the walking group is as much about the camaraderie, as the walking and coffee, so I hope to visit all our other groups over this year to extend those experiences.

I can be contacted on [janemalthus@gmail.com](mailto:janemalthus@gmail.com) or 021 1530 809 (preferably by text) if necessary.

Jane

### Art Collections Group

Convenor: Anne-Marie Hutton  
Monthly: First Tuesday 10 am  
[annemariehutton@gmail.com](mailto:annemariehutton@gmail.com)



### Book Share Group

Convenor: Trish Irvine  
First Friday, 1:30  
[trishjockloch@gmail.com](mailto:trishjockloch@gmail.com)



### Dining Group

Convenor: Karen Wards  
Third Friday, 7 pm  
[karendwards@gmail.com](mailto:karendwards@gmail.com)



### Expanding Musical Horizons full

Convenor: Paul Wheeler  
Second Monday, 10 am  
[wheeler@outlook.co.nz](mailto:wheeler@outlook.co.nz)



### Gallery Group full

Convenor: Tash Hurst  
Second Wednesday, 10:30  
[tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz)



### Gardens Lovers Group

Convenor: Robyne Selbie full  
Second Wednesday, 1:30  
[robyneselbie1945@gmail.com](mailto:robyneselbie1945@gmail.com)



### Genealogy Group full

Convenor: Jean Tilleyshort  
1st and 3rd Fridays, 10 -12  
[s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz](mailto:s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz)



### Lunch Group

Convenor: Anne Stratford  
Second Friday 12:30  
[annepstratford@gmail.com](mailto:annepstratford@gmail.com)



### Mahjong Group

Convenor: Jean Tilleyshort  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, 10 am  
[s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz](mailto:s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz)



### Monday Current Affairs Group full

Convenor: Joy Hayward  
Third Monday, 1.30  
[joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz](mailto:joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz)



### Photography Group full

Convenor: Ann Wood  
First Thursday, 1:30;  
Third Thursday, TBA  
[ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com](mailto:ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com)



### Poetry Group full

Convenor: Carole Bezett  
Fourth Wednesday, 11 am  
[carolebezett@gmail.com](mailto:carolebezett@gmail.com)



### Singing Group full

Convenor: Claire Stevens  
Weekly: Monday, 1 pm  
[cstevensnz@gmail.com](mailto:cstevensnz@gmail.com)



### Tuesday Current Issues Group full

Convenor: Gretchen Kivell  
Third Tuesday, 10 am  
[gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz)



### Waikouaiti Global Conversations

Convenor: Kath Ryan  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 2-4pm  
[kathryan09@gmail.com](mailto:kathryan09@gmail.com)



### Walking Group full

Every Thursday, 10:30  
Joint Convenors:  
Averil McLean  
[averilmclean2@gmail.com](mailto:averilmclean2@gmail.com)  
Janet Hewson  
[je.hewson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:je.hewson@xtra.co.nz)



### Wanderers Group

Interim Convenor: **In recess**  
Anne Stratford  
Every Wednesday at 1pm  
[annepstratford@gmail.com](mailto:annepstratford@gmail.com)



# Community Page

## SEARCH FOR A FUNDRAISER

The Family Therapy Training Trust are looking for help with fundraising and knowing the wide variety of expertise there is amongst U3A members, we are wondering if anyone with experience in this area might be available to help. Some of you will be aware of us because we presented at a meeting last year. We are concerned about families struggling with difficult interpersonal issues and the lack of professional help that is available. Once, Dunedin was a beacon of knowledge in this field,

and we are now in a place where it is almost impossible for families to receive family therapy.



Our group is both working with families and training future family therapists. We have been operating as an interest group for many years, and we have now become a charitable trust. To date, the work has been entirely voluntary, but for this to become sustainable long-term, trainers need to be paid. We have several excellent board members but lack anyone with expertise in applying for

funding. We'd very much appreciate the help of anyone with time to spare, or experience to offer.

Please contact:

Joy Hayward 0211508387 or

[family.therapy.training@outlook.com](mailto:family.therapy.training@outlook.com)

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**Are you a Sweater or a Cheetah?** A newish U3A member is canvassing interest for a **Bike Group**.

Gillian is hoping if there is enthusiasm among you, that this group might get their wheels spinning in early April. Her thinking is initially the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday morning of each month, but Monday morning is also a possibility depending on your thoughts. Setting off between 9am or 9:30 am until noon or 12:30 with a coffee stop halfway



through the morning's ride. Please indicate your preference of day plus start time. Gillian is very busy for the next month, so I will keep a list of your names, email address, and preferences, and she will respond to you later in March. As for me, I shall applaud your efforts from the relative comfort of my computer chair.

Email: [ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com](mailto:ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com) Ann (editor)

## Gallery Group February

How well do you know Marilyn Webb's work?

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb, the Gallery Group visited the Dunedin Public Art Gallery to view the exhibition of Marilyn Webb's work starting with her early teaching days (lino and wood cuts) in the North Island through to her long creative years here in Dunedin.



L: A sketch from a 2007 notebook that directly reflects her earlier lino and woodcut prints displayed in the first part of the exhibit, ***Sky Talk***

Curator Lucy Hammonds gave us an inspired talk on Marilyn's artistic journey. The unifying element in her work is the "love of place" and the commitment to understanding, being in and protecting that place. Here Lucy is standing next to one of her favourite works, ***Protection-Work-Dark Tulip***. She pointed out that Marilyn's use of red was a sign of protest. The eleven of us who viewed the exhibit decided that we had a narrow experience of Marilyn's work and think the show a 'must see'. Thank you curators Lucy Hammonds, Lauren Gutsell, Bridget Reweti and Historian Bridie Lonie.



***Aoraki-Mount Cook 1*** from the ***Place Names Suite 2005***

In 1996, Southland Museum and Art Gallery organized a trip for Marilyn with Department of Conservation staff into Tamatea Dusky Sounds which gave birth to her ***In Hodge's Wake***, series followed by ***Place Names Suite***.

RED again! ***Baby on Fire*** from the ***Bleeding Earth Goddess Suite 1990***. In the Pacific Countdown section of the exhibit Marilyn

takes us on a journey through her feelings of devastation after the Mururoa nuclear test. Her prints of protest were known overseas and in 1985 she was invited to exhibit at the Annual International Exhibition held at the



Centre International d'Art Contemporain in Paris. Since this was just after the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior, the Gallery staff refused to hang the work. However, New Zealand and international artists protested, and her work was exhibited. Since Marilyn's work is all on paper, not canvas, she was better known overseas, than here in New Zealand.



L: ***Mining Crumble***  
Marilynn was known and admired in the greater Southland and Otago art institutions and by James Mack at the Dowse Museum of Art who commissioned the series, ***Taste before Eating*** in which Marilyn, with serious humour, points out the

ecological concerns around the 'Think Big' Projects. This series also saw international recognition in San Francisco in 1984 at the World Print Council Show.

R: ***Swimming Hole and Willows at Maniototo***. A pastel work made possible by the support of Eastern Southland Museum and finally below is: ***Fossils*** from the ***Save Aramoana Campaign***. Two different approaches to environmental concern.



We ended our tour with lunch at The Corner Store where the conversations covered the exhibition and plans for our March tour, a two-day trip visiting artists and galleries in Central Otago.

Maryalyce

## Monday Current Affairs Group February

We met for the first time this week since early December. A great deal has changed both nationally and internationally since then. We tried to decide our topic by email which produced a number of coalitions as well as formidable opposition. There was also a strong faction wanting to avoid anything depressing which ruled out most issues.

A motion was put but it seemed people were unsure what they were voting for, so we met with a very vague agenda. Despite this, and perhaps because of the pleasure of seeing each other again, a consensus was spontaneously reached, and we embarked on wide ranging discussion about mental health.



Were people so distressed when we were growing up, or was distress just more hidden?

What solutions are there for people with serious mental health issues which prevent their functioning in the community?

What are the root causes of poor mental health?

Mental health as the poor relation re: allocation of funding and resources.

Positive developments in terms of brain research and better medications.

The impact of social factors and increasing inequality.

The need for greater support for parents and children during infancy and childhood.



The impact of the digital age, both in terms of loss of real in-person relationships, and on the very concerning online bullying.

We were particularly concerned about the race based and misogynistic nature of this, and, in particular, on women MPs, and other women with high public profiles. We had a robust discussion with no abuse, few interjections, no one crossing the floor and 'the speaker' having very little to do except call for suggestions for next time.

Despite the wish to avoid depressing topics, we plan to plunge right in and discuss Israel and Palestine.

Joy Hayward

## Walkers Group February

A small but dedicated, group of Walkers finally got to take on the Waihola trail. If you have not been to Lake Waihola lately, GO! The playground is excellent, and the track is perfect for walkers and bikers. No dogs allowed though, as there are too many birds to distract even the most obedient pet. Speaking of birds, there is good food and drink at the *Black Swan* across the road.



Just when you think you know about a place, Annette takes us through uncharted pathways above Waverley to eventually reach Rotary Park. Always a spectacular view and one of my favourites to impress overseas friends. Then the local café, *Tuppence*, for food and fluids, 9/10 cheese rolls!

Why Green Island? Well, what a treat to find easy free parking, a historic cemetery, a street name acknowledging the best generation of Walkers and fun at the *Food Room* with a special birthday song for Anne-Marie. An aside: Anne-Marie left the scene with a boot full of wine bottles, but no great cause for



concern: she was collecting empties to harvest her abundant elderberry crop.





Averil always does her homework on cemeteries. For example, we spent time at the grave of Archibald Baxter and his wife Millicent. Plus, there was a heap of Harraways ... still a very visible Green Island landmark, a multitude of Millers (Millers Park, Street, Mayor of Green Island) plus lots of other old Green

Island family identities. If interested, Toitu Otago Early Settlers has copies of the tapes of the Greater Green Island oral history project. It is catalogued on the National Library website.

And of course, we all talked about our memories of where we were, and how we were affected by, the 1979 Abbotsford slip.



Despite a steady soft rain, sixteen

Walkers took to the steps and streets up to the Mornington area and wandered down through



Central Dunedin. There are so many nooks and crannies in the area with some of the best historical buildings. The final leg was through the playground next to the bus terminal then followed a hot chocolate at the Kensington a.k.a. *The Glue Pot*.

Janet

*This name came to be during the time of the six-o'clock swill. So called by the disgruntled housewives whose husbands were, every weeknight, 'stuck in the glue pot'.*

Ani

## Poetry Group February

Seven of the group met on a beautiful summer's day and enjoyed our choice of poems written by women. It was a male-free zone today. Several of us chose NZ poets and one chose a poem written by her niece, Anna Livesey, who has several published works to her name. But it was Carol Ann Duffy who carried the day with a number of different poems, and her relatable work was chosen by more than one of us. Ani

### Mrs Midas by Carole Ann Duffy

It was late September. I'd just poured a glass of wine, begun to unwind, while the vegetables cooked. The kitchen filled with the smell of itself, relaxed, its steamy breath gently blanching the windows. So I opened one, then with my fingers wiped the other's glass like a brow. He was standing under the pear tree snapping a twig.

Now the garden was long and the visibility poor, the way the dark of the ground seems to drink the light of the sky, but that twig in his hand was gold. And then he plucked a pear from a branch. - we grew Fondante d'Automne - and it sat in his palm, like a lightbulb. On. I thought to myself, Is he putting fairy lights in the tree?

He came into the house. The doorknobs gleamed. He drew the blinds. You know the mind; I thought of the Field of the Cloth of Gold and of Miss Macready. He sat in that chair like a king on a burnished throne. The look on his face was strange, wild, vain. I said, What in the name of God is going on? He started to laugh.

I served up the meal. For starters, corn on the cob. Within seconds he was spitting out the teeth of the rich. He toyed with his spoon, then mine, then with the knives, the forks. He asked where was the wine. I poured with a shaking hand, a fragrant, bone-dry white from Italy, then watched as he picked up the glass, goblet, golden chalice, drank.

It was then that I started to scream. He sank to his knees. After we'd both calmed down, I finished the wine on my own, hearing him out. I made him sit on the other side of the room and keep his hands to himself. I locked the cat in the cellar. I moved the phone. The toilet I didn't mind. I couldn't believe my ears:

how he'd had a wish. Look, we all have wishes; granted. But who has wishes granted? Him. Do you know about gold? It feeds no one; aurum, soft, untarnishable; slakes no thirst. He tried to light a cigarette; I gazed, entranced, as the blue flame played on its luteous stem. At least, I said, you'll be able to give up smoking for good.



Separate beds. In fact, I put a chair against my door,  
near petrified. He was below, turning the spare room  
into the tomb of Tutankhamun. You see, we were passionate then,  
in those halcyon days; unwrapping each other, rapidly,  
like presents, fast food. But now I feared his honeyed embrace,  
the kiss that would turn my lips to a work of art.

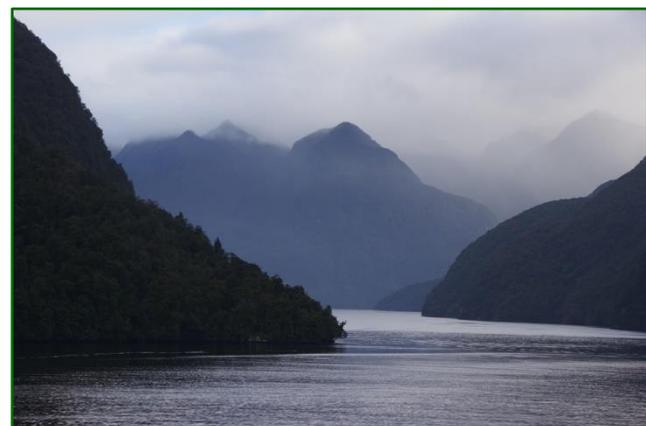
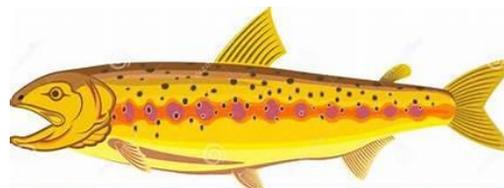
And who, when it comes to the crunch, can live  
with a heart of gold? That night, I dreamt I bore  
his child, its perfect ore limbs, its little tongue  
like a precious latch, its amber eyes  
holding their pupils like flies. My dream milk  
burned in my breasts. I woke to the streaming sun.

So he had to move out. We'd a caravan  
in the wilds, in a glade of its own. I drove him up  
under the cover of dark. He sat in the back.  
And then I came home, the woman who married the fool  
who wished for gold. At first, I visited, odd times,  
parking the car a good way off, then walking.

You knew you were getting close. Golden trout  
on the grass. One day, a hare hung from a larch,  
a beautiful lemon mistake. And then his footprints,  
glistening next to the river's path. He was thin,  
delirious; hearing, he said, the music of Pan  
from the woods. Listen. That was the last straw.

What gets me now is not the idiocy or greed  
but lack of thought for me. Pure selfishness. I sold  
the contents of the house and came down here.  
I think of him in certain lights, dawn, late afternoon,  
and once a bowl of apples stopped me dead. I miss most,  
even now, his hands, his warm hands on my skin, his touch.

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### **Luncheon Cove** by Cilla McQueen

It was so calm in Dusky Sound  
that Captain Cook requested  
luncheon served ashore

beside the frothing pool  
of a stream tumbling out of the bush  
where sunlight filtered down

and cool air sprang  
from amber peaty water, edged  
with rock and fern.

His linen white, his table set with silver,  
Captain Cook had an eerie, solitary feeling,  
as if he had set foot on the moon.

## Singing Group February

The U3A singers have made a good start to the year and are pleased to be back singing together again. During the coming months we will be re-visiting some familiar material from last year, and building on that with new songs, both a cappella and accompanied, in 3 and 4 parts.

While the soprano, alto and tenor parts have enough singers, another baritone/bass or two would be welcome. Please contact me [cstevensnz@gmail.com](mailto:cstevensnz@gmail.com) if you're interested. Claire



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## Tuesday Current Issues Group February

The Tuesday Current Issues Group February meeting was a little light on numbers, now that U3A courses have started. But that didn't stop vigorous and useful discussion.

1. A lot on the current NZ discussion on the Principles of the Treaty, and where this might be going
2. The Israel/Gaza ongoing situation
3. A little on NZ Foreign Policy and where it might be headed
4. A little on current US politics

Gretchen Kivell

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## Lunch Group February

A small number attended the monthly U3A lunch group which is held on the 2nd Friday at different venues around Dunedin.



This month we chose Ombrellos. The All-Day Breakfast, Eggs Benedict and Fish and Chips were popular with our attendees.

Next month we are going to The Waterloo Tavern at Forbury Corner on Friday 8 March at 12.15.

Please contact me: [annepstratford@gmail.com](mailto:annepstratford@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us for lunch.

Anne

## Garden Lovers Group February

The garden group had a wonderful start to the year. I could not have scripted it any better.



The sun shone, the views were stunning, the garden was beautifully set out, and our hostess even baked us a sponge for afternoon tea. What more could one ask?

Our day out started at the Blueskin Nursery for a tasty lunch. We had a good turnout of existing members, and we welcomed three new people to our ranks. It was a nice way to reconnect after the holiday break.



We had time at the nursery for a look at the displays of enticing plants, and a few plants made their way home with us before driving up Double Hill Road to visit the garden of Fiona Will and Dave Gardyne. Fiona and Dave have been living here for eleven years and enjoying the marvelous views over Blueskin Bay. The garden is laid out to maximize the views and provide sheltered areas for socializing and relaxing after work.



The work in the garden started in earnest after Fiona retired from her senior teaching position. The original garden had been professionally designed and planted out in native plants but over the years they had become overgrown, and a reset was needed. Fiona liked colour, so the garden now has a great mix of native plants, perennials, rhododendrons, and other ornamental trees.

Pathways lead you through the lower



part of the garden with views over the bay and back up to the house. Fruit trees and vegetables are tucked away in sheltered spots and the sheer number of plants had us snapping photos and discussing their healthy growth. Fiona did say she had had a few challenges with rogue plants, but it all looked very well managed to us.

A feature during our visit was the display of lilies, that towered above us in their striking colours. Fiona sourced these from a specialist nursery. They would be proud to see their stock.

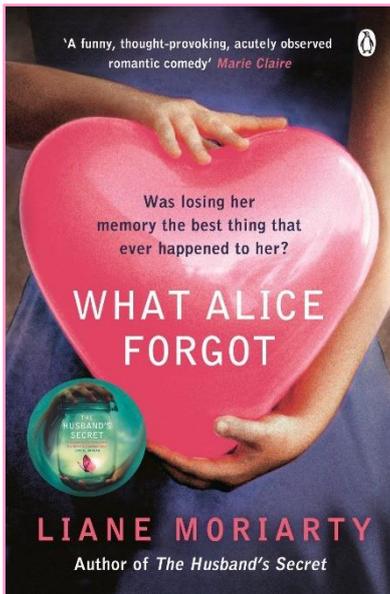
Our visit concluded with an afternoon tea, kindly provided by Fiona that included the aforementioned, freshly made cream sponge. It was a perfect end to the afternoon.

**Robyne**



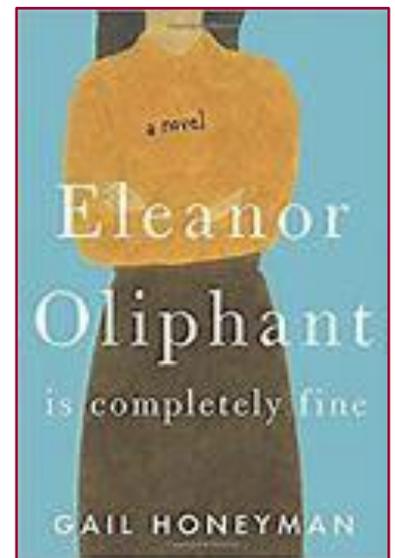
## Book Group February

Our first meeting for the year was over a shared lunch. We had apologies from new group members Ruth, Victoria, and Pam who we are looking forward to meeting next month.

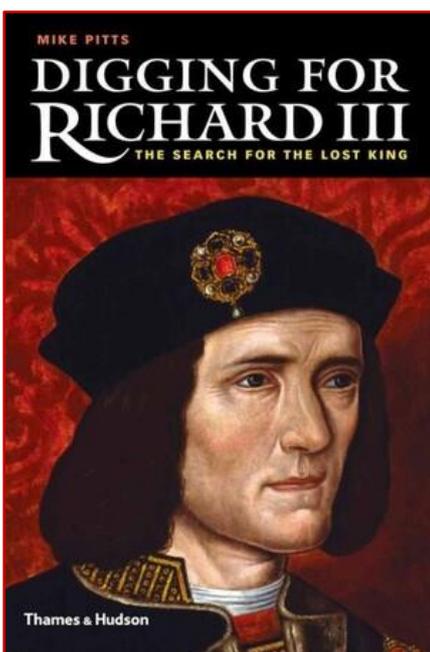


Elaine had been reading *What Alice Forgot* by **Leanne Moriarty**, an Australian writer. Alice 'comes to' on the floor of the gym with a bunch of worried friends around her. She can't figure out why she is at the gym and is shocked when she realises that she has lost the ten years of her thirties. She is not pregnant —and in fact she has three children, and her marriage to Nick that she remembers as happy is now on the verge of divorce. Alice is determined to figure out why her life has changed so much – why has her marriage failed? Who are these children? And why is her relationship with her sister so strained? How has she gone from a happy twenty-nine-year-old to a thin, grim, nearly divorced thirty-nine? An interesting story about memory loss which has been made into a movie starring Jennifer Aniston.

Also soon to be made into a movie produced by Reese Witherspoon is Elaine's other read *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by **Gail Honeyman**. Eleanor struggles with appropriate social skills and tends to say exactly what she is thinking. Nothing is missing in her carefully timetabled life of avoiding social interactions, where weekends are punctuated by frozen pizza, vodka, and phone chats with Mummy. But everything changes when Eleanor meets Raymond, the bumbling and deeply unhygienic IT guy from her office. And it is Raymond's big heart that finally helps Eleanor find a way to repair her own profoundly damaged one.



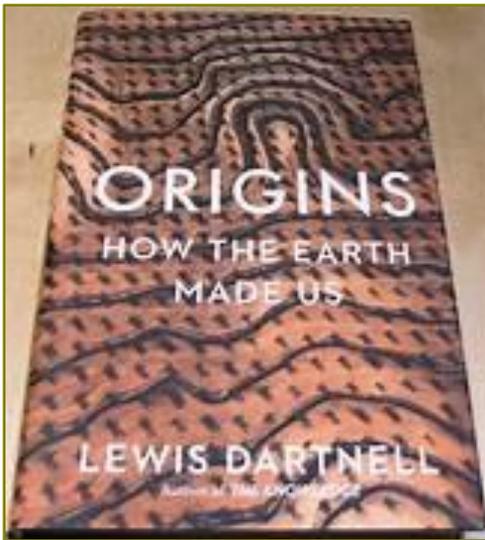
Ros has been reading *Digging for Richard III: The search for the lost King*. Though we all know how this story ends, *British Archaeology* editor **Mike Pitts**'s step-by-step account of the improbable discovery of the



skeleton of the last Plantagenet king of England, Richard III, is as gripping as any detective fiction. Richard died at the battle of Bosworth in 1485 and was vilified by the Tudor writers Thomas Moore and William Shakespeare in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Still, he had fervent supporters over the years, Philippa Langley among them. After much research, she came to believe that Richard was buried at the site of Greyfriars friary – now a car park in Leicester – and spearheaded the campaign for excavation. Pitts introduces the major players, each of whom worked towards their own ends. Archaeologist Richard Buckley and his colleagues had little interest in the dead king but had long wanted to dig up Greyfriars and Leicester Council saw the potential for a tourist bonanza. Only Langley believed Richard would be found. On the dig's first day the remains of a man with a twisted spine were found spawning a media circus. This story has also been made into a movie, *The Lost King*, which focuses on Philippa Langley over her fourteen-year

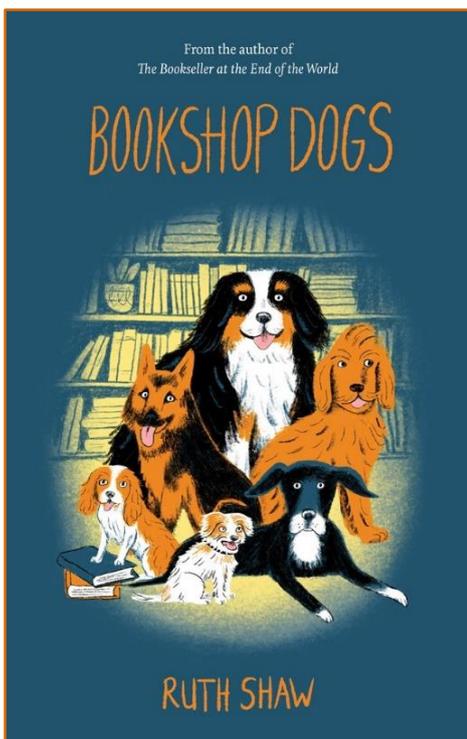
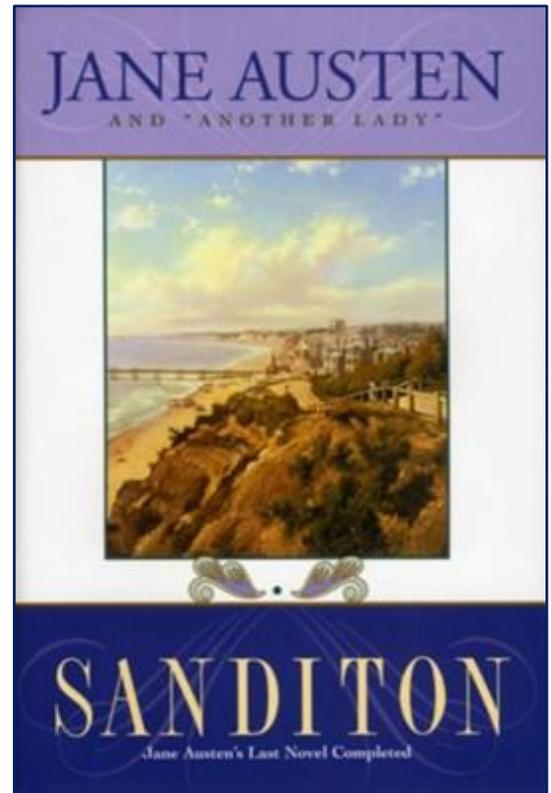
search. Both worth a look and recommended.

Nola had been reading ***Origins: How the Earth Made Us*** by **Lewis Dartnell**. How has the earth determined



our destiny and how has the planet made us? As a species we are shaped by our environment: geological forces drove our evolution in East Africa; mountainous terrain led to the development of democracy in Greece; and today voting behaviour in the United States follows the bed of an ancient sea (we did all question this, but there was a map detailing this proposition along the Mississippi). The human story is the story of these forces, from tectonic plates and climate change to atmospheric circulation and ocean currents. From the cultivation of the first crops to the founding of modern states, ***Origins*** reveals the Earth's awesome impact on the shape of human civilisation. This book was recommended by Nola's friend who is also interested in geology.

Carolyn has been reading ***Sanditon*** by **Jane Austen and Marie Dobbs**. ***Sanditon*** was Jane Austen's last novel, bequeathed unfinished to her niece. This is its completion. When Charlotte Heyward, eldest daughter of a family of fourteen, is invited to stay with Mr and Mrs Parker of Sanditon, she accepts with alacrity, intrigued to visit the once quiet town being promoted by Mr Parker as the newly fashionable resort for sea-bathing. As a guest of the Parkers, Charlotte is introduced to the full range of Sanditon's polite society, from Lady Denham to her impoverished ward Clara and to the feckless Sidney Parker and his hypochondriac sisters. Charlotte is a heroine whose clear-sighted common sense is often at war with romance. ***Sanditon*** has also been developed into a drama series for television which you can watch on the streaming channels.



Trish has been reading ***Bookshop Dogs*** by **Ruth Shaw**, author of ***The Book Shop at the End of the World***. Dogs of all shapes and sizes visit Ruth's three wee bookshops in Manapouri in the far south of Aotearoa. Local dogs, holiday house dogs, travelling dogs; many have great stories, be they funny, sad, strange, bemusing, quirky or sweet. Woven throughout are the tales of Hunza, the very special dog who worked alongside Ruth with troubled teens as a youth worker in Invercargill. A must read for dog fans and those who enjoyed Ruth's first book.

Our next meeting is on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 1.30pm.

Trish Irvine

## Art Collections February

No one said that a report could not start near the end of a wonderful viewing, did they? These four photos illustrate the reason we went to Knox College. Anne-Marie saw them on a fleeting visit one day last year and just had to go back and spend time having a closer look at them.



# The Yearbury Murals

Depicting *The Creation*  
as imparted by  
the Book of Genesis

The four Yearbury Murals were given to Knox College  
by the Burnett Family Trust, Silverstream in July 1995.

Three brothers from the Upper Waitaki were resident in College at times from  
and including 1934 to 1938: Bob (register no. 789), Sandy (873) and Mac (902).

These murals were painted by Pauline Kahurangi Yearbury and her husband, Jim. They were students together at Elam School of Fine Arts in the 1940's.

What a lucky find these were, Anne-Marie. They led to a very enjoyable morning for all the group, discovering the art and stunning architecture of Knox College.

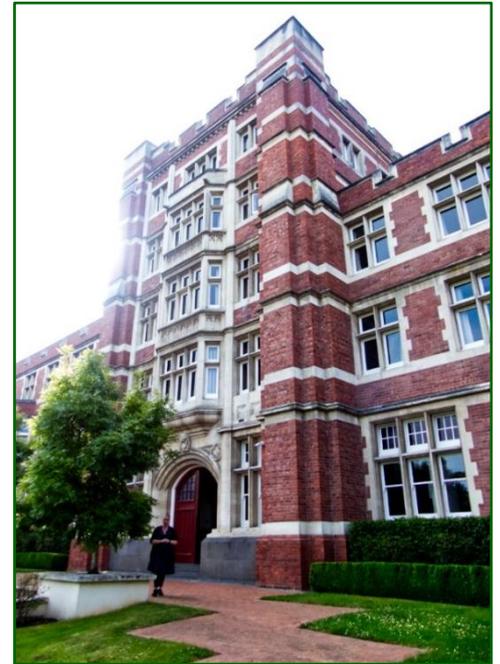
Ani

Anne-Marie

continues: We moved our February visit to accommodate Waitangi



Day so a few of our usual crew were unable to attend, but a small and keen group enjoyed a tour of Knox College. Led by the Director of the Presbyterian Research Centre, Rev Jay Robinson, we spent over an hour looking at this Dunedin



gem. Built in 1907, with sympathetic additions over the years since, Knox College is another of this city's

architectural treasures.



It is full of delightful works of art gathered over the years, such as these



three

watercolours of various scenes of Otago University by Douglas Chowns, who died just three days before our visit.

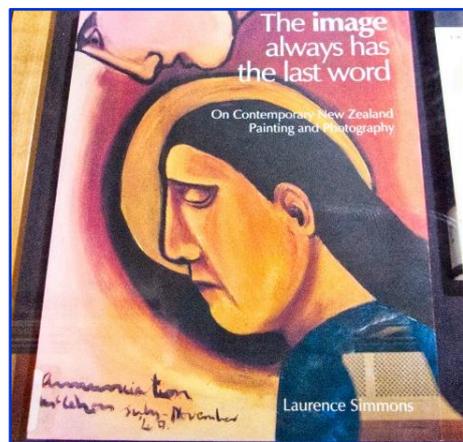




Genealogists will delight in the archives.



We were also treated to a look at the rare book collection including a beautiful early illuminated Bible. The Hewitson Library, complete with a slightly out of tune spinet, was interesting, as was the light and airy



chapel.



Knox College is open to visitors by appointment, (please phone ahead) and especially in December and January,

when the students are not in residence, I encourage others to enjoy.

Anne-Marie

## Mahjong Group February

We welcomed four new members last week, who all enjoyed learning the traditional game, and we



look forward to introducing them to the European version when they have built their confidence.

We are a very relaxed group, no competition and you just come when you can. We will start another beginner group on March 7th, contact Jean, [s-jilleyshort@xtra.co.nz](mailto:s-jilleyshort@xtra.co.nz) if you're interested. Jean

Incidentally, researchers who have studied the effect on people's brains of playing Mah Jongg report that compared to non-players, the Mah Jongg players had sharper minds and more long-lasting memory. Playing this game is thought to help prevent or delay dementia.

"Regardless of frequency of playing, mahjong produced consistent gains across all cognitive performance measures." – [International Journal of Geriatric](#) From [brainhealth.com](#)

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## Genealogy Group February

We started again with meetings at the library, where we shared our challenges and successes, and worked on our own research. We are starting to arrange more visits and some speakers on



topics of interest.

We have two new members, and currently, no waiting list.



We all have different amounts of experience and are happy to share our learnings to help break down those brick walls, where we just can't get any further. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact me. Jean

"According to this genealogy website, I'm 60,765228th in line to the throne!"

## Waikouaiti Global Conversations February

We started this group to discuss local, national, and global issues and this month we came together, looked at each other and said, “Do we have to?” Such is the state of all things these days.



A homemade lemon drink on the sun deck helped to cool us down, so we did get on with talking about irritating and unsettling current affairs. The hot topic of the week after Waitangi Day was Te Tiriti and the Act Party’s determination to spearhead a debate about The Principles. We shared our different understandings of The Treaty, its text, principles, and context, and realised the complexity of its evolution and the dangers of riding roughshod over our history and all the political, academic, and legal work that has been done by individuals and organisations over decades.

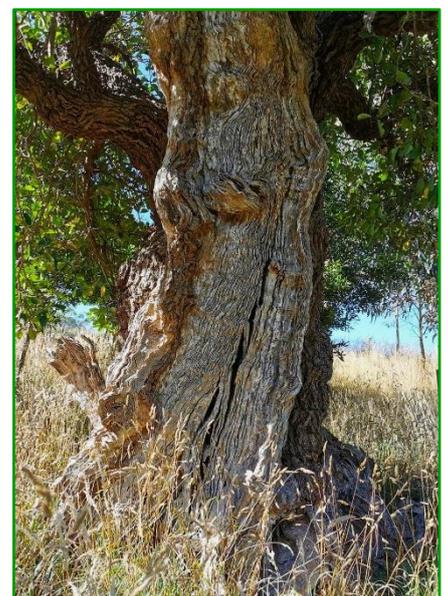
We were surprised by the findings of the recent Research New Zealand survey of 1000 people about a referendum on The Treaty of Waitangi that showed 36% (counter-intuitively, mostly younger) wanted it and 35% (mostly older) didn’t. Unfortunately, not enough information was gathered to really understand this response, but more men and more people living north of Taupo were in favour of a referendum. This survey simply further illustrates the complexity of the whole subject.

Some of us had watched the video ‘Brexit: An Uncivil War’ (a dramatization of the Leave Now campaign on TVNZ+) and could see potential parallels if a referendum was held in NZ.

At that point we decided to pull up the drawbridge, forget about the outside world and go for a walk up the hill to see the spring and newly planted forest on the farm of our hostess. It feels like we are moving

towards a friendship group over and above a discussion group. Isn’t that a bonus?

Kath Ryan



## Dining Group February

Nine diners enjoyed a meal at Cobb & Co restaurant last Friday evening. Seven of us had the very good value, Gold Card menu, with a choice of three starters, five mains and three desserts.



Two of the group decided to relish the smoked kahawai pie, followed by a dessert.

You must believe me when I say the food delivery was totally robotic. We were fascinated to see our meals emerging from the kitchen in this way. There was a real live



waitress to take our orders and she also assisted with popping the plates on the table.



Next month we are going to Best Café. Please contact me:



[karendwards@gmail.com](mailto:karendwards@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us.

Karen

## Photography Group February

A good turnout for an excellently planned outing to Kaka Point and the Nuggets Lighthouse. Thanks very much indeed Marie Thomson. We had a great day, and many of our partners came along.

Elsie, a very gentle golden retriever has joined our group along with her human, Pat.



Half of us picnicked on the beachfront while the other half lunched in comfort in the café. Some couples took the opportunity to spend a few days in the Catlins.



A wander along the beach yielded some interesting finds, not always immediately visible to the naked eye. It wasn't until processing the shots it became apparent that on this limpet, there was a snakeskin chiton.





This photo sent in by Marie has special significance to her. This was the site of her childhood family crib, in the area known as Back Beach. A holiday house has now been built at the top of the section to take advantage of the splendid views. In Otago, cribs are often fairly rustic holiday homes, but in other parts of New Zealand these are



referred to as baches, and the term crib meant something quite different to me before settling here.



Kaka Point, despite the overcast day, was inspiring to many of us. I really want that stone, Chris!



Most of us then headed to the Nugget Point Lighthouse. A brilliant sight while walking from the car park was, what seemed to be, a spoonbill nesting site. It was a very long way below, and rather fancifully

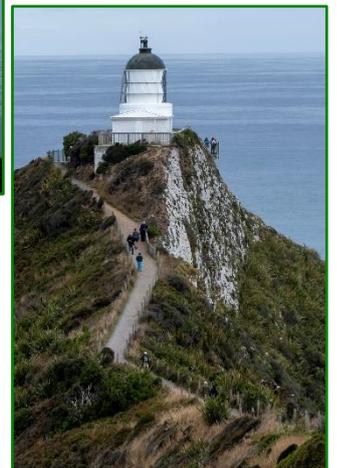
described by one group member as resembling a Magic Kingdom.



Another member returned the following week, taking Auckland visitors, and there was not a spoonbill to be seen, so bang goes that theory. So many shots of the lighthouse and nuggets so please bear with us.

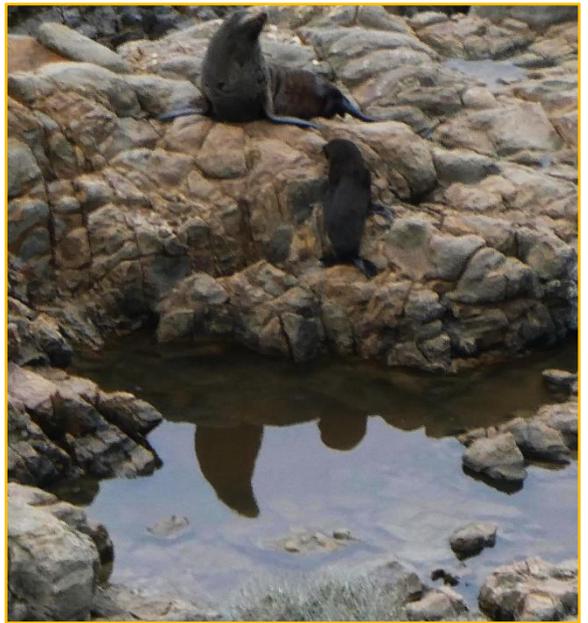


At least six different photographers chose the angle they preferred.





L: Will you just look at the amazing sight perched on top of the rock. Sea lions look so ungainly, but they can scale anything!



Below is a pic of



what might have been on a better day and taken exactly one week later. R: these feet just couldn't resist checking out the amazing puffballs!

Pics this trip by Sue, Chris, Kevin, Anne UK, Anne H, Graham, Ross, Marie, Ani and Pat.

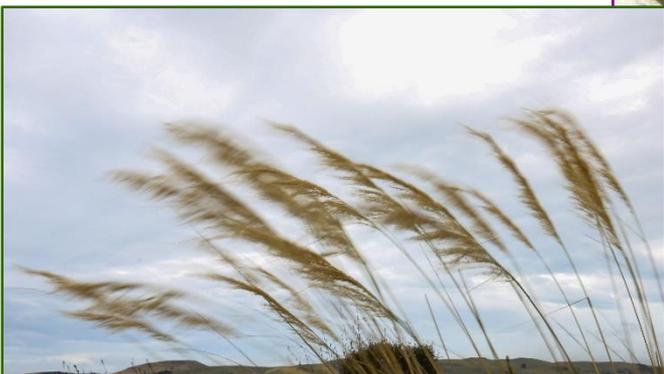




The well laid plans of Ross McIvor went a little awry on February 15 because of a dodgy weather forecast, but he quickly arranged a substitute



trip, and off we went to Aramoana. Some went along the Mole, a couple of us took the shortcut off Pari St and headed to



the beach, while others went to the boardwalk. A few took more than one option. Aramoana is great, so many different areas to look at the wonderful scenery, wildlife, and rock formations.



The shipping channel is so busy that it is rare to come down here



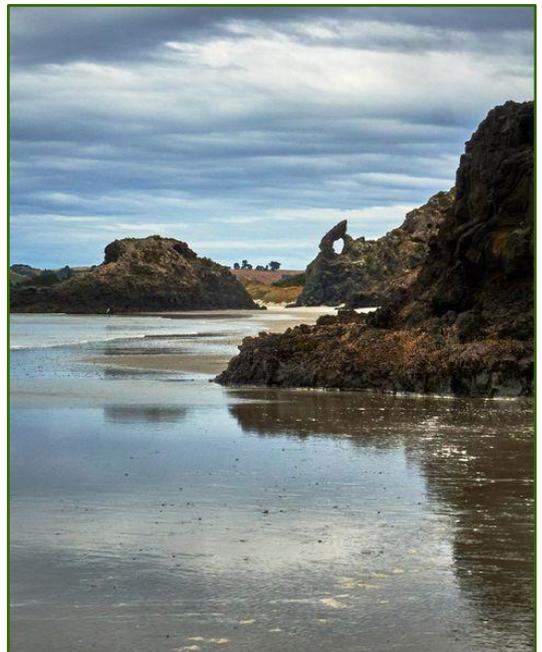
and not see ships, tugs, barges, the Monarch, and



smaller craft, heading in or out past the Mole.



Because the tide was very low, we got a long way further south of Keyhole Rock than usual. A new area for two of us.





The light rock, at a distance looked like a stand-alone column. Wasn't. Above: A take on the Sphinx?



We even included a slow drive through the maze of tiny streets to see some quirky sights.

The lady of the seahorse gate house loves, very dearly, the second husband she married

beside Keyhole Rock. He loves her so much he carved the gate just because seahorses are her delight.



I had hunted high and low online for a royalty free pic of a gold caravan just that morning. Who knew it could be found so readily?

Pics this trip from:

*Chris, Ross, Sue, Graham. Mary-Jane and Ani.*



Thanks very much,

Ross. Enjoyed by all. The consensus was apparent in the smiling faces and good humour of the group. Ani