

Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

December 2022

Thank you very much to all Interest Group Facilitators, many of whom send contributions, month in, month out. Without your work, and sharing, this newsletter would not happen. Wishing everyone in our multicultural community a safe and happy holiday. We will be back in late January 2023. Ann

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Meri Kirihimete me te tau hou

Manuia le Kerisimasi ma le Tausaga Fou

عيد ميلاد مجيد وسنة جديدة سعيدة

Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches neues Jahr

メリークリスマス、そして、あけましておめでとう

feliz Navidad y un Feliz Año Nuevo

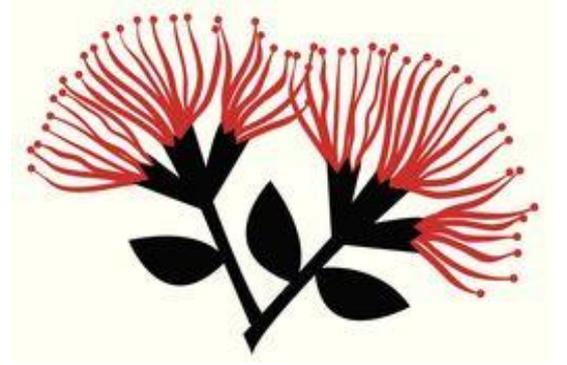
聖誕快樂，新年快樂

Geseënde Kersfees en 'n gelukkige nuwe jaar

क्रिसमस और नया साल मुबारक हो

Buon Natale e un Felice Anno Nuovo

Joyeux Noël et bonne année



Art Collections Group

Facilitator: Anne-Marie Hutton
Monthly: First Tuesday 10:30
E: annemariehutton@gmail.com



Book Share Group

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



Dining Group

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



Expanding Musical Horizons full

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



Film Group full

Facilitator: Bill Stanford
Third Wednesday, 1:30
E: w.stanford@protonmail.com



Gallery Group full

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



Gardens & Botanical Group

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



Home Gardens Group

Facilitator: Carole Bezett
Fourth Thursday, 1:30
E: carolebezett@gmail.com



Luncheon Group

This group is temporarily in recess until a new facilitator is appointed

Mahjong Group

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



Monday Current Affairs Group full

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



Photography Group

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



Poetry Group full

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



Singing Group in recess

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 full

Every Thursday, 10:30
Joint Facilitators:

Averil McLean
E: averilmclean2@gmail.com

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



Wanderers Group

Facilitator: Ailsa Williams
Weekly: Every Friday 10 am
E: ailsasx@gmail.com



Mahjong Group December

About twelve keen Mahjong players meet on a Thursday (2nd and 4th of the month) morning at the Otago Golf Club for friendly competition. Here are some of the players on our last day in December, which was followed by a lunch at Rhubarb.



We start again on January 26th. New players are always welcome, with any level of experience. If you have ever wondered what this game is all about, you are very welcome to come along, or get in touch with me.

Jean



Wanderers Group December



The Wandering Group managed to walk each week despite the fickle weather. Our walks included the Tomahawk Reserve and surroundings. We were treated to the sight of numerous black swans showing off their cygnets.



The following week, walking, then climbing the loop of trails of the Future Forest at Broad Bay, where it is possible to enjoy views across to Port Chalmers.



More challenging, but equally worthwhile, was the old Quarry up the NE Valley, panoramic views as you climb, some precarious trails of uneven ground and fallen logs, but all negotiated without mishap.



We rounded off the year's wanders with a gentle stroll through the Botanical Gardens, up to the Aviary, still being refurbished, through the upper gardens and back down to the little cafe, Adjø, adjacent to the Gardens.



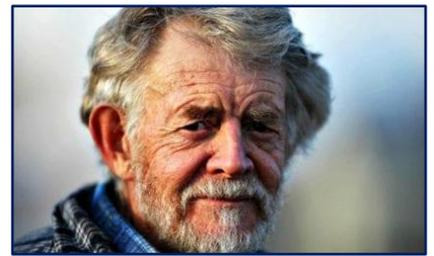
Season's Greetings to one and all. Ailsa

Some reasons why I got this job

Because I'm charming, elegant, gracious.
Cultivated, strapping, and look good on the box.
Because I haven't appeared on
This Is Your Life.
Because I don't sit up late
and watch sad movies on TV.
Because I've given the effigies to charity
and thrown away the pins.
Because I'm fast on the bike
and cast very nicely when standing
in ripples in high country streams.
Because footie's no more important than art.
Because there's love in a cool climate.
Because I accept that we just have to live with sandflies.
Because, when Americans began talking loudly
outside the motel window at 6:15 this morning
they weren't threatened with weapons of mass destruction.
Because I've been surprised by what I've written
and perseverance isn't to be sneezed at
except when caught in the middle of a bull paddock.
Because there's no good reason to give up trying
to do the decent thing, now and again.
Because annoyance or irritation
make more sense than anger and outrage.
Because there's room to do better.
Because we're not yet lost nor found.
Because my grandmother was scared I was drawn
to depravity, and her husband told me
if I wasn't careful I'd become an anathema.
Because . . . because this is not the sort of poem
I'm said to write. Or is it?

Poetry Group December

This poem, which inspired the hostess of the month to choose the topic of works by Poet Laureates for our final meeting of the year, was written by **Brian Turner** when he was appointed Poet Laureate of New Zealand in 2003.



The group chose poems by many different Laureates from several countries.

Billy Collins, an American Laureate was a popular choice.

John Masefield and his wonderful *Sea-Fever* led us to a YouTube video of this poem set to music.

WH Auden and "*Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone*" popped up.

Among other poems of choice by NZ Poet Laureates were some written by *Hone Tuwhare*, *Cilla McQueen* and *David Eggleton*.



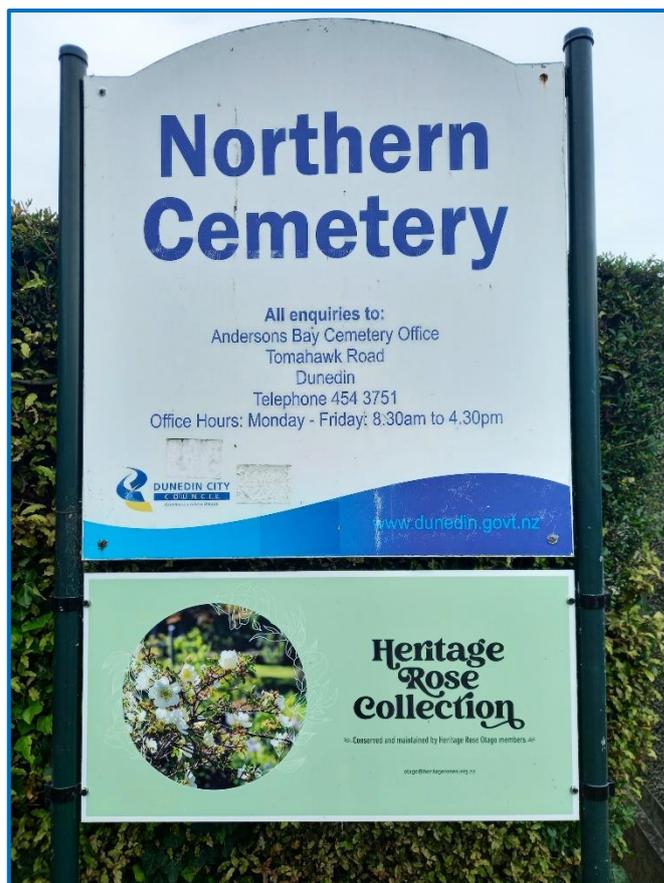
Meri Kirihimete Ani

Gardens and Botanical Group

December

Our December meeting took place on the first true day of summer! Lovely temperatures to explore the Northern Cemetery which is a jewel in the city reserves, and one that is well worth a visit at this time of year to view the heritage rose collection which are at their best this month. The Cemetery has significant collections of rare roses set amongst the headstones and tombs of the Victorian city fathers.

The roses are conserved and cared for by Heritage Roses Otago and supported by the DCC. The roses in the cemetery fall into three categories, the memorial roses are those which were planted by the families owning the plot. The club has managed to identify the names of most of these roses and small plaques identify the family and the rose. Another group are roses that families ask Heritage Roses to put on family graves, and the rest consist of one thousand roses planted as a millennium project for the city.



The Northern Cemetery is an excellent example of a Victorian Garden Cemetery, the only one in the Southern Hemisphere. The design by John Claudius allows for wide grassed paths to walk between the



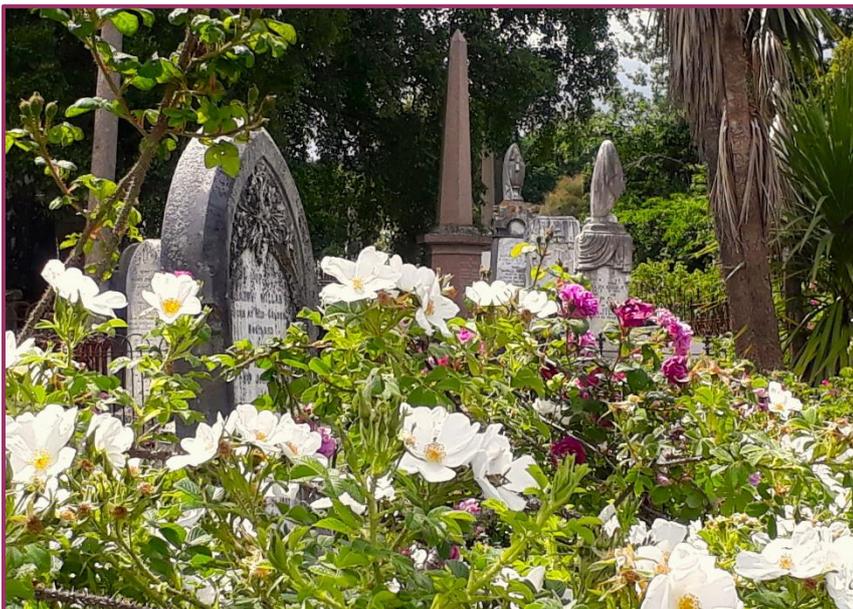
graves, a widow's circle for socializing and garden plantings to engage the visitors. The cemetery spreads over twenty acres and was established in 1872.

Our group met at the Sexton's Cottage, in the newly refurbished Information Room, to hear about the history of the

cottage and surrounds from Ann Barsby of the Southern Heritage Trust. The room features information about the cemetery tours, Parihaka, significant settlers and, of course, the roses.

Following the introduction, we set off on a walk to see the rose families, smell the roses and hear some of the stories about the residents of this place. The symbolism was also a talking point as we wandered through the various sections of the cemetery.

The roses were in full bloom and featured examples of most roses families could find in the 1800s.



Did you know there is a 'hanging tree', the grave of a soldier who fought in the Zulu War, those of sporting heroes, and the final resting place of a little-known premier of New Zealand, to be found amongst the many graves?

Graves of young people are identified by symbols reflecting a life cut short and male graves have a deep maroon or red rose planted along with two yew trees. and women and children have white roses to mark their resting place.

Our afternoon concluded with a cup of tea together at the Gardens Cafe. Very welcome as 25 degrees was recorded in the city during our visit.

Robyne

Book Share Group December

Carolyn brought us a novel which in 2003 was listed 68 on the BBC's survey *The Big Read*.

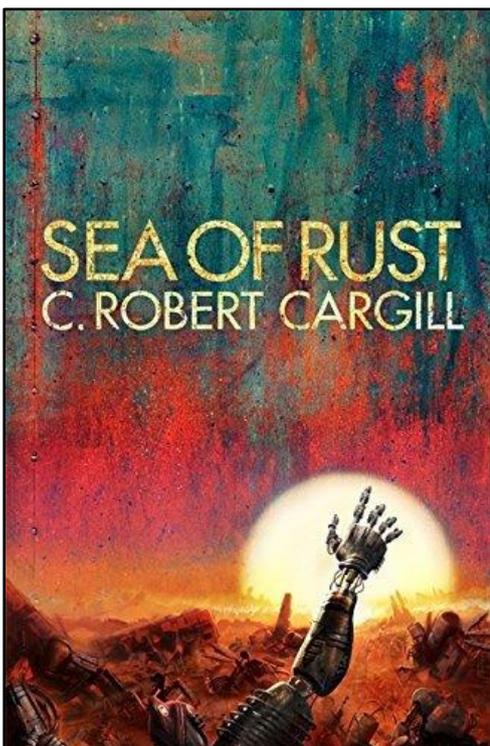
Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch is a 1990 novel written as a collaboration between English authors **Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman**. The book is a comedy about the birth of the son of Satan and the coming of the End Times. Aziraphale, an angel (originally a guardian of the gates of Eden) and Crowley, a demon (originally the serpent who tempted Eve) have lived on earth since its creation. They attempt to sabotage the coming of the End Times because they have become comfortable living on earth. There are sub plots – one features a mix-up at a small country hospital; another concerns the summoning of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse.

Carolyn says this is a complicated book to read but doesn't require a lot of biblical knowledge to follow the plot lines.

Nola's summer reading is ***An Equal Music***, a 1999 novel by **Vikram Seth**.

This is a book which was especially well received by music fans who have noted Seth's accuracy in the descriptions of the music. The plot concerns Michael, a professional violinist who never forgot his love for Julia, a pianist he met as a student in Vienna. They meet again after a decade and have a secret affair, though she is married with a child. Their careers are affected by this affair and the knowledge Julia is going deaf. A recurring element throughout is the pair's performance of Beethoven's Piano Trio Opus 1 No 3 which they had first performed in their college days.

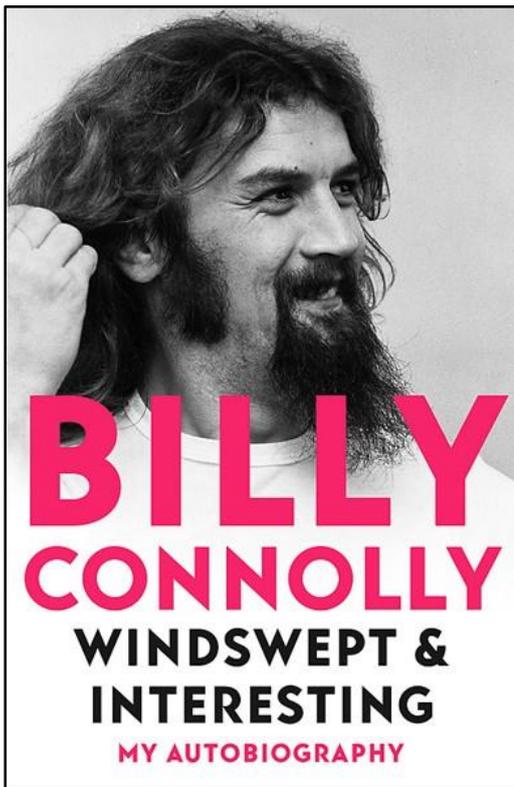
Jane, a keen sci-fi fan brought along ***Sea of Rust***, a 2017 novel by **C. Robert Cargill**



This is “a robot western.” It has been thirty years since the apocalypse, and fifteen years since the murder of the last human being at the hands of robots. Humankind is extinct- liquidated by a global uprising by the very machine that humans designed to serve them. Most of the world is controlled by OWI – One World Intelligence – the shared consciousness of millions of robots uploaded into a mainframe brain. But not all robots are happy to cede their individuality. This is a harsh story of survival and an optimistic adventure.

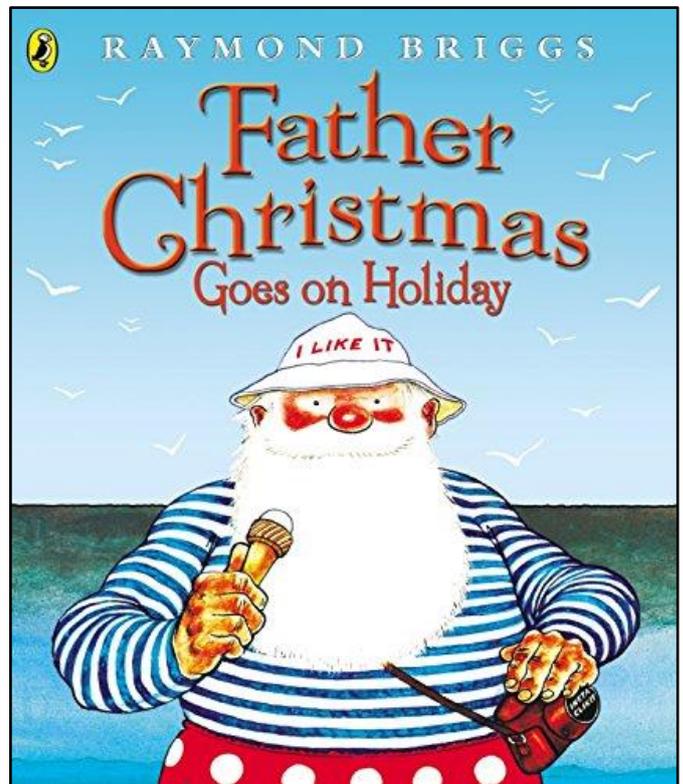
We did check in on how well Jane slept after these stories!

Trish has been rereading ***Windswept & Interesting: My autobiography*** (2022) by **Billy Connolly**.



This had been prompted by it being Billy's eightieth birthday on November 24th. Born in 1942 in a tenement flat in Glasgow, orphaned at 4, and a survivor of appalling abuse at the hands of his own family, it is a remarkable story of success against all odds. Billy's first escape was as an apprentice welder in the shipyards on the river Clyde – later as a folk musician and an ability to spin stories about real life that held audiences in his hands. An appearance on the Michael Parkinson show catapulted him from cult hero to national star and international fame. Decades later a double diagnosis of cancer and Parkinson's has bought these live performances to an end. This is a joyful, funny read, dictated and transcribed by one of his daughters – the computer software couldn't understand his accent!

We all shared a Christmas memory, and Trish shared a favourite book ***Father Christmas Goes on Holiday*** (1975) by **Raymond Briggs** the English illustrator, cartoonist and author who achieved critical and popular success with both adults and children. He is best known for his story "The Snowman" which is thought to be inspired by a dream had by David Bowie and is shown on British TV every Christmas. This story however is about a grumpy Father Christmas who decides to go on holiday – no one needs a holiday more than Father Christmas. Where can such a well-recognised person go? As he sets off in search of the ideal holiday spot, he travels to France, Scotland and Las Vegas – but soon discovers there is nowhere really like home.



Merry Christmas everyone, and I hope the New Year brings joy and happiness for us all.

Trish

Photography Group December

We risked a picnic lunch at Broad Bay for our final meet of 2022. And a risk it was, because the weather has not played fair for many weeks now. Anne Stratford brought with her a book that detailed the addresses of the cribs of the monied families of early Dunedin. She led us around the back streets and could tell us which family had owned



which crib. Some still there, at least a hundred plus years on, but a number had gone to make way for new homes.

One of the finds along the way was the *Ewan McDougall* painted Lilliput Library. We also came across the flourishing Community Garden and, eventually, made our way to the Polish Catholic church which featured in last month's newsletter. Front view towards Harbour Cone. Back view towards Port and a cruise ship in at

the dock.



So many other quirky sights to see. We loved



the old car, now being used as a plant stand. Bird life was very evident amid the surrounding bush and trees.



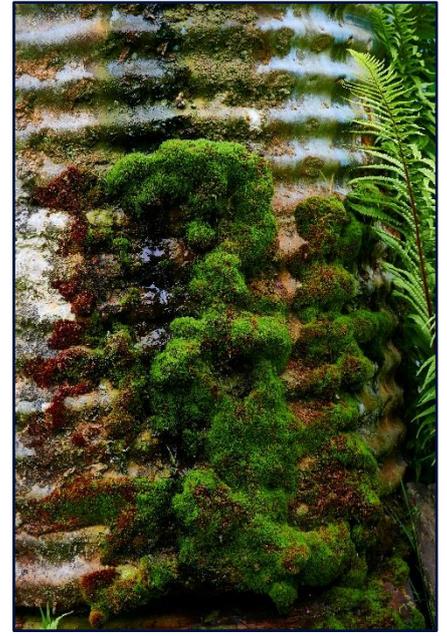
Photo credits this month:

*Graham Corbett,
Howard Randal,
Marie Thomson,
Caz Brigham,
Laurie White,
Ann Wood and
Linda Forbes*





One water tank, three views,
three photographers



Two of our group peeled off and went to see Yellowhead.





The photograph above, taken near Tuapeka, a few months ago by Graham Corbett, inspired the artist of the fabric work below. Mary Jane Sneyd joined our group earlier in the year, not so much with photography in mind, but to seek inspiration in nature on our twice monthly rambles. Graham was happy to grant Mary Jane permission to use his photo.



Meri Kirihimete to all members of this group, and to all who read the U3A Interest Groups newsletter each month. Ani