



Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

January 2023

Hello all and Happy New Year

Many of our Interest Groups are underway again this month. The remainder plan a restart in February.
Ann (Editor)

***** **The Home Gardens Group is seeking further members** *****
***** **Read all about it further on in the newsletter** *****

The Singing Group will start again at 1pm, Monday February 13 at the Maori Hill Community Hall, 607 Highgate. Singers of any level of experience are welcome - no auditions, and ability to read music is not essential. For more information contact Claire: cstevensnz@gmail.com or 0274 934 246

Robyne advises that the Garden and Botanical Group will resume on February 15 with a visit to Wylde Willow Garden at Abbotsford

CROQUET



Want some gentle exercise?
Want some social interaction?
Want to challenge your brain?
Want to enjoy the outdoors?
Want to avoid Covid?

Here's the answer. Croquet at Punga Club, corner of Ross and Lawson Streets (next to the Belleknowes Golf Club) at 11.00 on Mondays. \$5 cash a time. It's a bargain. No previous skill required. We haven't got much either, but we know the basics, and can teach you until you find a proper coach. Contact Clare Dorking **0212443549** or Joy Hayward **0211508387**

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 **full**

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

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



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

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



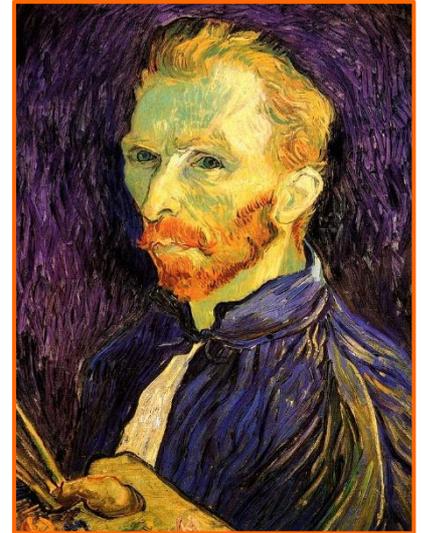
Art Collections Group January

On Saturday 14th January several from the Art Collections Group went to the screening of “Vincent van Gogh: A New Way of Seeing” at the Planetarium of the Otago Museum. This film was the first in a new series on art and artists. Perhaps more than any other artist, van Gogh’s



life has captured the imagination of storytellers. Delving deep into his fascinating and often deeply troubled world comes this definitive, award-winning documentary directed by David Bickerstaff.

The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam has changed, for the better, the way his paintings, letters and drawings are displayed.



Van Gogh’s iconic works were shown along with interviews with staff at the Van Gogh Museum and his brother’s great grandson. He painted many self-portraits,

mainly it seems because he didn’t have to employ a model, and



he knew himself so well.

The film told us

about the many different places he lived including time in Belgium, London, and several areas of France. The time he spent in, or near, Arles, was a very prolific period in his artistic life, despite a lengthy incarceration in an asylum



because of the deterioration in his mental wellbeing.

One of us had been to Arles ten years ago and had followed the art trail that showed the sites of many of his paintings.

Altogether a fascinating film, much enjoyed by all the members who attended. Anne-Marie

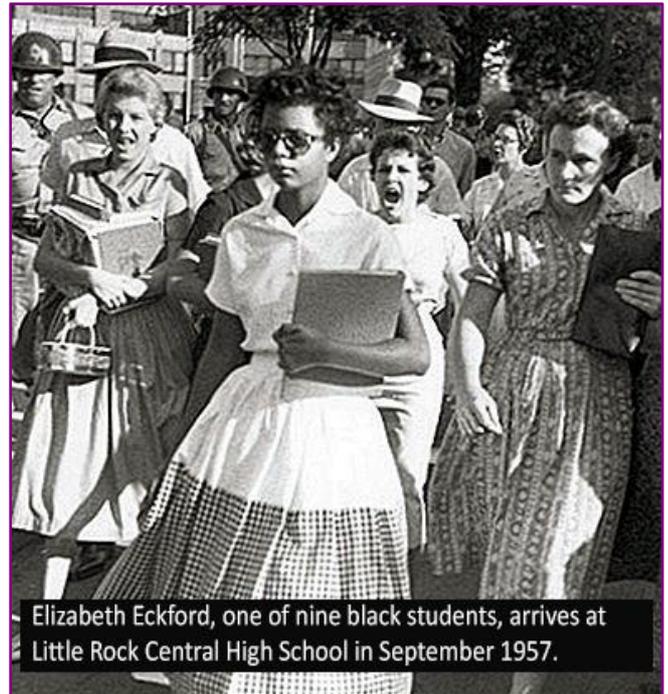


Blackbird (Paul McCartney)

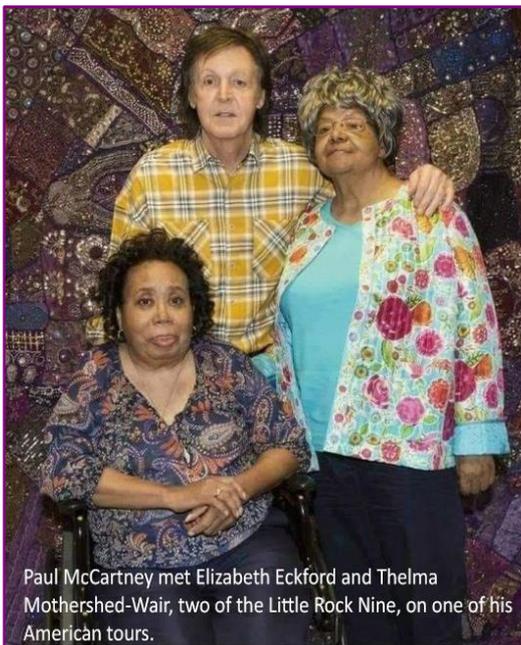
Blackbird was one of the songs discussed under the topic “The Sound of Protest” last year by the Music group. Although well-known and popular, written by Paul McCartney, it is not so well known as a protest song,

The protest was about civil rights in America. McCartney remembered, as a schoolboy, being dismayed by the Rosa Parks story, in which a black woman refused to give up her seat for a white person on a bus. What horrified him even more was watching the news on TV and seeing footage of 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford arriving to attend classes at Little Rock Central High School in 1957.

He was disgusted to hear an angry mob following her, yelling, "Drag her over this tree! Let's take care of that nigger!" and "Lynch her! Lynch her!" and "No nigger bitch is going to get in our school!" She was one of nine black students who enrolled that day. He couldn't believe that by 1968, civil rights had not improved. He couldn't forget these women in particular being mistreated and abused, simply because of the colour of their skin. He sat down and started writing. He used to tell his audiences "It made me want to write a song that, if it ever got back to the people going through those troubles, it might just help them a little bit".



Elizabeth Eckford, one of nine black students, arrives at Little Rock Central High School in September 1957.



Paul McCartney met Elizabeth Eckford and Thelma Mothershed-Wair, two of the Little Rock Nine, on one of his American tours.

The bird, whose wings are broken, was symbolic for a black girl (“bird” being a slang term for a girl in the UK at that time). The phrase "you were only waiting for this moment to arise" was stating that he felt that the time had come for black people in the southern states to rise up.

As a side note, the guitar accompaniment for *Blackbird* was inspired by Bach's *Bourrée in E minor* a well-known lute piece, often played on classical guitar. As teenagers, he and George Harrison tried to learn *Bourrée* as a "show off" piece, so that people “wouldn't think we were as stupid as we looked”. Although he admits in hindsight, they never played it completely correctly, he adapted small segments of the piece for the opening of *Blackbird* and carried the musical idea throughout the song.

Paul Wheeler.

You can hear Paul McCartney singing it (live in America) here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qokMu7BMv_8

Walking Group January

The Talking Walkers had their first excursion of the year on the 19th of January to Quarantine Island where they enjoyed circling the island in beautiful sunny conditions, catching up,



picnicking, but with no time for a swim. It was a glorious day with many more to follow!



Poetry Group January

Seven of us got together for the first poetry reading and shared lunch of 2023 in the third week of January. A lovely catch up after many weeks off over the holidays. The topic this month was **Deception**. Such a variety of poems. Many by Shakespeare, and at least one apiece by Auden, Browning, Keats, Sassoon. Another chosen was **The Highwayman** by Alfred Noyes. One was rather controversial, and a decision was taken not to print it in this publication, but do read it if you so choose: <https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/poems/god-a-poem/>

Little Red-Cap by Carol Ann Duffy

At childhood's end, the houses petered out
into playing fields, the factory, allotments kept, like
mistresses, by kneeling married men,
the silent railway line, the hermit's caravan,
till you came at last to the edge of the woods.
It was there that I first clapped eyes on the wolf.

He stood in a clearing, reading his verse out loud
in his wolfy drawl, a paperback in his hairy paw,
red wine staining his bearded jaw. What big ears
he had! What big eyes he had! What teeth!
In the interval, I made quite sure he spotted me,
sweet sixteen, never been, babe, waif, and bought me a drink,

my first. You might ask why. Here's why. Poetry.
The wolf, I knew, would lead me deep into the woods,
away from home, to a dark tangled thorny place
lit by the eyes of owls. I crawled in his wake,
my stockings ripped to shreds, scraps of red from my blazer
snagged on twig and branch, murder clues. I lost both shoes

but got there, wolf's lair, better beware. Lesson one that
night,
breath of the wolf in my ear, was the love poem.
I clung till dawn to his thrashing fur, for
what little girl doesn't dearly love a wolf?
Then I slid from between his heavy matted paws
and went in search of a living bird – white dove –

which flew, straight, from my hands to his hope mouth.
One bite, dead. How nice, breakfast in bed, he said,
licking his chops. As soon as he slept, I crept to the back
of the lair, where a whole wall was crimson, gold, aglow with books.
Words, words were truly alive on the tongue, in the head,



warm, beating, frantic, winged; music and blood.
But then I was young – and it took ten years
in the woods to tell that a mushroom
stoppers the mouth of a buried corpse, that birds
are the uttered thought of trees, that a greying wolf
howls the same old song at the moon, year in, year out,
season after season, same rhyme, same reason. I took an axe

to a willow to see how it wept. I took an axe to a salmon
to see how it leapt. I took an axe to the wolf
as he slept, one chop, scrotum to throat, and saw
the glistening, virgin white of my grandmother's bones.
I filled his old belly with stones. I stitched him up.
Out of the forest I come with my flowers, singing, all alone.



Biographical Note:

When Carol Ann Duffy was sixteen, she went to a concert in Liverpool where she met the poet, musician, and artist Adrian Henri. He was thirty-nine. This has resulted in speculation that in 'Little Red Cap' she cast herself as Little Red Riding Hood and Henri as the wolf. She has admitted that "In the interval, I made quite sure he spotted me, sweet 16, never been, babe, waif, and bought me a drink, my first." That started a relationship that lasted about 12 years. When asked if the wolf represented Henri, Duffy said, "The poem is just playing around with the story. It's not necessarily how it was."

Ani

Monday Current Affairs Group

January



Our Current Affairs group welcomed a new member. We met at David Cooper and Julie Gemmil's place at Waikouaiti. You may be wondering, looking at the photos taken by John Burton, whether this was the garden group masquerading as the current affairs group, a very reasonable confusion.

We did attend to current affairs which were our taste buds (a sumptuous, shared lunch, followed by a cake made from Julie and David's delicious red and white currants), plus our visual and olfactory senses as we meandered around



the garden. It was a lovely way to reconnect, enjoy great company, the delicious food and, in every sense, a life sustaining garden. Joy

Wanderers Group January

The Wanderers Group have had one wander thus far in 2023, meeting by the Stadium where our first challenge of the year manifested itself - the Park Café has shut, permanently. There were various suggestions as to alternate destinations and cafés, so the group wandered through Logan Park, headed towards the University Campus where a café thankfully beckoned. Well refreshed, our wander resumed.



We were regaled with tales and details from one of our group members who shared memories and commented on the architectural features of the University.

Those who attended Otago will know the bell is sounded every time a candidate submits their thesis.

Ailsa



Home Gardens Group

This very new group is actively seeking members. We meet at 1.30 pm on the fourth Thursday of the month (although this could possibly change). The aim is to spend time looking at loved, but not show, gardens, some of which belong to members of the group, and others which belong to people we know who would be happy to share theirs with others. Personally, I love it when people ask if they can see our garden. We put in a lot of effort which few others get to see. It's also a great motivator to get outside and pull a few weeds!



There is also a social aspect to this group as the plan is to gather for afternoon tea

after our visit. It's a time to talk about gardens and decide where we may next go. Our first visit was to Tash and Peter Hurst's lovely garden in November and were invited to stay on afterwards (thank you, Hursts), likewise next month we will be going to

Wyn and David Jones' garden and, once again, have been invited to stay on afterwards.

There is no rule that says you need to stay and socialise after the visit, just as there is no rule that says if you offer your garden for a visit, you must provide afternoon tea.

Please call me if you want to discuss joining this group.

Carole Bezett: 021 348 128

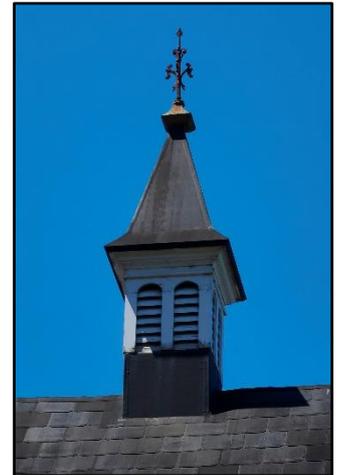
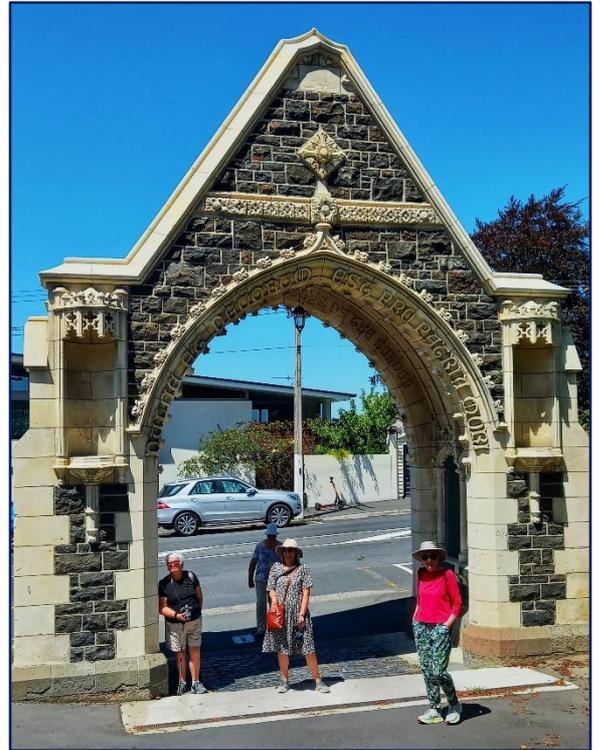


And I could not resist popping in further pics taken at the Hurst's beautiful garden. Ed.



Photography
Group
January

A low-key start to the year on a beautiful day. We set forth to take our best shots at Otago Boys' High School. The coming and the going through the Memorial Gate.



Some construction was underway, so the school was not perfect for unsullied views, but this interesting pic (L) resulted. To the (R) shapes.



Taken some years back when the photographer was experimenting with image manipulation in Photoshop



Pic credits OBHS:

Robyne Selbie,

Ani Wood,

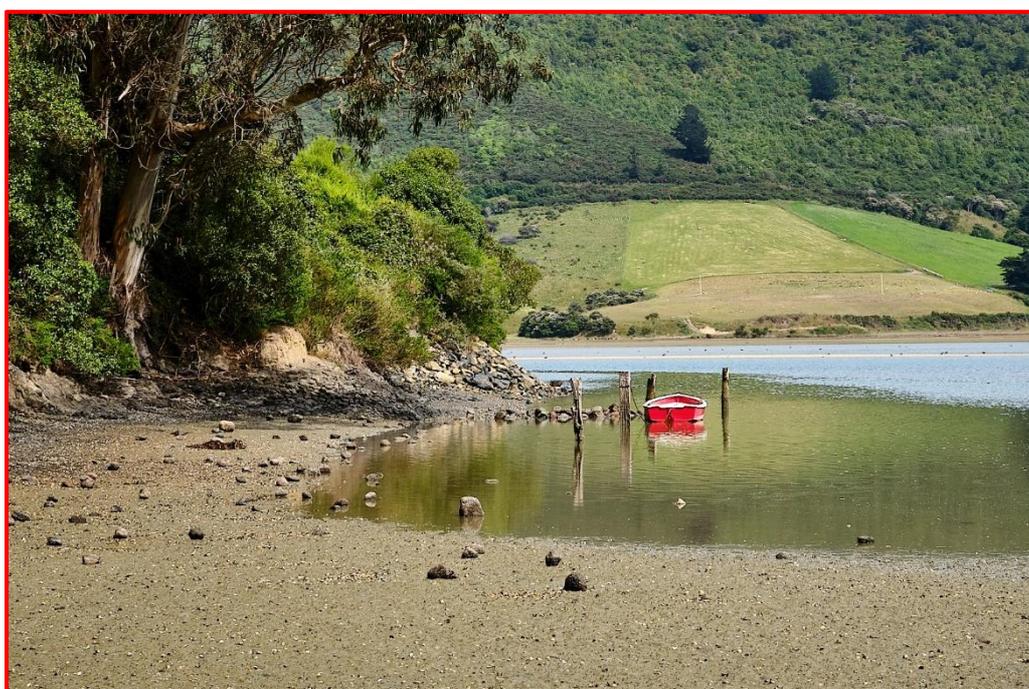
Hildegarde Lubcke,

Anne Matravers,

Graham Corbett



You may realise that photographers don't have an 'off' button. Holidays are just a marvellous excuse for them to practise their art in different places. Here is a small selection of the images shared by members over the summer, either on our group's private Facebook page, or between the friends we have become.





One of us caught the waterlilies flowering at Lan Yuan. Another missed the lilies but caught the shag.



Ann Trewern writes:
A honey bee harvests nectar deep inside a campanula flower in a world of purple.

Ani

