



October 2019

DiscussionGroups NEWSLETTER

Greetings members!

Another successful month for the Discussion Groups.

There have been three members who would like to take part in a **German Conversation** group. There is room for one or two more. Please contact Ngaire if you are interested. There is also room still in both **Book** Groups.

The first group of participants in the **Mahjong** lessons have completed their lessons. They are now playing fortnightly at St Barnabas Rest Home in Ings Avenue on a Thursday morning for a cost of \$2 to cover heating etc. If you would be interested in this group and know how to play please contact Ngaire.

The second group of lessons begins on Tuesday 29th October at 10.15am at St Barnabas Rest Home also. This group is full.

We are looking to start up a **Poetry** and a **Chess** group. The poetry group will include the development of Haiku poems which sounds like fun.

All in all a very successful month.

If you have any ideas for new groups please don't hesitate to contact Ngaire Bates and she will do her best to take it further for you.

Ngaire Bates
T 454 2170

E ngairemichael@gmail.com

Friday Book Club

Facilitator; Garda Cotesi
<gardacortesi@gmail.com>

Monday Current Affairs

Facilitator: Joy Hayward
T 454 4996 E: joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz

Book Club 2

Facilitator: Angela Vickers
E: angela.nz@e3.net.nz

Tuesday Current Affairs - (full)

Facilitator: Gretchen Kivell
T: 4730031 E: gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz

Dining group

Facilitator: Nanette Linklater
E: nanettelinklater@gmail.com

Expanding Musical Horizons(full)

Facilitator: Paul Wheeler
T 476 0462 E: wheeler@outlook.co.nz

Film Group (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford
T 027 461 5343 E billstanford9@gmail.com

Gallery group

Facilitator: Tash Hurst
T 467 9747 E tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz

Local History

Facilitator: Stuart Strachan
T 482 2339 E sistrachanz@gmail.com

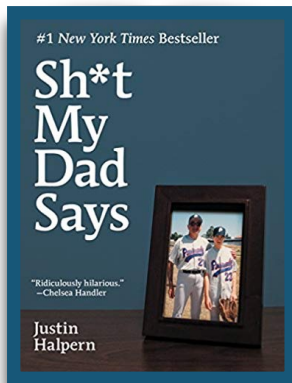
Walking Group

Facilitator: John Hogue,
E hoguetimaru@xtra.co.nz

Invisible Women in Art History

Facilitator: Moya Smith
T 476-1415 and 027 4761415
E: moya.smith@xtra.co.nz

Friday Book Club



Although our numbers were small for this meeting, we had a very interesting and informative afternoon. We set the world to rights!! The first book reviewed was

Sh*t My Dad Said by Justin Halpern

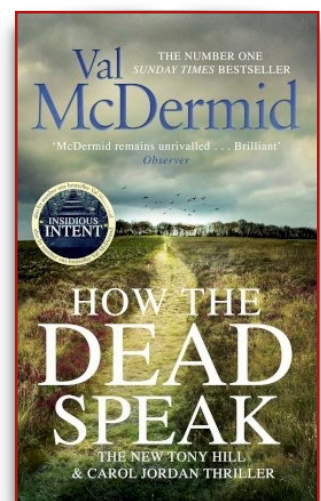
After being dumped by his long-time girlfriend, twenty-eight-year-old Justin Halpern found himself living at home with his seventy-three-year-old dad. Sam Halpern, who is "like Socrates, but angrier, and with worse hair," has never minced words, and when Justin moved back home, he began to record all the ridiculous things his dad said to him. Very funny.

Counter-Revolution - Jan Zielonka

Liberal Europe in Retreat. A bold attempt to tackle the extraordinary problems facing present-day Europe. A provocative argument, accessibly presented in a series of heartfelt letters.

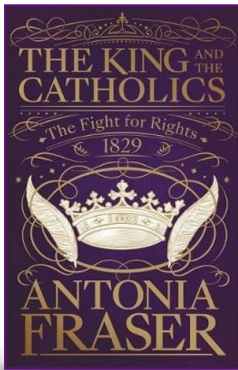
How the Dead Speak by Val McDermid

When human remains are discovered in the grounds of an old convent, it quickly becomes clear that someone has been using the site as their personal burial ground. But with the convent abandoned long ago and the remains dating back many years, could this be the work of more than one obsessive killer? It's an investigation that throws up more questions as the evidence mounts, and after their last case ended catastrophically, Tony Hill and Carol Jordan can only watch from afar. As they deal with the consequences of previous actions, someone with a terrifying routine is biding their time - and both Tony and Carol find themselves closer to the edge than they have ever been before . . .



Circle of sisters by Judith Flanders.

The novelty of this lively and well-researched biography is that Flanders does not focus on the lives of famous men, or even famous women. Her subject is the intertwined lives of "four women of little fortune". The Macdonald sisters, Alice, Georgiana, Agnes and Louisa, started life as daughters of a poor Methodist minister, "middle-class by the skin of their teeth". Yet Alice became the mother of Rudyard Kipling and Georgie the wife of the pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones; Agnes was the mother of prime minister Stanley Baldwin, while Louise married Edward Poynter, an art-world worthy and minor painter who presided over both the Royal Academy and the National Gallery.

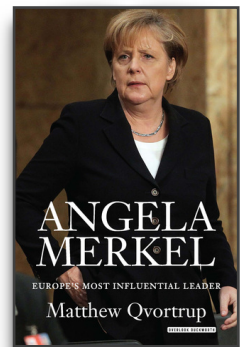


The King and the Catholics by Antonia Fraser

Gripping, spirited, and incisive, *The King and the Catholics* is character-driven narrative history at its best, reflecting the dire consequences of state-sanctioned oppression—and showing how sustained political action can triumph over injustice.

Angela Merkel by Matthew Qvortrup

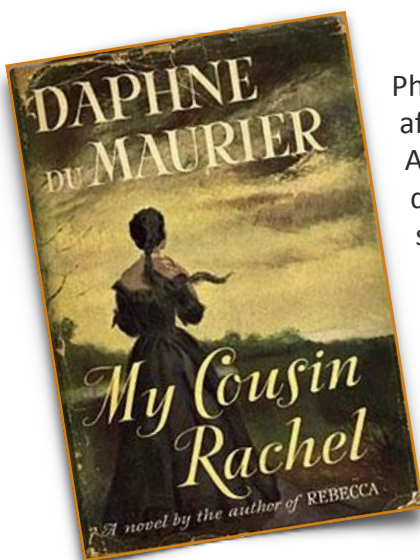
Angela Merkel has been Chancellor of Germany for the past 11 years; arguably, she remains the most powerful political leader in Europe. Yet most Americans are unfamiliar with her personal or political life, so this first English-language biography can help alleviate that shortcoming. A well-written and informative tribute to an extraordinary political leader. This book is updated to cover trump and Brexit.



Family Romance By John Lancaster

In their particulars, the Blanchester's were not every family. The father was an international banker, the mother a former nun. Yet in the dynamic of family life, their patterns are instantly recognisable. The heart of that dynamic is a built-in tug-of-war: to a young child, a sense of loving protection becomes, as he matures, a set of barriers to be overcome.

My Cousin Rachel by Daphne du Maurier



Philip is a young Englishman who finds his cousin Ambrose dead after traveling to Florence, Italy. He vows revenge against Ambrose's missing wife Rachel, blaming her for his untimely demise. When Philip meets Rachel for the first time, his mood suddenly changes as he finds himself falling for her seductive charm and beauty. As his obsession for her grows, Rachel now hatches a scheme to win back her late husband's estate from the unsuspecting Philip.

Gallery Group



A few of our group were either sick or away but a band of 6 were warmly welcomed with much banter and humour into Ron Esplin's exhibition called "Beautiful Dunedin"...Ron kept us well entertained with extracts from his autobiography (that he felt we should all write..). He explained how his journeys overseas often inspired his paintings. Unlike his father Tom Esplin who painted in oils, Ron has chosen water colour as his medium. This has brought him continual joy and his latest exhibition attests to this enjoyment. The scenes of Dunedin are instantly recognisable and might contain a picture of your house!.. It was well worth a visit to the Rob Piggott gallery on Jetty Street.

"Beautiful Dunedin" Ron Esplin Exhibition at The Robert Piggott Gallery 8 Jetty St Dunedin: Beautiful Dunedin is an exhibition of sixteen watercolours and one acrylic by Artist Ron Esplin illustrating his love for the city in which we live. "It is my duty as an artist to point out the beauty that surrounds us. Mounting this exhibition with the help of Rob Piggott has been a pleasurable experience for me, and his peaceful gallery at 8 Jetty Street is a perfect environment for visitors to take some moments out of the daily hustle and bustle, and to contemplate these views of the city that we share with one another".



Our next visit is to Anne Ryan at the University Glass blowing unit c/o Zoology Dept. Marples Building 340 Great King Street. at 10.30.

The studio is off the main corridor through glass doors and further down to your left. The sign hangs from the ceiling. You go through a door and across a ramp/platform between the Marples Building and the building next door. Take care when exiting the building as the ramp/platform is on a slope and can be a bit unexpected.....Jan

FILM GROUP

In September & October the Film Group has viewed **Babette's Feast by Gabriel Axel, 1987** (based on the 1958 story by Isak Dinesen/Karen Blixen); and **Greetings from Fukushima, 2016 (Grüße aus Fukushima) by Doris Dörrie.**

In *Babette's Feast* the elderly and pious Protestant sisters Martine and Philippa live in a small village in 19th-century Denmark. One day, Babette Hersant appears carrying a letter which explaining that she is a refugee from Paris -- recommending her as a housekeeper. The sisters cannot afford to take Babette in, but she offers to work for her keep -- Babette works as their cook for the next 14 years.

Babette wins a lottery and she decides to use it preparing a feast for the sisters and their congregation. As various exotic ingredients are delivered and preparations commence, the sisters begin to be concerned that the meal will be an indulgence, a sort of sin – thus the sisters and the congregation agree to attend the meal, but to have no reactions to the feast itself, to make no statements of praise or pleasure. The feast itself is a quiet triumph —

also a link with the past for many of those who attend.



In parallel, *Greetings from Fukushima* relates to the past, via quotations from notable films – the most apparent the French masterpiece by Alain Resnais, *Hiroshima mon Amour*.

And just as *The Story of Marie & Julien*, a deeply moving film involving a clock maker and two revenants (by Jacques Rivette – director of *Celine & Julie go boating*, our February selection) opens with a significant dream; so *Grüße aus Fukushima* begins with a brief nightmare of the protagonist's failed marriage.

Thus at once we have Resnais and Rivette quotations, but there are others, such as the memory of a famous shot from Ozu's *Tokyo Story*:



So we can think that *Greetings from Fukushima* is emphatically anchored in a tradition of auteur cinema which examines



death and loss; and the rebirth of life. Like these films which it quotes, it looks directly at the issues of how to deal with catastrophic loss; and how new beginnings can arise for those who do so.

Tuesday Current Affairs

The October meeting began with a review of Saturday's local elections. We're going to investigate more of the STV voting system at our next meeting.

We discussed the current news about insufficient reinforcing in high rise buildings, and from there to the problems of self-regulation for safety and the responsibilities of Directors.



Funding of national elections (by donations or from the public purse?) took some time.

Our last topic started with the article about Jim Flynn in The Mix talking about Free Speech, which led on to racism, then concern for the Kurds caught between Syria and Turkey, which led on to the US impeachment action and the US elections.
Gretchen Kivell,
convenor

**That's all for now! Take care and
Enjoy your Discussion Group/s
as the year winds to a close**

Discussion Group Convenor **Ngaire Bates** T 454 2170 E ngairemichael@gmail.com
Composition **Jill Geary** T 021 223 4332 E jillgeary067@gmail.com