



Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

June 2023

Let me share with you an email excerpt from Andre Smith, Coordinator of the Interest Groups, who is currently in Australia. It sounds like a fairly intrepid trip, but he did say there was a pub along the way with great beer. Love the blue sky! Ann (Editor)

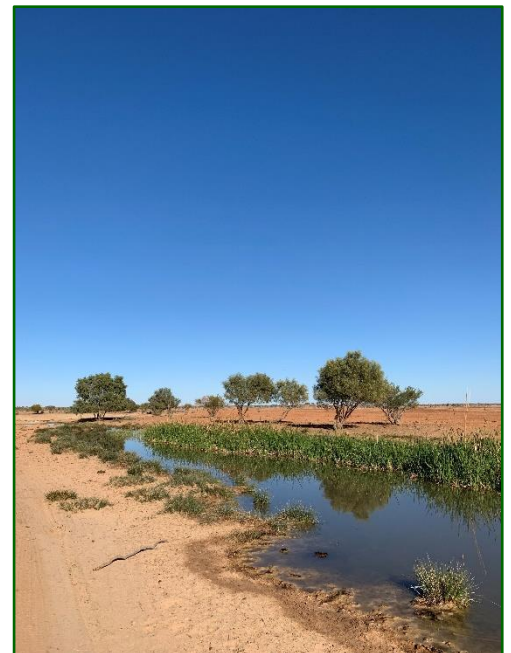


Greetings from the Australian outback! We have just completed the Birdsville track, from Birdsville to Maree, heading into the Flinders Ranges north of Adelaide tomorrow, 17 June.

L: Big Red dune near Birdsville

Since the start of our journey, we have already covered 2000 km.

R: Artesian water on Birdsville Track - 517 km of unsealed road through desert country. Over the first 250 km we came across only three other vehicles!



The whole trip will probably be about 6000 km. We aim to be back in Dunedin on 12th July.

L: Aboriginal art near Betoota.

With internet not readily available on our route (mostly camping), communication is a bit of a

hassle. Hope it is not too cold - we are enjoying the sunshine here.

Andre

Art Collections Group

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



Mahjong Group

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



Book Share Group

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



Monday Current Affairs Group **full**

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



Dining Group

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



Photography Group **full**

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



Expanding Musical Horizons **full**

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



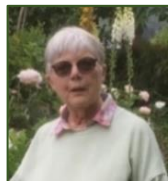
Poetry Group **full**

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



Gallery Group **full**

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



Singing Group

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



Gardens & Botanical Group **full**

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



Tuesday Current Issues Group **full**

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



Genealogy Group ***** NEW*****

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



Waikouaiti Global Conversations

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



Home Gardens Group **In recess until Sept**

Convenor: Carole Bezett
Third Thursday, 1:30
E: carolebezett@gmail.com



Walking Group **full**

Every Thursday, 10:30
Joint Convenors:



Averil McLean
E: averilmclean2@gmail.com

Lunch Group

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



Janet Hewson
E: je.hewson@xtra.co.nz



Garden and Botanical Group June

Our meeting was held indoors this month. A nod to the weather gods you might say, as temperatures turn chilly, and gardens take a rest. We met at the Otago Golf Club and anticipated a talk from our guest speaker, Joy Morton about Bonsai culture. Sadly, Joy was unwell and was not able to speak on the day, but we look forward to hearing from her in the future.



Instead, I had on hand a PowerPoint presentation of public gardens I had visited on overseas travels to North Wales, The Channel Islands, France and Britain.

Laburnum Walk at Bodnant Gardens, North Wales

We had a lively group of thirteen members who also shared some gardening experiences, swapped plants, and enjoyed afternoon tea together.



*R:
Jersey Botanic Garden, Channel Islands*

*L:
Church yard garden on Sark, Channel Islands.*



Next month Jean is 'taking' us to see gardens she visited in China. Robyne

***** NEW *****

Genealogy Group

***** NEW *****

This is an informal group for beginners and experienced genealogists, **starting on 21 July**.

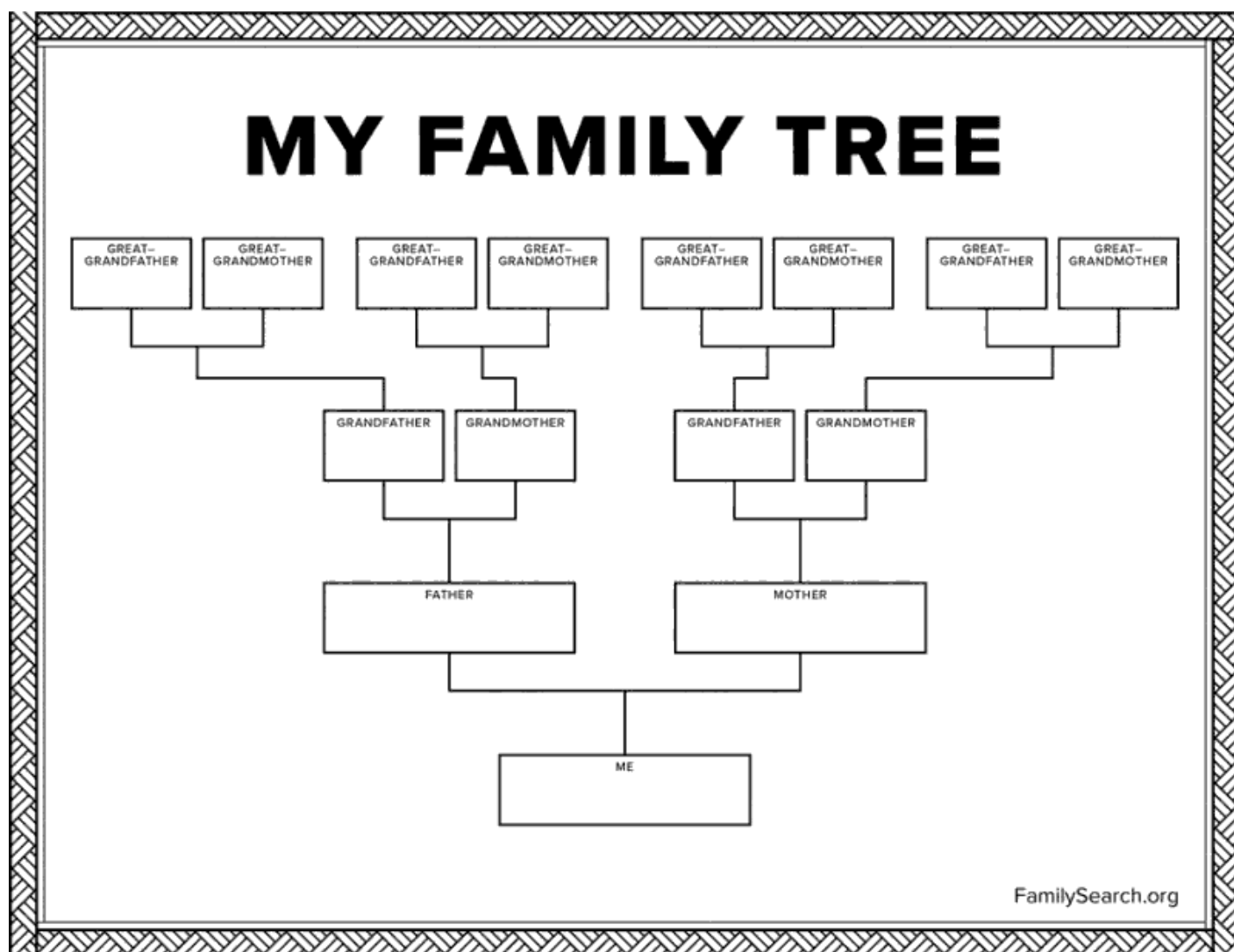
We will develop a range of activities depending on the interests and needs of the members of the group - workshops, visits to resources, time to work on our own research, brick wall brainstorm, DNA in genealogy, etc.

You will need to bring your own wifi capable device (phone, tablet or laptop), but you can use the library's Ancestry account and other resources.

Come and share your knowledge and your issues so we can all learn together.

We will meet every 1st and 3rd Friday from 10 – 12 in the McNab Seminar Room, 3rd floor, Dunedin Public Library.

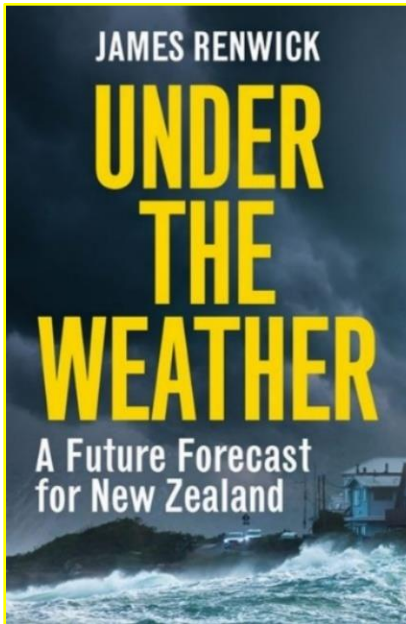
Contact Jean Tilleyshort to find out more (021 735481) or s-jtilleyshort@xtra.co.nz



Monday Current Affairs June

Our group welcomed a new member. Our topic, climate change, was somewhat ambitious. We have discussed this twice before; but as several of us attended Janet Stephenson's talk in the Why Can't We Get Along series, we approached it anew.

Whilst we were all armed with more information from multiple



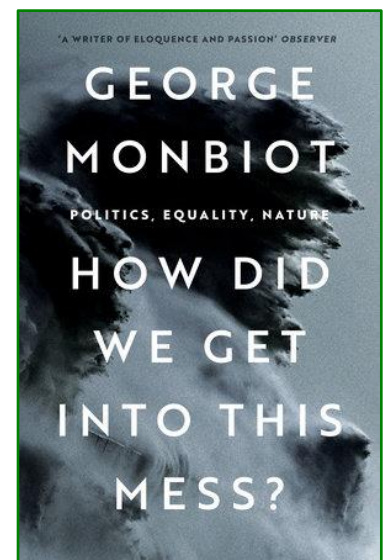
sources, this did not make the topic easier. There were a number of writers we had found helpful.

Naomi Klein, (*This Changes Everything and No is Not Enough*), George Monbiot, (*How Did We Get into This Mess*), and New Zealanders writing about how we will be affected, Veronica Medusa, (*Towards a Warmer World*) and most recently, James Renwick, (*A Future Forecast for New Zealand*).



There are so many interconnected issues, contradictions, and unintended consequences. Whilst discussion about whether it is happening is long gone, what can be done on a political and *A Future Forecast for New Zealand* individual level is very challenging.

Of course, most of us can have no influence over ruthless oil companies. Some of the discussion focussed on what can scientists do and some on what can we as individuals / consumers do. There was also a continuum of people who were more fatalistic and people who feared for the kind of life their grandchildren will have.

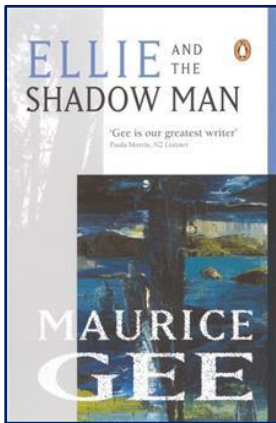


Our next topic is "Women should be having more babies." Demographic changes in the population.

Joy Hayward

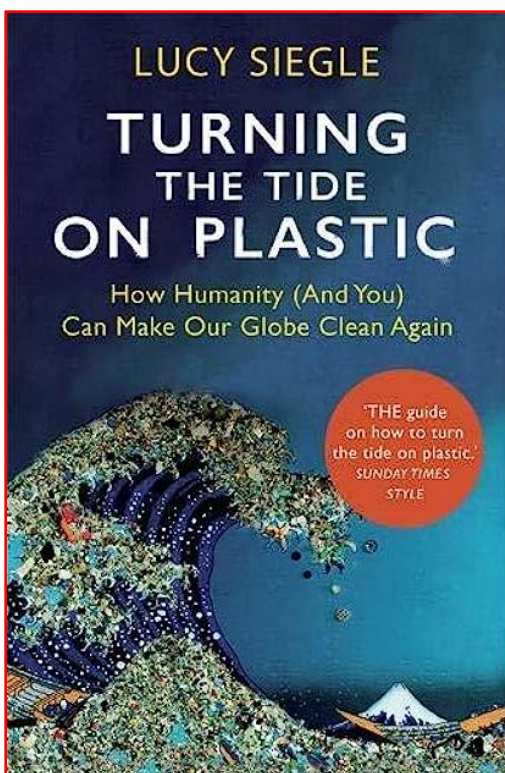
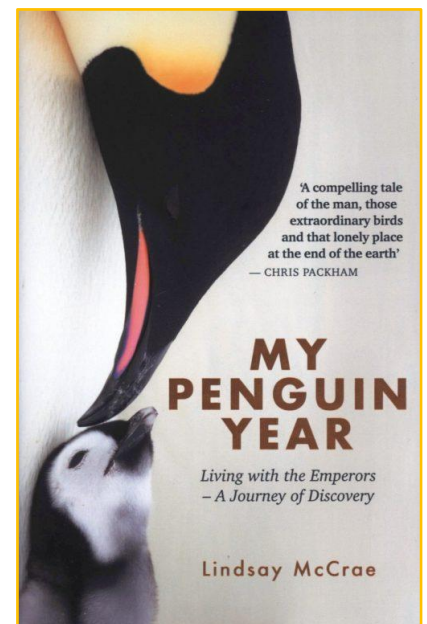
Book Share Group June

Our June meeting once again had a wide range of books to discuss and share.



Carolyn had been reading *Ellie and the Shadow Man* by **Maurice Gee**. This is the story of Ellie Crowther, a spirited and original woman who becomes a painter of distinction, but her canvases continue to be haunted by an elusive presence she thinks is her 'shadow man'. Told in five parts, it ranges from the 1950s when as a girl she lived in a WMCA hostel with her mother, to her twenties when she lived on a commune in Nelson, through to middle age, as she raised a son and became a painter. As the story progresses, Ellie came to understand and eventually make peace with her shadow man.

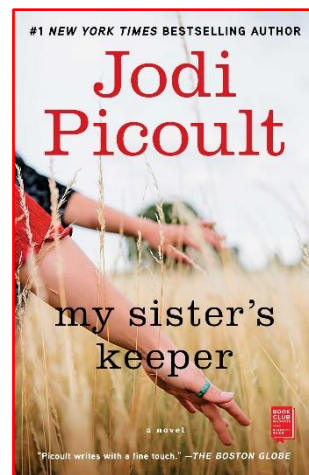
Ros had been reading *My Penguin Year* by **Lindsay McCrae**. When the BBC asked BAFTA winning cameraman Lindsay McCrae to go to Antarctica to film Emperor penguins he was thrilled. However, this meant leaving behind his partner Becky for eleven months and missing the birth of his first child and the first seven months of their life. Taking the chance of a lifetime, *My Penguin Year* recounts Lindsay's adventure to the end of the earth filming the most resilient creatures, who march up to 100 miles over solid ice to reach their breeding grounds. This is a beautiful book with amazing colour photos and a masterpiece in natural observation.



Elaine had been reading *Turning the Tide on Plastic: How Humanity (and You) Can Make Our Globe Clean Again* by **Lucy Siegle**. Enough plastic is thrown away every year to circle the world four times. More than eight million tonnes of plastic enter the ocean each year, and over 300 million tonnes of plastic is produced each year. Lucy Siegel provides a powerful call to arms to end the plastic pandemic, along with the tools we need to make decisive change. This book is an authoritative and accessible guide to help us.

Elaine also bought along a book by **Jodi Picoult**, *My Sister's Keeper*. This is the story of Anna, who is not sick, but she may as well be. By age thirteen she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots

so that her sister Kate can somehow fight the leukaemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate — a life and role she never challenged until now. Jodi Picoult tackles a controversial real-life subject with grace, wisdom, and sensitivity.



Nola introduced us to police commissioner **Guido Brunetti** who



confronts crime in and around his hometown of Venice. He features in a series of books by **Donna Leon**, and each case is an opportunity for the author to reveal another aspect of the seamy underside of society and another facet of Venetian life. Brunetti reports to the vain and self-serving buffoon Vice-Questore Patta, while Sergente Vianello and the all-knowing and well-connected Signorina Elettra, Patta's

secretary, assists Brunetti on the ground and through research. Leon lived in Venice for 30 years and her very popular novels have spawned multiple spinoffs, including a travel guide to Brunetti's Venice and walking tours with maps of the locations and routes noted in the novels. Harry Ricketts gave these books an excellent review on RNZ this month.

Trish had been reading *Laughing at the Dark*: a memoir by **Barbara Else**. This is a funny, elegant, moving memoir by one of New Zealand's best-known authors, a woman who finally rebelled against being a handmaiden. By the time Barbara Else was in her forties, she was married to a globally recognised academic physician, had two beautiful teenage daughters and a house in Karori in Wellington. Gradually she realised her husband did not want her to have a career of her own or do anything outside his orbit. He refused to acknowledge there was a problem. In the end the man who became her second husband offered a way out. It was a huge risk, but she fled, with a laundry basket of oddments, two suitcases, and her Mac Plus and dot matrix printer. The result was best-selling books and literary honours. A very enjoyable read.



Our next meeting is on Friday 7th July at 1.30pm.

Trish Irvine

Expanding Musical Horizons June

In the past few years, we covered two instrument families, firstly the violin family and then the woodwinds. Because we're all familiar with instruments from the orchestral family or know them well from other contexts, we explore lesser-known instruments from around the world and from centuries past.

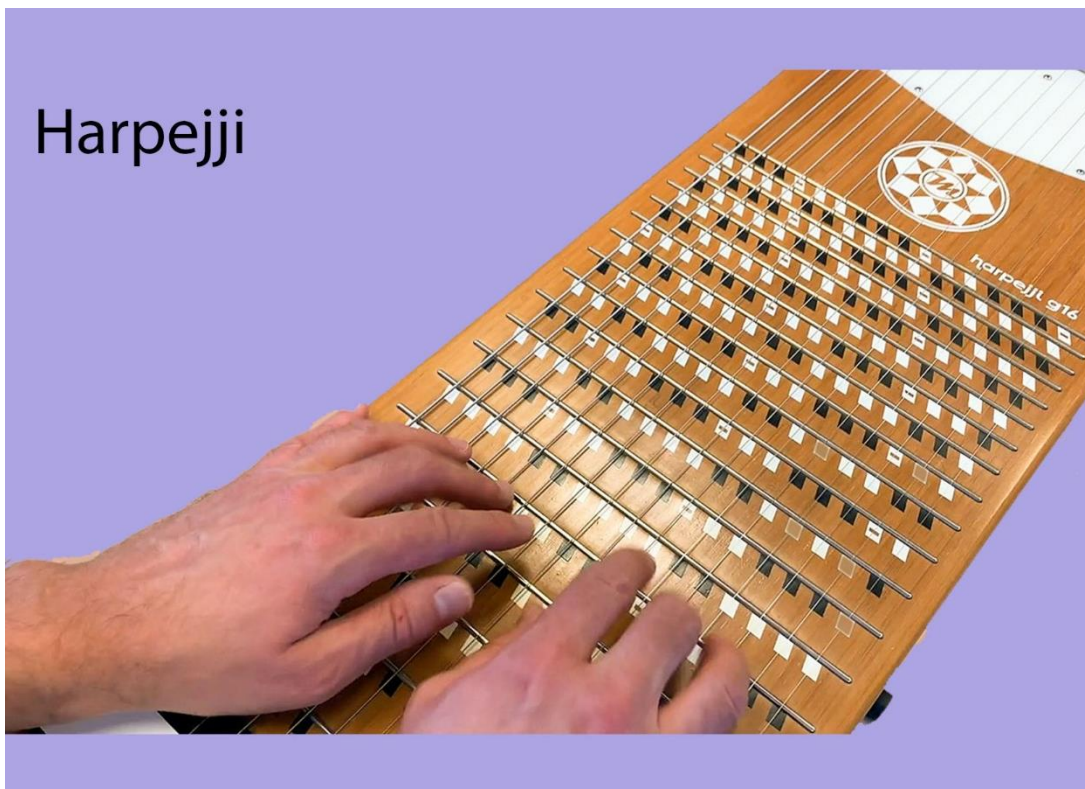
At our June meeting, we covered fretted instruments. Stringed instruments have been around for thousands of years and in so many forms that classifying them from pictures from historic times is nearly impossible. They were made of different materials, in different shapes and sizes, and were played with different techniques. Players of the violin family continue today to find the correct notes along their fingerboards, but someone (hundreds of years ago) decided to take the guesswork out of it and invented frets for their particular type of instrument. These were usually made of gut, and this development also made it easier for chords to be played.

We listened to a number of fretted instruments, including the lute, sitar, balalaika, bouzouki, pipa, torban, dobro, mandolin and mandola. Of particular interest were two 21st Century fretted instruments, the harpejji and the 12-string bass. Our next session will feature two of our members (both proficient



12 string bass guitar

Harpejji



guitarists), who will be going into much greater depth about playing and listening to various styles, how much electronics have advanced the range of sounds we can hear and much more.

Paul

Gallery Group June

Just when we think we must surely run out of amazing places in Dunedin, another pops up. This time it was initiated by Sue who was keen to follow up on the varied and talented Brian Stewart, an established artist at the Otago Art Society located in the Railway Station. Sue arranged with Brian for the group to visit him at his home little realising that his home was, in itself, a treasure.



Above R: *One of the beautifully restored trims and kauri fireplaces throughout the house. The tile inserts dictated the colour scheme in each room.*



L: *The Lincrusta panelling in the hallway.*

Brian's house is a historic Speights house located on York Place. He bought it over 20 years ago when it was separated into two flats and over the intervening years has restored it to its former glory. Fortunately, the house was basically sound, but Brian has undertaken considerable alterations to make it a

luxurious home for present day living, including luscious velvet pile carpets in the many living rooms plus the master bedroom.



Above R: *Examples of the wide range of art in which Brian revels.*

The house provides an extensive gallery to display all the paintings accumulated over the years as well as a substantial collection of Brian's own work over different painting phases in his life. We much admired the eclectic nature of the art he achieves as it ranges from abstract, to designs, to interiors, to landscapes, to still life, and everything in between. It displays an amazing and curious mind that is always seeking a new and unique way of illustrating everyday objects, through to wide open scenes of Antarctica.

Brian's studio is at the top of the house in the old servants' quarters and is the perfect haven for artistic peace and quiet. He built the access spiral staircase which involved a bit of contortion to get to the top by the taller members in the party.



R: *Brian explains the various techniques to all the interested artists in our group.*

We would like to thank Brian so much for giving

us a fascinating morning and for lighting all the real fires in each room as we went round the house. This is a house with so much history and love associated with it, that it must be preserved for ever and ever.



L: *One corner of the outside of the house. It is so big that it was impossible to get it in a camera shot. Note the amazing chimney, one of many.*



We met for lunch at Coffee Culture in the old Roslyn Fire Station where we enjoyed an excellent lunch as illustrated by Chris in this photo.



Our next visit is being organised by Jill and we are visiting the Dunedin Public Art Gallery where we are being taken to see the stacks. Our guide has asked that if there was a particular artist you would like to see, could you please notify Jill, and then the guide will get their artworks ready for our visit.

Tash

Lunch Group June



Five of our group met at Thai Mornington restaurant – two of whom were first timers. There was a large selection of dishes to choose from and we received a complimentary appetizer to share while awaiting our orders. Everyone was delighted with their meals, and we recommend this place as a good choice to eat.

Anne

Chocolate Salami Tried this whilst at a shared lunch last week. Very good it was.

I immediately thought of fiddling with the recipe, but it really does need the ginger element.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 pkt gingernuts (Kayes are good) | 150g pkt glacé cherries |
| 50g butter | 1-2 tbsp rum |
| 150g dark chocolate | 1 egg |

Crush biscuits. Melt chocolate over hot water or in microwave.

Melt butter and combine with beaten egg. Stir in melted chocolate, biscuits, cherries and rum.

Place mixture on greaseproof paper and roll into a sausage shape.

Wrap and chill until firm. Dust with icing sugar (optional) and slice thinly to serve. Ani

Dining Group June



We had a good muster, including one new member, turn up at Speights Ale House on a chilly Friday evening. The food was very good, and while I enjoyed the vegetable stack, the lamb shanks were a very popular choice among the group. I'm not telling which of us claimed the trophy for the 'cleanest bone'. Karen

Poetry Group June

Seven of us turned up at the sunny home of our hostess and sat around her welcoming kitchen table. Mary is a great cook and the hearty winter soup she made for our shared lunch was top notch. One or three of us were less than enthused about today's topic: Hands, but we all came up with different choices with only one double up. Two of us chose this poem.

These are the Hands

By Michael Rosen

These are the hands
That touch us first
Feel your head
Find the pulse
And make your bed.

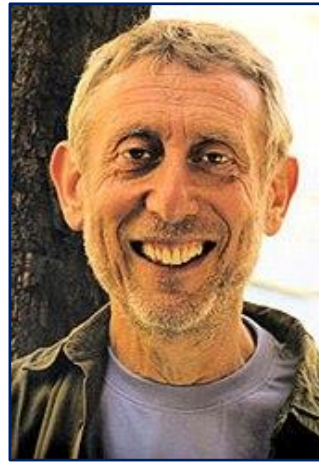
These are the hands
That tap your back
Test the skin
Hold your arm
Wheel the bin
Change the bulb
Fix the drip
Pour the jug
Replace your hip.

These are the hands
That fill the bath
Mop the floor
Flick the switch
Soothe the sore
Burn the swabs
Give us a jab
Throw out sharps
Design the lab.

And these are the hands
That stop the leaks
Empty the pan
Wipe the pipes
Carry the can
Clamp the veins
Make the cast
Log the dose
And touch us last.

British children's author and broadcaster: Jewish.

Born 1946. Most famous book:



We're Going on a Bear Hunt.

He wrote These are the Hands for the 60th anniversary of the NHS.

Michael Rosen very nearly died from Covid

in 2020. He spent many weeks on a ventilator, and later wrote this poem (and many others) about his experience.

Ani

*I am not who I was.
I am who I was.
This is not me.
This is me.
I am now the person
who had Covid:
the thing that came in March
I am now the person
who disappeared
in April and May
I am now the person
who peers into the mirror
hoping his left eye
will see what the right eye sees,
catching a glimpse of the blackness
of the big pupil
looking back at me in hope.
I am now the person
who hears the telephonic trebly sound
through the hearing aid
in his left ear,
that makes the sound of a kettle boiling
into scream.
I am now the person
who is alert to every twinge
or mark anywhere on me.
I am getting to know this person.
This is not me
This is me.*

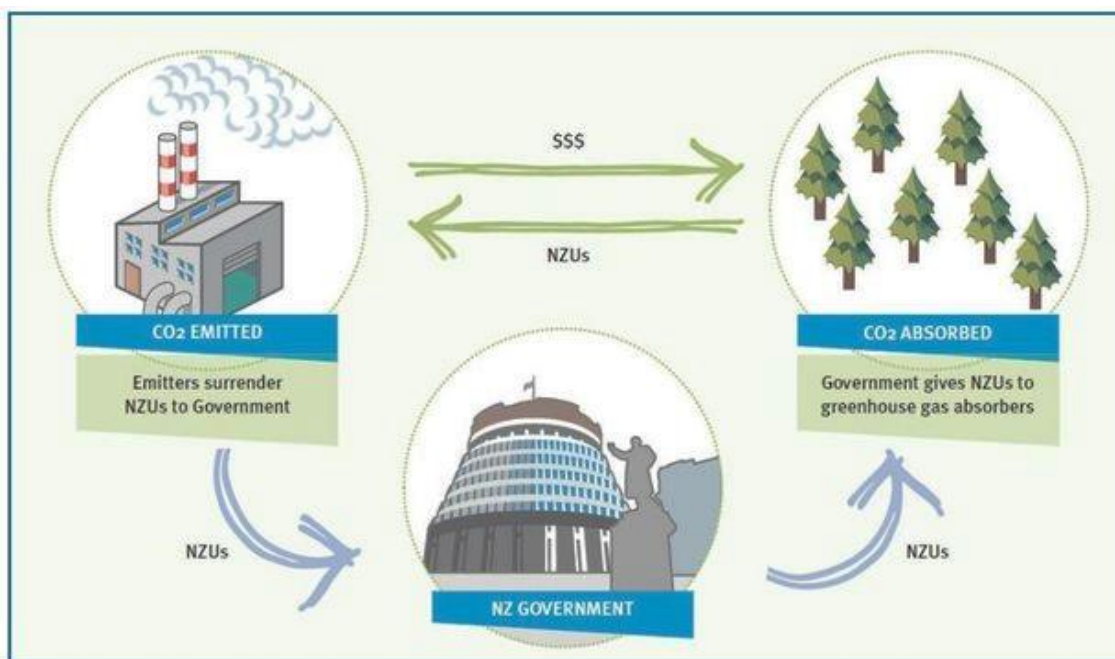
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/sep/30/michael-rosen-on-his-covid-19-coma-it-felt-like-a-pre-death-a-nothingness>

Click on the link above to read the interview.

We held our second meeting this month, welcomed one new member, and continued with the informal conversational format in the meantime. This seems to work for us with a range of perspectives being expressed and respectfully listened to, on a variety of subjects. In light of Radio New Zealand's revelations about altered Reuters' reports on the war in Ukraine, we revisited our previous conversation about trusted sources of information.



Other topics included politicians, farmers and the emissions trading scheme; the financial situations of New Zealand's universities, restructuring and government support for the



tertiary education sector including the pros and cons of university study versus experiential learning; and, briefly, artificial

intelligence, demographics and the track record of government delivery on policy.

In the interests of getting to know each other, we also started a round of in-depth introductions, which we will continue over the next few meetings. It became evident that by the time we get to be members of U3A, we have all lived varied and interesting lives!

Walking Group June



Paisley in Scotland. A wonderful opportunistic find years ago”.

We kept on going to Ross Creek amongst the stars. And then finished our day at the Botanic Gardens for coffee.

Martin led us on a favourite walk starting around Woodhaugh. A bit of history there, and Shona shared a watercolour (painted by George O’Brien who lived in Dunedin until his death in 1880). “He was a cousin to my grandmother Anne Smith from



Maree gave us an up and down variety of the old money streets mixed with the Town Belt and then to our usual tables at Copper.



Janet pushed us through Tainui and Tahuna. We stopped for a photo at a FIFA Women’s World cup venue. Then over the golf course and back along Portobello Rd for a drink with high fibre, high calorie treats at her house on the hill.





Ian kept us near the water at Tomahawk Lagoon and Tomahawk Beach. We came across this interesting signage on a house along the way.

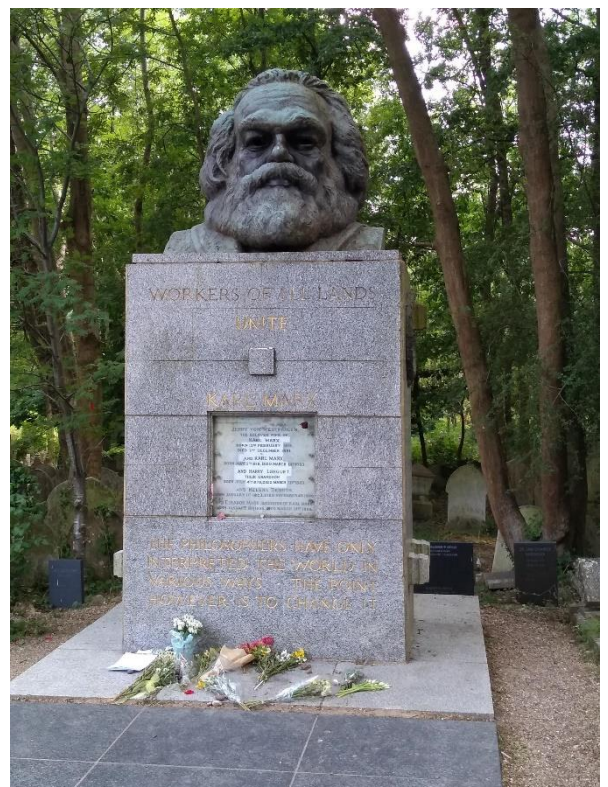


Coffee at a new spot on the Esplanade, Fugue

Bev, who is overseas but still walking, sent several interesting pics from Highgate Cemetery - Karl Marx and a faithful dog.



Thank you to the walk leaders and followers who keep us moving, talking and experiencing new neighbourhoods and cafes. Janet

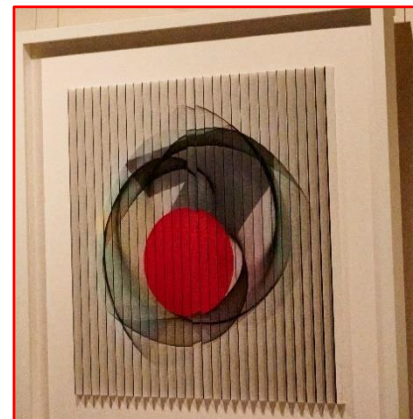


Art Collections Group June

Our June visit was held at the very end of May so that we could attend the Cleveland Art Awards at the Otago Art Society in the Dunedin Railway Station before the exhibition closed on June 3rd.



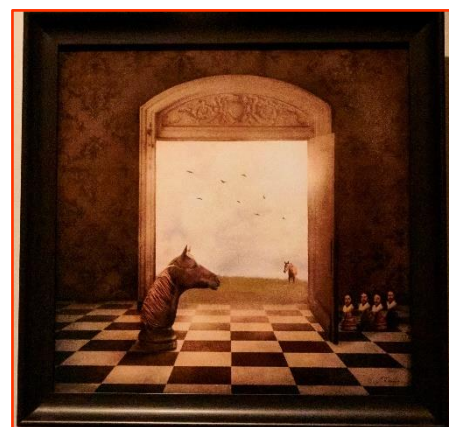
It was a very convivial outing in which we welcomed two new members, Jackie and Pat. We engaged in much discussion about our personal preferences, comparing them with the works to which the judges had awarded prizes. Among our favourites were:



L and R: **Ambiguity** by Mark Cowden.
This clever mixed media work



changes dramatically as you run/walk/saunter past it. Buy this, and you will effectively have two works of art!

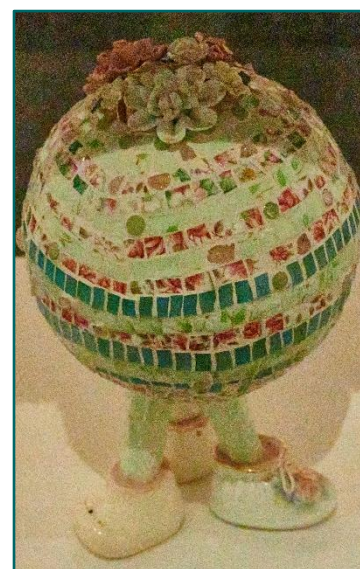


R. **The Unsung Song**, a Digital Print created by Carolyn Dakin

Above: **Self Combustion** by Jasmine Middlebrook, Oil on canvas



R. **Trois Pieds** by Sharon Pine, a mixed media work which had delicious mosaics.



L: **Jimmy and Joe** by Jenny Sutherland, Acrylic. Almost certainly based on James Cook and Joseph Banks.

We popped into the Potter's Collective over the road from the station, then finished our morning with tea, coffee, treats, and a further chat at the dog-friendly Maggies in Lower Stuart Street.

Anne-Marie



Tuesday Current Issues June

A relatively small group met at Coffee Culture Roslyn. We discussed informally several issues, 'going with the flow'.

The general election scheduled for later in the year, parties and individual politicians provided plenty of fodder. Opinions were expressed about policies, such as one party's law-and-order ideas, as well as a range of other issues, including funding and wealth disparity.

Individual members of parliament who make life difficult for their leaders, provided further subject matter. Leaders themselves came under scrutiny.

We branched out to local politics and felt that one southern council may have a continuing problem with relationships.



Aspects of waste generated in Dunedin were discussed: the Kettle Park landfill, the new Smooth Hill landfill, proposals for waste incineration at Glenavy and plans to truck Dunedin's recyclables to Timaru.

Waste volumes were an area of concern. One member calculated that if Dunedin generates waste at the same rate as in the last forty years, and if landfills were of similar capacity as the Green Island one, eleven new landfills would be needed in the next five hundred years. It is unlikely that that many sites could be found. This has already been discussed

with the DCC, both councillors and a senior staff member. The council was urged to undertake an education programme, aimed at limiting the amount of waste going to landfill, but seven months down the track nothing has been done.

Could more be done with recyclable materials being generated by businesses? It seems so.

We touched on the Ukraine war, and wondered what it will take to bring an end to the conflict. Putin will want to save face.

John Jensen

Claire from the **Singing Group** reports that numbers are fluctuating a little at the moment due to travel and the ills of winter. Watch this space for news of an aural surprise. Ani

Photography Group June

On the first day of winter a hardy group of intrepid photographers set out to explore the Sinclair Wetlands “a basin that has been down-faulted in the underlying schist, a metamorphic rock that still outcrops as the ‘islands’. The wetlands can be classified as

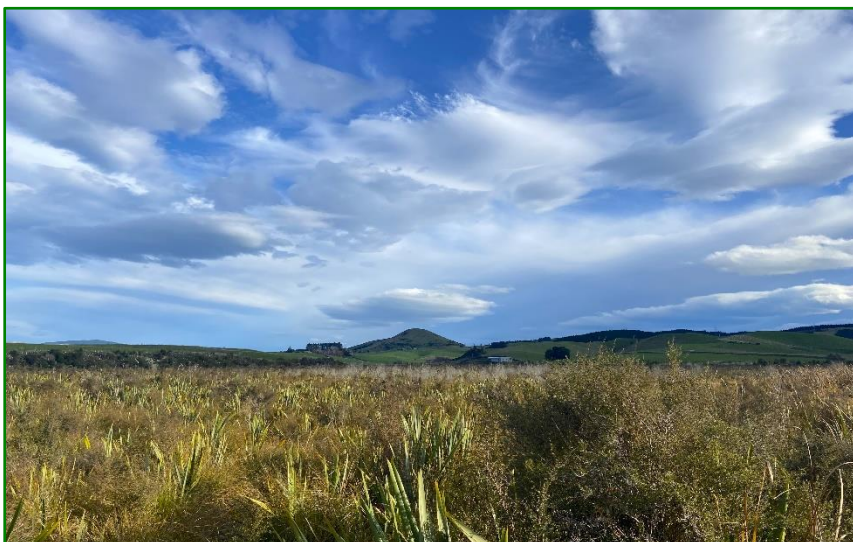
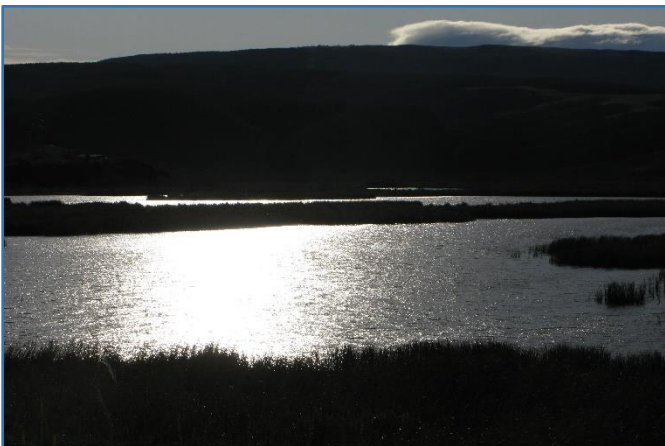


swamps, i.e. relatively fertile, with much surface water and numerous ponds” ([The Wetlands » Sinclair Wetlands \(tenohoaka.org.nz\)](http://tenohoaka.org.nz)).



We were rewarded with a lovely sunny,

balmy day with excellent visibility. The walkway extends about 2 km and along the way, raised ground provided vantage spots for some beautiful landscapes.



We could even see Lake Waihola and village in the distance. While we were hoping to see some of the abundant wildlife which inhabits the area, this was not to be. A pair of paradise shelducks were seen feeding in one of the smaller waterways, while some pukeko were seen on a nearby hill. Swallows and sparrows were also visible, but we didn't manage to spot other species.



Later in the afternoon some beautiful cloud formations were on show and these made excellent subjects for keen photographers. The exploration ended with afternoon tea, picnic style at



the tables provided by the trust. Great conversation and some delicious gluten free treats (thank you Linda) rounded off the day's exploration. Anne H.

Photos from Sinclair Wetlands by Chris, Sue, Anne H, Anne M, and Linda.

I'm delighted that two wonderful women stepped up to organise this group for the



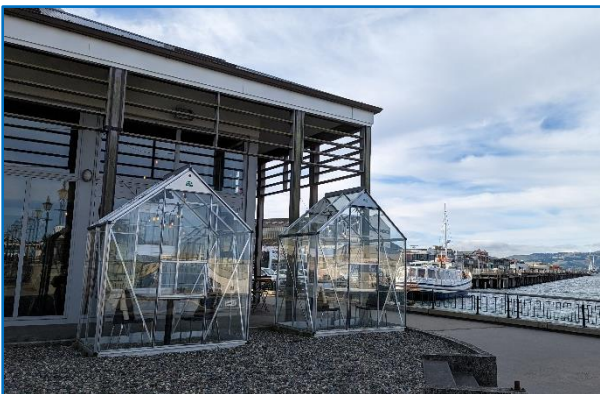
month of June while I went to one of the Winter Lecture series to hear the vastly interesting Prof. Terence Doyle. Well done, and thank you, Anne H and Sue! Ani



The weather was again kind for our second excursion this month - some cloud cover and not as warm, but no rain. The Harbourside Area was our destination. Possible photographic subjects included harbour and city views from the wharf areas not closed off to the public. This area was limited but did provide some acceptable vantage points across to Waverley and out along the harbour that attracted some members of the group.



The Monarch was in dock and gave some interest to the landscapes out along the harbour. There were some striking reflections off the glass building which was built out over the sea. Others were attracted to Fryatt Street and surrounding areas. Here were showcased old buildings, rusty downpipes, interesting paint colours and huge tanks encircled by stairs. These also provided good picture opportunities.



We wandered where our interests took us, then met up again at the Harbourside Grill. Here we found two small glasshouse structures, each with a table and chairs for two, apparently built during the covid



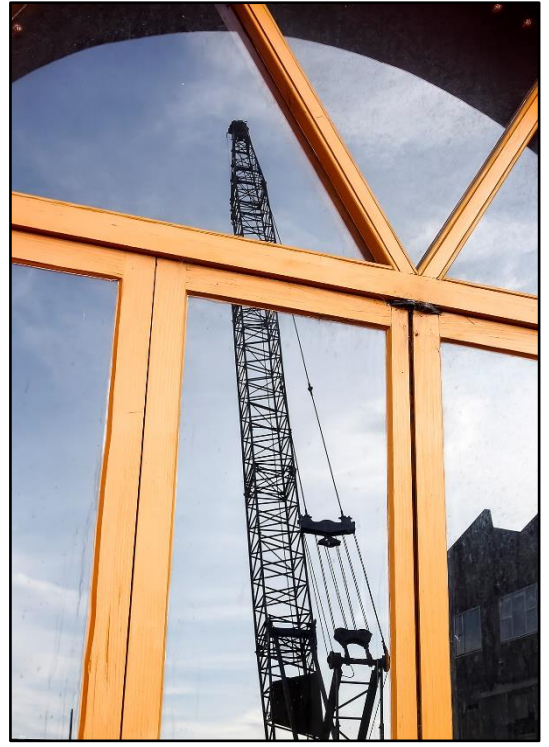
restrictions. Charming as they were, we all elected to settle in the main building where we shared our days experiences over tea, coffee and some delicious treats. Sharing ideas gave others a chance to find some different subjects not seen in their initial walk if they felt so inclined. Anne H.

I just loved the photos that emerged from this trip, and it has been hard to whittle them down to publish here. The whole gamut from monotone to very colourful. One bright spark shot this from Signal Hill. I thought he had a drone, but not so, just a good long-range lens. Ani





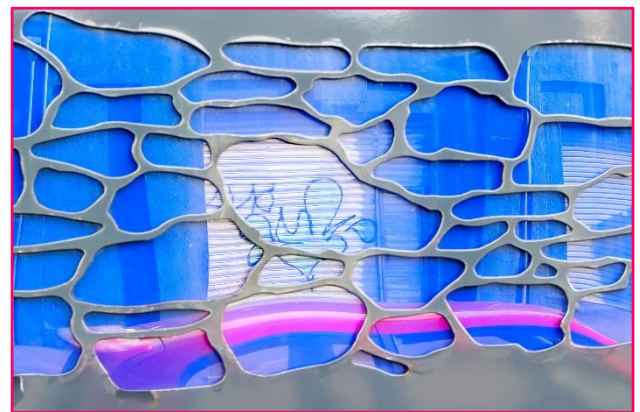
Something I normally avoid, but the first seven pics on this page are all by Laurie. I was simply unable to resist the vibrancy of the photos



he sent in to share with us.



Other waterfront photos by Sue, Anne H. Hildegard,



Chris, Anne M, Graham, Linda and Howard.

L: 2 views

1 sculpture



