



# Discussion Groups NEWSLETTER

May 2021

## Convener's report

Nearly half way through the year and the temperatures are starting to bite.

However, we can all still look forward to our covid vaccination can't we! Hopefully we will soon get them as the vaccine is saving lives all over the world.

I did receive an email on Friday to say that the SDHB will be sending out invitations shortly to get one done. So the time has nearly arrived for our age group.

Our groups are going very well despite the disruption caused by this virus. I think most of us have now realized that in living here in Dunedin we are extremely lucky – in that we are very well protected from the mainstream of New Zealand, and therefore the Covid infection. I do hope it keeps up however.

Where new groups are concerned, I have been approached by a number of U3A Dunedin members who would like to see a group start up for a short time to enable those with Android cell phones to attend a class or two to learn how to use them properly. As I also have an Android phone and don't really get the use out of it I should I will be first to line up for this group.

However, we also require a member who knows how to use one of these phones and wouldn't mind showing the rest of us how it all works.

So, if this sounds like an idea that you would like to take up, either as a teacher or a

### Art Collections

Facilitator: Moya Smith  
Third Wednesday, 2 pm  
E: [moya.smith@xtra.co.nz](mailto:moya.smith@xtra.co.nz)

### Book Group

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi  
First Friday, 1.30  
E: [gardacortesi@gmail.com](mailto:gardacortesi@gmail.com)

### Dining Group

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

### Expanding

### Musical Horizons (full)

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

### Film Group 1 (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford  
Third Wednesday, 1.30  
E: [w.stanford@protonmail.com](mailto:w.stanford@protonmail.com)

### Film Group 2 (full)

Facilitator: Bill Stanford  
Second Wednesday, 1.30  
E: [w.stanford@protonmail.com](mailto:w.stanford@protonmail.com)

### Gallery Group (full)

Facilitator: Tash Hurst  
Second Wednesday, 10.30  
E: [tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tash.hurst@xtra.co.nz)

### German Language

Facilitator: Rob Lawson  
Third Monday, 2 pm  
E: [roblawson75@gmail.com](mailto:roblawson75@gmail.com)

participant, please let Ngaire know and we will get this class rolling.

Also, at present, we don't have a science oriented group. Thus we are offering the chance for interested people to get an Investigating Science Issues group off the ground! Again, please contact Ngaire if you'd be interested in this group.

Some of the other existing groups, although they are up and running, and the present members are all enjoying them, would like to see a few new members to swell their numbers and therefore make the sessions more interesting with more diverse opinions.

These groups include the Book group, Opera Appreciation group, and Current Affairs group 3. (This group also requires a new facilitator).

Also, there are available places in the Podcast and the Singing groups. And the Photography group, though stronger now, is open to anyone with an interest.

As you'll have seen in the last few newsletters, we photographers have had some wonderful trips about town to take photos and enjoy each other's company.

Some of our members use a point and shoot or a camera on their phone – so you don't require a big fancy camera to take part!

So, if any of these groups pique your interest, please contact Ngaire or the listed group facilitator and s/he will let you know about it.

The Discussion Group committee would also like to hear from anyone in our membership who would like to see a new group start up.

This does not mean that you will be expected to facilitate it. That usually sorts itself out – someone else who wishes to look at the same topic offering to take on the role. So, don't be shy. Let's hear from you!

Ngaire Bates

454 2170  
ngairemichael@gmail.com

### Local History

Facilitator: Stuart Strachan  
Fourth Wednesday, 10.30  
E: sjstrachanz@gmail.com

### Luncheon Group

Facilitator: Patricia Irvine  
Second Friday, 12.30  
E: trishjockloch@gmail.com

### Mahjong Group

Facilitator: Hilary Allison  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, 10 am  
E: hilary.allison@xtra.co.nz

### Monday Current Affairs (full)

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

### Opera Group

Facilitator: Garda Cortesi  
Fourth Wednesday, 1.30  
E: gardacortesi@gmail.com

### Podcast Group

Facilitator: Ann Broadfoot  
Third Thursday, 1.30  
annbroadfoot2012@gmail.com

### Photography Group

Facilitator: Ann Wood  
First Thursday, 1.30  
E: ngairemichael@gmail.com

### Thursday Current Affairs

Facilitator: Clare Hamel  
Fourth Thursday, 1.30  
hameldownunder@yahoo.com.au

### Singing Group

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

### Tuesday Current Issues Group (full)

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

### Walking Group

Facilitator: John Hogue  
Every Thursday, 10.30  
E: hoguetimaru@xtra.co.nz



## Announcement



### **Next Photography excursion!**

The next Photography group excursion will be to the landscape of sea, and rocky shore, of the beach south of Taieri Mouth.

This trip will take place on 2 June, contact Ngaire Bates

(ngairemichael@gmail.com) or Ann Wood (ann.wood14blaw@gmail.com) for details.

This will involve some walking, but there is convenient car parking close to the beach. The location offers both wide landscape photography, but also rock formations & pools!



## Facilitators' Reports



### **Gallery Group**

#### **Gallery group visit: Viv and Phil**

A great visit to Chris's daughter and son-in-law's house to see their eclectic art collection! They were wonderful hosts ...telling us the interesting stories behind each piece of art, explaining the plans for the next stage of the restoration of their house; and providing a tasty lunch...

A most enjoyable and educational visit! Thank you so much Chris for your organization... please pass on our thanks to your family - a wonderful collection of art!

Our next visit is to Sue's to pour some paint...

Tash



### **Monday Current Affairs**

Our May topic was free speech. Bill Maher said, 'Don't get so tolerant that you tolerate intolerance' and this was the fine line we tried to grapple with. There was concern that free

speech could become dangerous speech at times of crisis like the pandemic when there were radio personalities expressing their own view as fact and giving out erroneous and often dangerous information.

It was interesting to hear from members who have spent long periods of time in China and the USA about their different experiences of free speech.

We discussed the impact of social media, the way information can be distorted and the power this has to influence people in unhelpful ways. The lack of diversity in Google's

global workforce (including YouTube) is partly to account for this. It is 67% male and, in the US, only 5% black.

In discussing free speech we morphed into hate speech and decided to continue this as our topic for next time.

Joy Hayward

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## **Podcast Group**

The facilitator, Annie, was away and Garda hosted in her absence. We listened to Ayaan Hirsi Ali's interview with Michael Shellenberger on climate change. Here is the link:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/the-ayaan-hirsi-ali-podcast/id1552059697?i=1000515374076>

Shellenberger, a career climate activist, has some challenging opinions and with some of us finding

him convincing, and others not, a very interesting discussion ensued.

He offered a well reasoned opinion on why we should not panic about changes in climate, which he does believe is happening.

According to Shellenberger young people now consider themselves doomed due to social and mainstream media fueling the panic, and that their defeatist attitude is influencing their future plans in a profound way.

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## **Tuesday Current Issues Group**

Our April meeting started with some thoughts from Judith on inequity. She wondered whether women leaders – or, better, women at the head of world and country financial institutions – might make a difference to the poorest and the poor. We questioned why it was so difficult to raise taxes – you needed to get a majority of the population behind you. Discussion moved well away, too, to the meaning of 'woke', and whether republicans in the US, and large business, are as much against matters of social and racial justice as they have been.



After our break for coffee, Ted talked us through the realities of lithium used for batteries. The world's reserves of lithium are finite, and will not be enough

for all vehicles to convert to lithium batteries. There is research underway into alternative battery materials; alternatively, we talked about hydrogen-driven cars coming into more common use and whether we would feel comfortable being in one.

We also touched on cultural sensitivity, the cliff-hanger election in Samoa, and Andrew Little's missed opportunity to give serious thought to decriminalizing drug use.

(Re our next session: we currently have room for one or two more members.)

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Finally here, a general overview from ...

## **The Walkers' Group**

The 'Walkers' initiative emerged over two years ago from a small gathering at Ngaire Bate's house. There were two of us initially but we've evolved to become a dozen or so. This is a good number. In the last month we have been delighted to welcome three new people to the weekly walks.



At this juncture we are beginning to consider the question of an optimum number in the group.

As it is unusual for all walkers to turn up on a Thursday this consideration is still ongoing so we are still 'open' to others joining us. Please make contact if you are interested.

We maintain a pattern of a different walk each week (chosen by one of the walkers) with a visit to a cafe to follow.

The location and theme for weekly walks are decided over the coffee at the end of the most recent morning's walk. Often one of the walkers has passion or connection to a particular area or theme which is built into our time and discussions. Most Thursdays we meet at 10:30 am and walk for up to 90 minutes maximum. We are a diverse group (some would say bordering on odd) so aim to cater for all.

Recent walks have included:

- Historic Caversham
- Hidden Paths in Unity and Jubilee Park

- Portobello Peninsula and tour of UO Marine Station
- Guided Tour of the Fashion Exhibition at the Otago Museum after a walk through the OU Campus
- ‘The Big Easy’ Signal Hill
- Around Port Chalmers
- Flagstaff
- Orokonui Estuary
- Redwood Loop Trail (Ross Creek)
- Heywards Point Track



John Hogue



## Notice Board

Hi Facilitators! June group reports: Tuesday Current Issues, Luncheon, & Art... But if you want to send an unscheduled report, please do! Thanks!

And everyone, don't forget -- this is your spot. If you have a pup to give away, a tip re a coffee shop, a flat to let -- this board is a way to reach the U3A membership!

## Groups Committee

***Discussion Groups Convener***  
***Discussion Groups Committee***  
***Discussion Groups Newsletter***

Ngaire Bates  
Garda Cortesi  
Bill Stanford

ngairemichael@gmail.com  
gardacortesi@gmail.com  
w.stanford@protonmail.com

## Photography Group Gallery

This month the Group visited Cargill Castle, a great photo opportunity!

Graham Corbett provides a tranquil overview:



But a ruin is a ruin, as  
Graham's next shot  
demonstrates:



And Ann Wood shows  
us that Nature is  
encroaching

Anne Howarth indicates that the interior is no picnic either:



And she demonstrates that the kitchen is no place to cook!

While Ann disabuses us of the idea of a roof:



More safely, Ngaire concentrated on the exterior, and the ‘grounds’:



(We do gratefully acknowledge the work that Cargill's Castle caretaker's do, and who also continue to fund raise for stabilisation of these ruins. If you would like to donate to this cause please go to this link; <https://cargillscastle.co.nz/donate>.)

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After shoot:

But we also had a ‘blood moon’ and some of us braved the chill.

Graham got a splendid, classic shot!

