



Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

January 2024

It is with mixed feelings that I write this. After much thought and consideration, Suzanne and I have decided to return to our roots.

Our original planned stint of two years in NZ has us still here after 17 years! We are NZ citizens and have settled in well. At one stage we had two of our three children, with six grandchildren, living here. We thought that this is where we would spend the rest of our lives. Years have passed, and none of them are in New Zealand anymore.

A few months ago, we spent some time in Cape Town. We visited friends and family, and also attended a university reunion. Returning to lovely Dunedin, we realised that 'home is where the heart is'. We both grew up in Cape Town, went to university there, and even got engaged on top of Table Mountain many years ago.

We are in the process of planning our relocation. In view of this, I shall have to step down from my U3A commitments, which includes the role of IG coordinator. I shall continue until the end of March, to conclude my involvement in the two courses of the Autumn series that I convened.

Having attended U3A meetings elsewhere in the world, I realize that the local chapter is unique. It should be treasured. My membership, albeit for a relatively short while, has enriched me and broadened my perspectives on a wide range of subjects.

With all the conflicts going on in this world in which we live, I leave you with food for thought with a quote from Nelson Mandela:

To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

Best wishes for the future

Andre Smith

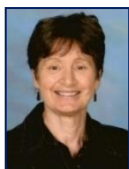
*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time*

T.S.Eliot



Art Collections Group

Convenor: Anne-Marie Hutton
Monthly: First Tuesday 10 am
annemariehutton@gmail.com



Book Share Group

Convenor: Trish Irvine
First Friday, 1:30
trishjockloch@gmail.com



Dining Group

Convenor: Karen Wards
Third Friday, 7 pm
karendwards@gmail.com



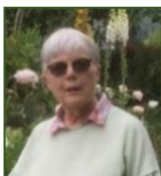
Expanding Musical Horizons **full**

Convenor: Paul Wheeler
Second Monday, 10 am
wheeler@outlook.co.nz



Gallery Group **full**

Convenor: Tash Hurst
Second Wednesday, 10:30
tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz



Gardens & Botanical Group

Convenor: Robyne Selbie **full**
Second Wednesday, 1:30
robyneselbie1945@gmail.com



Genealogy Group **full**

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



Lunch Group

Convenor: Anne Stratford
Second Friday 12:30
annepstratford@gmail.com



Mahjong Group

Convenor: Jean Tilleyshort
2nd & 4th Thursdays, 10 am
s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz



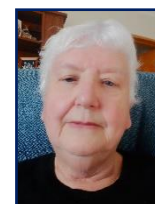
Monday Current Affairs Group **full**

Convenor: Joy Hayward
Third Monday, 1.30
joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz



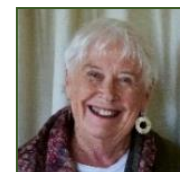
Photography Group **full**

Convenor: Ann Wood
First Thursday, 1:30;
Third Thursday, TBA
ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com



Poetry Group **full**

Convenor: Carole Bezett
Fourth Wednesday, 11 am
carolebezett@gmail.com



Singing Group **full**

Convenor: Claire Stevens
Weekly: Monday, 1 pm
cstevensnz@gmail.com



Tuesday Current Issues Group **full**

Convenor: Gretchen Kivell
Third Tuesday, 10 am
gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz



Waikouaiti Global **Conversations**

Convenor: Kath Ryan
2nd Wednesday 2-4pm
kathryan09@gmail.com



Walking Group **full**

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



Wanderers Group

Interim Convenor:
Anne Stratford
Every Wednesday at 1pm
annepstratford@gmail.com



Tuesday Current Issues Group January

Our group meets twelve times a year. The December and January meetings are less formal, and for any members who are not busy with families, holidays or tennis.

Our January meeting is usually held at a coffee house to emphasize that we are still on holiday, and this is no ordinary meeting.

This is the second year Harbourside Grill has given over the entire south side of their restaurant to us, for at least half of the time without others and sans music too 😊

We started with some observations on the policies of our coalition government, and then one member introduced two excellent Newsroom articles by Dame Anne Salmond:

- <https://newsroom.co.nz/2024/01/13/dame-anne-salmond-how-to-split-a-society/>
- and 'Will the real Christopher Luxon please stand up?' (the web address is inordinately long, but the author and title will get you there)

After that we found that sitting at a long table, as opposed to sofas around a sitting room, didn't work for general discussion so we had a catch up with our near neighbours, and then moved around the table for further catching up.

The morning was a very relaxed introduction to our new year 😊

Gretchen Kivell



Dining Group January

Five members of our group attended the dinner at Chilli Dhaba in Mornington We all chose something different from the Indian menu and shared a large bowl of rice. My dish, pictured below, was lamb rogan josh. Very tasty, as were the other dishes! An excellent waiter made sure that the spice additives in the



food would be adjusted to our tolerance levels.

We plan to meet at

Cobb and Co on the third Friday in February.

Anne Stratford



Walking Group January



Thursdays Walk on December 21

We walked around the replenished Te Ruaone Beach and Harington Point, Otakau, then enjoyed our Christmas repast at 1908 Café. John planned this and Ian led us around a place that would be wonderful for a family day

out. Great parking and toilets, a large area with play equipment and an adjustable basketball hoop, plus a beautiful white sandy beach for swimming or paddling all surrounded by great scenery. The resident sleeping sea lion completely ignored us.



Brighton Wetlands walk on December 28



After carpooling we started at Brighton Rd, headed past the houses on McIntosh Rd. then off the tarmac and the canoers paddling in Otokia creek, plus the extensive replanting of native species in the wetland ponding area. We paused for a photo about 100 meters up the hill beside a notice “Danger Live Wires” which we thought was quite appropriate. Refreshments were enjoyed at Brighton Beach Café.

Karitane Walk on 6 January

We didn't resist this invitation. “My wife, Maggie, and I are going out to Karitane for a couple of days Jan 5 -7 th. This would seem an ideal opportunity to go for a walk out to the old Huriawa Pa site on the Peninsula”. The sun, sea and summer all shone on us this day as we explored the peninsula, ate our lunch, and enjoyed the scenic drive to and from Dunedin, thanks to the thoughtfulness of our hosts.



Thursday's walk January 11 was around Sullivan's Dam



After consolidating at the Leith Bowling Club, we headed up Malvern St and Leith Valley Road to obey this instruction 'Park on either side of

the road, outside the gates of the dam.' It was a lovely bush walk with many photo opportunities across the water. The Croque- o-dile café at the Botanic Gardens had ample room as always for our large group.

Haring up Flagstaff on January 18 following Kris and Graham seemed like a great idea. After meeting at

the Bull Pen it was all uphill to admire the panoramic views and work off some of the festive season excesses. The rule



'what goes up must come down' was in play and we congratulated ourselves on our fitness by redressing the calorie balance at Copper in Maori Hill. We were again lucky with the weather, the showers arrived after lunch.

I see that our next excursion is to Waihola, but more on that in the next newsletter. Averil

In December 2023 we invited Rosemary Penwarden to our meeting to discuss her experiences of climate change activism. She talked about her belief that the climate crisis is far worse than we are told and her commitment to mobilizing people towards action through disruption (gets attention), local assemblies (keeps decision-making power with the people) and building relationships with government and the police.

Rosemary is currently on electronically monitored bail, wearing an ankle bracelet and serving her sentence of 125 hours of community service (work that she loves!) for creating a false document in 2019 calling off an international petroleum conference in Queenstown. In October 2022 she cemented her hand to a Wellington street during rush hour commuter traffic under the auspices of 'Save Our Trains', an activist group with links to the international A22 Network.



So, at our first meeting in 2024, we reviewed the state of the world, climate change, our reactions to Rosemary's presentation and talked about what we might do to look after ourselves in the face of so much negativity. Planned relaxation, community engagement and voluntary work came out as top suggestions. We shared what we had been reading, and viewing, over the holiday period and concluded that we would like more information about the good things that people are doing to address current concerns.

Suggestions are welcome!

Kath Ryan

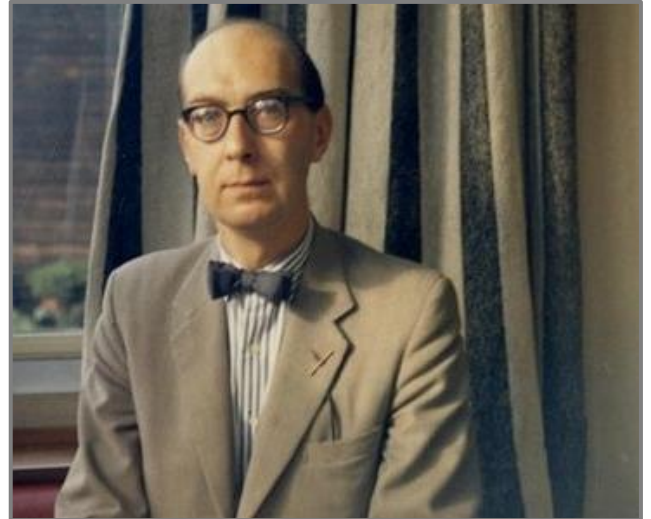
Poetry Group January

Six of us met on January 24 to share our poems on the topic, Summer. We welcomed along a new member, Adrienne, and enjoyed a shared lunch. The group was very kind about a cake that spread far wider and, consequently, lower than the hostess of the day planned. The day would not have been complete without Shakespeare's Sonnet No 18: Shall I compare Thee to a Summer's Day.

Mother, Summer, I by Philip Larkin

My mother, who hates thunder storms,
Holds up each summer day and shakes
It out suspiciously, lest swarms
Of grape-dark clouds are lurking there;
But when the August weather breaks
And rains begin, and brittle frost
Sharpens the bird-abandoned air,
Her worried summer look is lost,

And I her son, though summer-born
And summer-loving, none the less
Am easier when the leaves are gone
Too often summer days appear
Emblems of perfect happiness
I can't confront: I must await
A time less bold, less rich, less clear:
An autumn more appropriate.

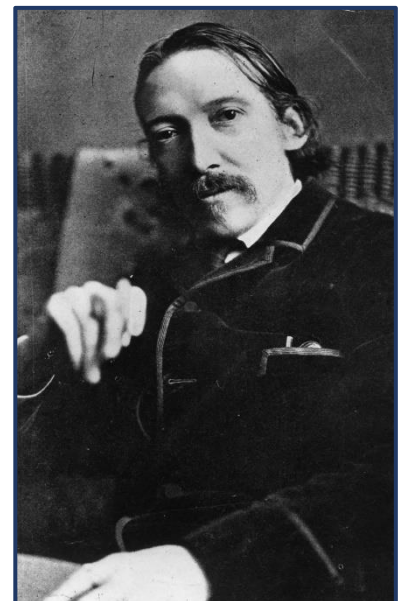


Bed in Summer by Robert Louis Stevenson

In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?



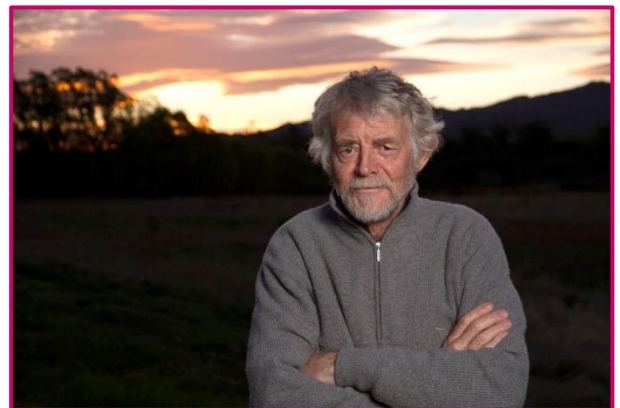
The Summer Day by Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean —
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down —
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?



Remembering Summer by Brian Turner

The memory of what you'd love to do again
is on the rise. You'd run barefoot
over the grass on a summer evening,
the sky like candy in the west
where the wind and the sun die down,
watch light flickering in the bounce
of water flowing over a wobbly bed
of gorgeous yellow, green and brown stones,
your mother's voice calling you home.



Photography Group January



Despite the rather unsettled weather over the Christmas period, it hasn't put a stop to some great photos being taken and then shared within our group. Mostly in and around Otago, but a few Auckland shots have snuck in.

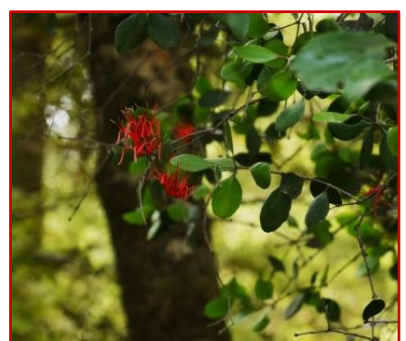
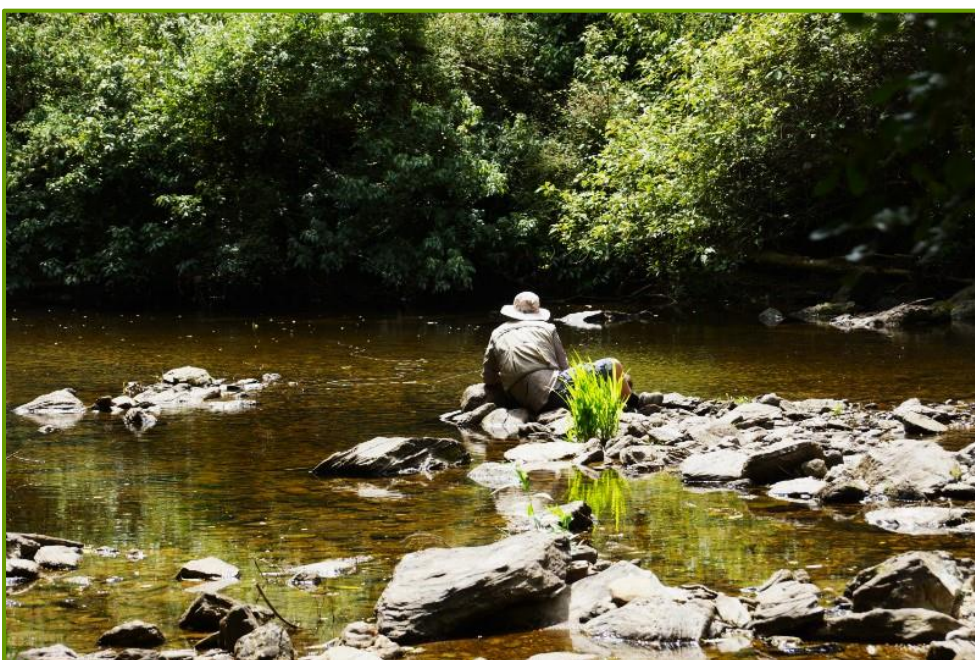


L: A quail on watch near Millbrook

R: Fancy-footed
Cootie and Mistletoe



Below: A member's son who is a very keen fly fisher.





R: Pounaweia



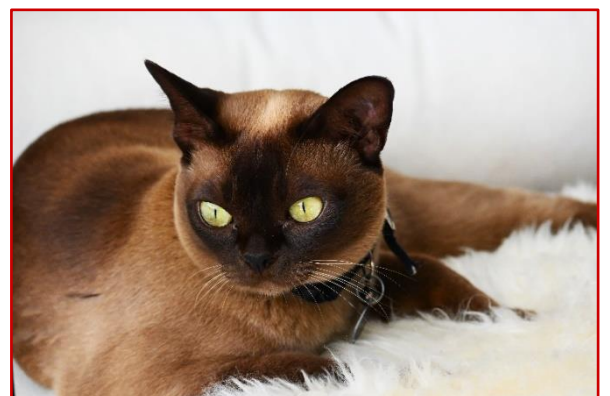
Below: A baby seal at Katiki that was crying for its mother

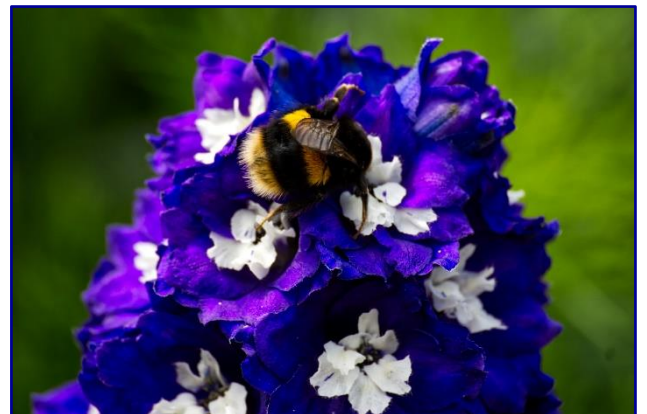
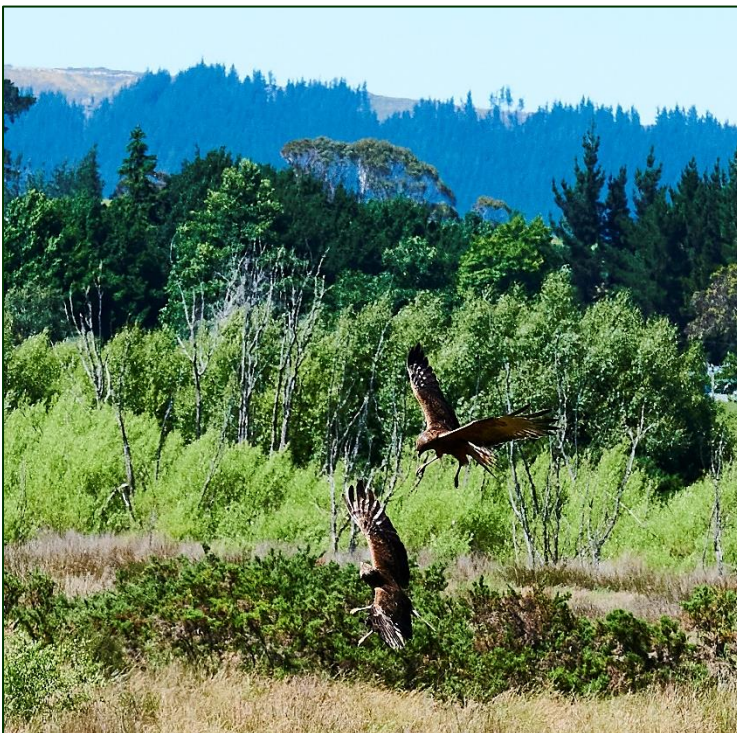


Above: Meditation at Doctors Point



Above: Big skies at Loganburn



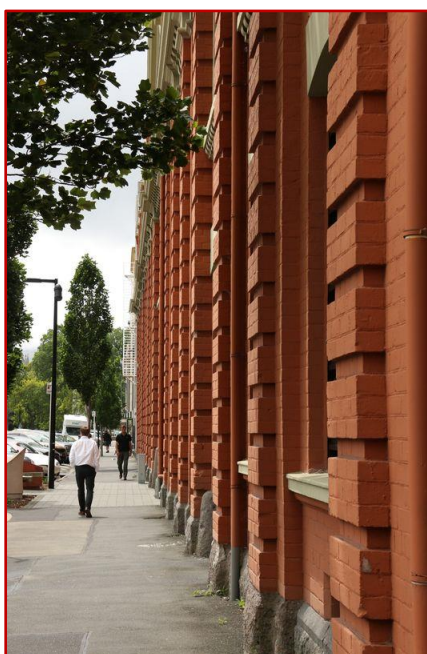


A good turnout was delighted to meet up again on 18 January. Thanks, Anne Matravers, for arranging this. Her brief was to take in the architecture and sights in and around Vogel St. Inspired by a couple of other Interest Groups, we are trying out a member's selection with, hopefully, all taking a turn to plan and organize a meeting throughout the year.

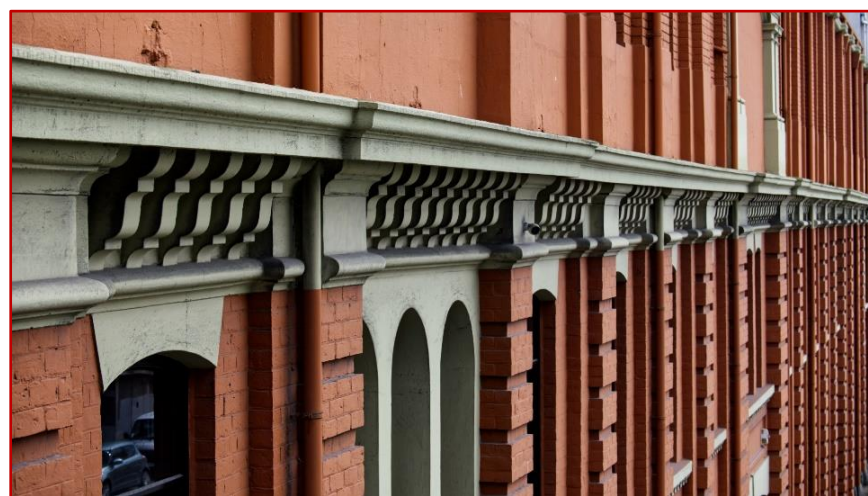
Ross busted a few of us who had detoured into the Hospice Shop, but one needs to ask, what was he doing in there?



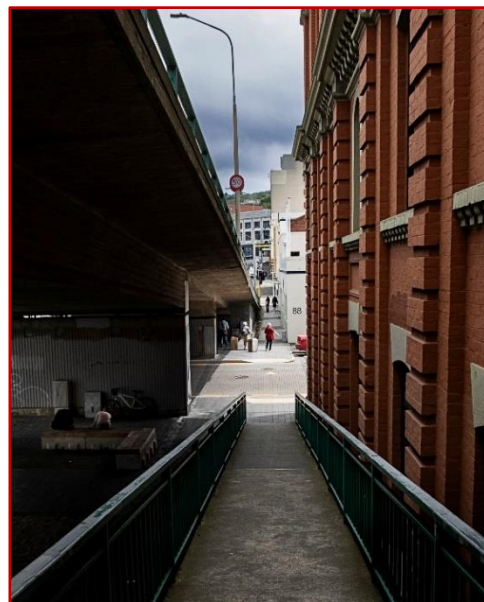
One building featured in the selections of many of the

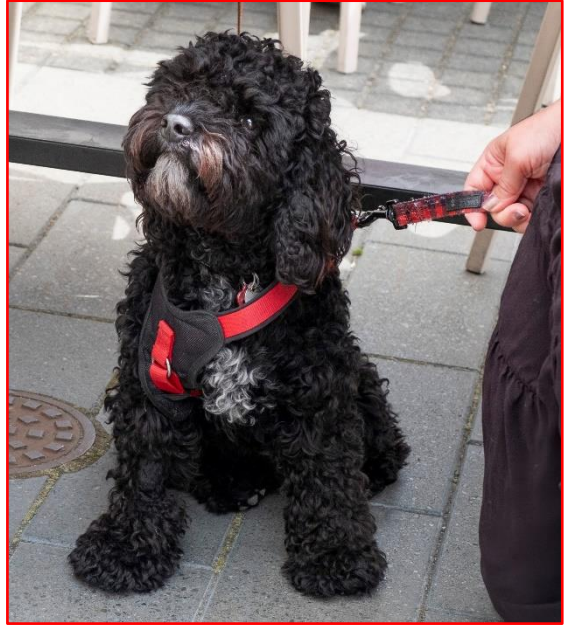


photographers. I have since looked on both sides, Vogel St and the one-way system heading south, for the name,

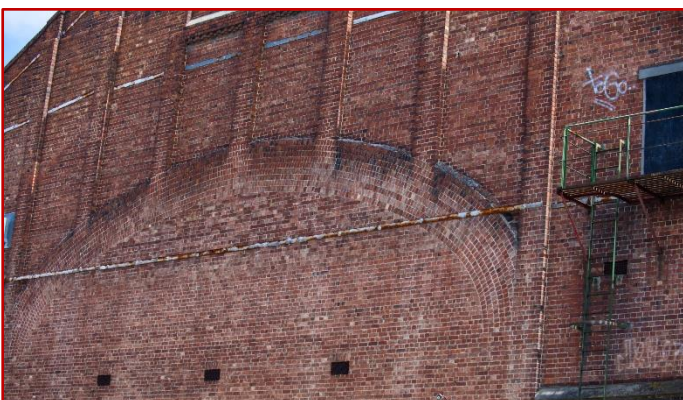
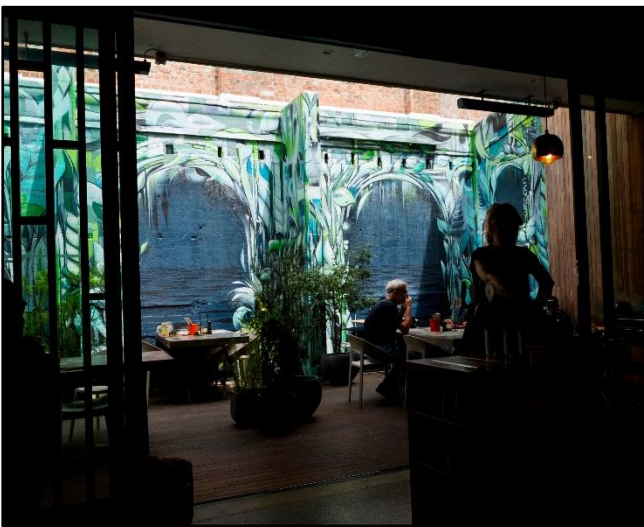
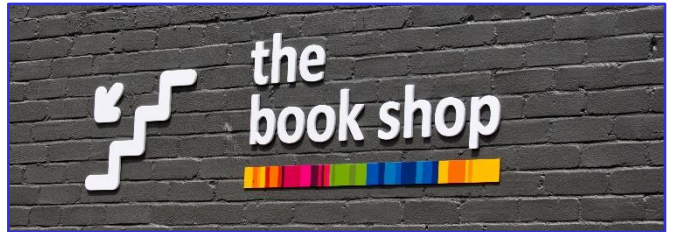


only to come up with a blank. A solution is to say it is 'innominate.'





The Railway Station as seen from an overbridge.

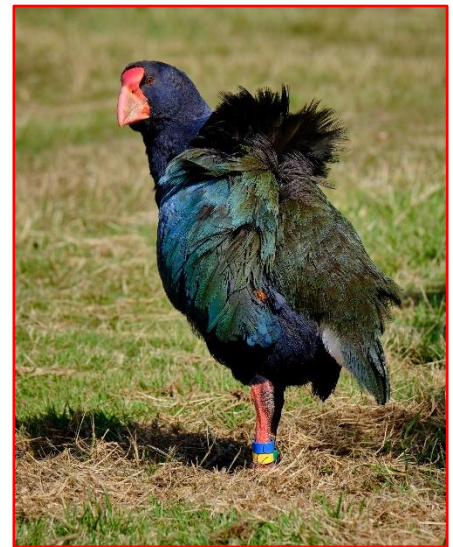


Photos this month are from Keith, John, Chris, Hildegard, Sue, Ani, Anne M, Graham and Eunan.





And this page is an unashamed plug for the wonderful Orokonui Ecosanctuary. A couple of us headed out last weekend with the aim of seeing the takahe chicks. Got lucky. If you haven't been, please know it is such a good day out. A five-month-old chick is almost adult size, but their colouring is still to emerge. A much younger chick below with wings just budding.



Bell bird below and a tuatara to the right. This gentle South Island robin hopped off the post and settled at my feet. Ani

