



April 2020

# Discussion Groups NEWSLETTER

## Discussion Groups

*Well it has been a very interesting few weeks.*

I must say for me personally I have really enjoyed the 'time out'. I have caught up on all my extra cleaning, sorting and general spring cleaning. Even though it is Autumn! I have even found time to do a long framed up embroidery project that has been waiting for me for about 12 years to finish! The end is in sight now with this project and I must say it has enthused me to now do more of the same.

So, life continues.

The lockdown will hopefully now be nearly at an end. I have my fingers crossed that everyone will still take care of what they are doing so that the virus does not take off again. That would be disastrous.

It has been an interesting time for the Discussion Groups also. One or two groups have continued with meetings using Zoom to do this. Other groups have kept in touch with members via email, phone and text messaging, on a more personal level by sharing jokes, writing poetry, enquiries after health, and generally keeping an eye on their more vulnerable members. Well done to you all.

I think now everyone can really see the value of Discussion Groups within such a big organisation as U3A Dunedin -- and the Groups will continue to grow.

We still have room for one or two more participants in the Book, Photography and Dining Groups. So, if any of these appeal to you please do not hesitate to contact Ngaire in the first instance to register your interest.

In the short term the Groups will not be starting up just yet. However, when the decision is made that they can do so, all members will be notified by their facilitator of that decision.

**Ngaire Bates T 454 2170 E [ngairemichael@gmail.com](mailto:ngairemichael@gmail.com)**

### Book Club Friday

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi  
E: [gardacortesi@gmail.com](mailto:gardacortesi@gmail.com)

### Book Club 2

Facilitator: Angela Vickers  
E: [angela.nz@e3/net.nz](mailto:angela.nz@e3/net.nz)

### Monday Current Affairs

Facilitator: Joy Hayward  
T 454 4996 E:  
[joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz](mailto:joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz)

### Tuesday Current Affairs (full)

Facilitator: Gretchen Kivell  
T: 4730031  
E: [gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gretchen.kivell@xtra.co.nz)

### Dining group

Facilitator: Ann Wood  
T: 03 455 6061 E:  
[ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com](mailto:ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com)

### Expanding Musical Horizons (full)

Facilitator: Paul Wheeler  
T 476 0462 E:  
[wheeler@outlook.co.nz](mailto:wheeler@outlook.co.nz)

### Film Group (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford  
T 027 461 5343 E  
[billstanford9@gmail.com](mailto:billstanford9@gmail.com)

### Gallery group

Facilitator: Tash Hurst  
T 467 9747 E  
[tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz)

### German Language

Facilitator: Rob Lawson  
T: 021 023 91642  
[roblawson75@gmail.com](mailto:roblawson75@gmail.com)

## Walking Group

Kia ora Ngaire

The walking group - what's been going down?  
Here are some of the 'activities' that we have  
been sharing:

- almost daily sharing of jokes by email
  - thoughtful links being shared on Covid-related themes by email
  - one member has initiated a Facebook page for those who want to share in that zone
    - walking in ones bubble
- All looking forward to meeting face to face soon.  
Regards John Hogue

### Local History

Facilitator: Stuart Strachan  
T 482 2339  
[sistrachanz@gmail.com](mailto:sistrachanz@gmail.com)

### Mahjong Group

Facilitator: Hilary Allison  
T 4772903 Cell; 021 393 323  
[e:hilary.allison@xtra.co.nz](mailto:e:hilary.allison@xtra.co.nz)

### Walking Group

Facilitator: John Hogue  
E: [hoguetimaru@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hoguetimaru@xtra.co.nz)

## Tuesday Current Issues

met on its due date via Zoom. We'd all got  
registered beforehand, and we all accessed the meeting!

Discussion didn't move far from the effects of Covid 19 - there are so many  
for us, the country and the world, and implications for now and into the  
future, that we had plenty to talk about.

We booked a two-hour slot, but didn't break in the middle for the usual  
cuppa and informal chat. That seemed to make the session feel quite long,  
and we were flagging a bit near the close. Maybe Zoom meetings are more  
intense, or need more concentration. We might go for 90 minutes next  
meeting.

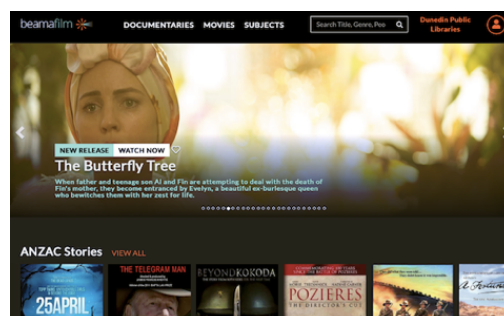
We remembered with sadness our friend Rod Oakley, who died unexpectedly at  
the end of March. He was a thoughtful contributor to our meetings, and  
always of good cheer. We all miss him.

Gretchen Kivell

## Film Group

With the Film group, all film going cancelled, but at  
this time a free streaming service offered via the  
Dunedin & other libraries is starting to be a  
godsend: **Beamafilm**.

They're at <https://beamafilm.com> ... (Based in  
Sydney, they're New Zealanders, one of the co-  
proprietors being from ... Mosgiel!)



I've held off mentioning Beamafilm until now, as a couple of us and others in the Dunedin Film Society have been troubleshooting the service. Logging on with the Firefox browser is strongly recommended; and slow (SDL) internet connections may be an issue.

But with Firefox & fibre Beamafilm works just fine! and with DSL (copper) it may well work...  
*To join, you need your Library card with its 14 digit number.*

***Hope this might be useful!***

**Bill Stanford**

Bill has inspired me to watch all of **Hayao Miyazaki's** movies. They are all on Netflix at the moment. I have been passionate about cartoons all my life and Miyazaki has changed the way I look at the cartoons I know. The artwork is astoundingly good. No wonder **Studio Ghibli**, where they originate, is the holy grail for Japanese cartoonists, the place where everyone wants to work. The stories are deceptively simple, especially so for someone like me, who knows so little about Japanese culture. Most of them are happy and thus great for these lonely times.

**Garda Cortesi**

## **Monday Current Affairs**

Monday's current affairs group have made two somewhat unsatisfactory attempts at zoom meetings using the free 40 minute option. Technical complications and human fallibility have combined to leave most of us a little frustrated. We are currently in the process of deciding whether to wait until we can meet in person, pay for a longer zoom time so we can discuss a topic, or meet with the free zoom to touch base. The focus of our brief discussion has been the impact of isolation on mental health.

**Joy Hayward**

## ***Wanted :***

***People who have time and expertise at applying for funding.***

*A group of colleagues and I are trying to reinvigorate family therapy in Dunedin and the major impediment to this is money. Whilst we have expertise in family therapy we have no experience in applying for funding.*

*NZ and Dunedin, in particular, were once world leaders in Family Therapy. At a time when suicide rates are at an all time high, families are stretched to breaking point, schools are reporting numerous students in acute distress, the incidence of self harm and addictions is highly disturbing, many families are at their wits end in not knowing how to get help.*

*The public system caters only for children and teenagers at the most extreme end of the spectrum, and even if they are accepted it is unlikely family therapy will be offered. Whilst there are still some options for children and teenagers to be seen individually, this is not always helpful and runs the risk of the child being further pathologised.*

*As a child Psychotherapist training in the 1980 's I had the privilege of a very good training in Family Therapy. Sadly, very little Family Therapy exists in New Zealand, and, apart from small pockets, very little is available in Dunedin. As I am now retired, I want to pass on this knowledge for fear it will disappear completely. For the last 2 years I have been working with a group of health professionals to endeavour to reinvigorate it in Dunedin. This has been highly successful. We have had to increase the number of groups wanting to train and we have found families who have greatly benefited from the opportunity to be able to work with us.*

*There are now a small number of very competent health professionals who could be offering therapy to families in need. The big obstacle is funding. I am aware that amongst the U3A group there is likely to be a number of you with expertise in the area of applying for grants, or in fundraising. If so I would be very keen to talk to you.*

*Please contact me [joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz](mailto:joyhayward@hotmail.co.nz) Or 4544996*

## **Books Group**

I have revisited a lot of books.

Dan Ackroyd's **Venice Pure City**. He successfully blends fact with a sort of esoteric attempt at painting a hazy, floating almost shape shifting la Serenissima. I believe that I was designed to be a Venetian, so I AM a sucker for anything on Venice

Christopher Hitchens **God is not Great**. He passed away a long time ago and I had forgotten just how clever he was. Still struggling too get through it.

Bertrand Russel **The Stones of Venice part 2**. Just because it took me about 10 years on and off to read part 1. There are 3 parts and I am not sure if I would live long enough to finish that.

**Lost to the West** by Lars Brownworth. A history of now Byzantium was lost written beautifully for a historian. I highly recommend this book.

**Garda Cortesi**

## Podcasts

I have been cooking and preserving a lot so needed my hands free. Podcasts have been my constant companions. The main recommendations are:

**In Our Time** with Melvyn Bragg. See the BBC podcasts. Everything is discussed with suitable academics and experts, from the history of honey to Marie Antoinette. The standard is very high and there is

**The Sceptics Guide** to the Universe. Anchored by 2 brilliant neuroscientists keeping three very ordinary panelists inline, they debunk stupidities, fake news etc. Some humour and fun so it is a good mix.

**No Such Thing as a Fish.** Presented by the fact finding gnomes behind the show QI. They each present their favourite fact of the week, fast moving with lots of fun and weirdness.

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