



Interest Groups NEWSLETTER

March 2023

Kia ora koutou,

The Interest Groups and their success are an important part of the business of U3A Dunedin.

As you are aware I met with most of our current facilitators of groups in January this year. Our agenda was to determine a revised support structure for our group leaders. The idea presented at this forum, of having a Board member with the role of an overview of the groups, was an agenda item at the Board meeting in February.

The Board supported this position, in principle, and a 'Short Life Working Party' (SLWP) was set up to determine the roles and responsibilities of both a Coordinator role, and the role of a Convenor.

The SLWP comprised of two Interest Group facilitators, Ann Wood, and Gretchen Kivell, with Andre Smith and me, as Board members. We had gathered a range of documents and utilised the experiences of our current leaders to inform the process.

I am very pleased to report we formulated a document which has been emailed to all current facilitators, to be renamed from April as convenors, for their feedback. The document has two roles and responsibilities, one of a Coordinator, and secondly, the role of a Convenor of a group. We also considered a process for the formation of new groups, which will be necessary, considering many of our existing groups are full.

Feedback to date is positive and I believe we have a potentially successful plan to move forward.

Your Board meets at the beginning of April when we hope to approve this document and appoint a Coordinator. I look forward to reporting back to all members on the outcome of this process.

My grateful thanks to all who have been involved. Together we can make a difference.

Ka mihi nui

Linda Kinniburgh

Chairperson Board U3A Dunedin

2021-2023

Art Collections Group

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



Mahjong Group

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



Book Share Group

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



Monday Current Affairs Group **full**

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



Dining Group

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



Photography Group **full**

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



Expanding Musical Horizons **full**

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



Poetry Group **full**

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



Film Group **in recess**

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



Singing Group

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



Gallery Group **full**

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



Tuesday Current Issues **Group full**

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



Gardens & Botanical Group **full**

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



Walking Group **full**

Every Thursday, 10:30
Joint Facilitators:



Averil McLean
E: averilmclean2@gmail.com

Home Gardens Group

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



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



Lunch Group

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



Wanderers Group

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



Home Gardens Group March



After a few false starts we finally made it to Wyn and David Jones' delightful inner-city garden. A lovely sunny day, and our group of five wandered around the beautifully landscaped area which featured Wyn's love of many kinds of plants, which does not include roses.

Her particular passion is a marvellous variety of native ferns, the most striking being Mamaku (*Cyathea medullaris*) New Zealand's largest and fastest growing tree fern. This garden also has a



large number of NZ forest trees including rimu, kauri, miro plus many *Pseudopanax* species.

The sculptured, very green lawns were the envy of all whose lawns are displaying the effects of the drought.



Wyn shared with the group a photograph album which charted the



development of the garden, so good to see what can be done with a rather daunting piece of land.

Our group is hoping to attract more members. We plan to meet on the third Thursday afternoon of the month and part of the pleasure is the friendship which eventuates over a cup of tea - although at Wyn's today we had a very welcome, ice-cold orange juice.

Please email me if you are interested.

Carole



Walking Group March

The last Thursday in February was wet, but we still ventured out for a walk around Fairfield with our usual stop at the Village Green café in Sunnyvale for coffee. This is a good place to stop if you are in the area.



March started out with a good walk around Caversham. We traversed both sides of the motorway making stops at Kuku for coffee and a long look at the Lisburn House where most of us had been to for a meal in the past.

Jill was back from her caravan and biking adventures to take us around the edges of Māori Hill



along Braeview Crescent overlooking Leith Valley. Our coffee stop was at Copper with its fancy teacups.



Out Waitati way a few hardy walkers took in Cedar Creek. Enjoying sun and mist on the hills while nutting out engineering and hydrology questions.



Then we enjoyed Gérard's Big 0 birthday treat at the Orokonui Café.



I am reminded of the superb summer Dunedin has experienced this year. Note our occasional walker's dog, Molly, on the beach.



Finally, a photo from the King Country in 1911. This is a good picture of the days before *Health and Safety* interfered with fun, adventure and taking responsibility for yourself and others.



Janet

Monday Current Affairs Group March

Our topic was One Month On from the floods, cyclone, and political events of last month. This rather nebulous topic was however, a little like the cyclone itself, in that it threw up a maelstrom of random thoughts some of which landed fleetingly and others which were whisked away seconds later.



Some enjoyed the less structured approach, but we resolved to return to our usual format of a specific topic which we research beforehand. Next month we plan to talk about AUKUS, the trilateral security pact between Australia, the US, and the UK.

Joy

The Poetry Group's meeting has been delayed, to better fit with the member's busy lives, by a couple of weeks this month, so the report will be in the April newsletter.

The Lunch Group met at Salt Restaurant, St Clair on the second Friday of March, and one of the attendees tells me it was greatly enjoyed by all. The Dining Group met a week later at the Mornington Tavern



where, it was reliably reported, the food was very good. Ann (Ed)



Gallery Group March

On a beautiful autumn day in March, we assembled at the amazing home of Paul Aubin, to see his collections. Here is a lifetime of learning available in one house. Paul, being a former history teacher, and avid collector, soon had us all engrossed.



Paul pointing out a painting by Grahame Sydney. Many paintings were collected when the artists were starting out and were friends of Paul.

Paul collects art, books, toy soldiers, and anything else that he becomes interested in. He has over 20,000 books and has read most of them. He has every copy of Alice in Wonderland he can lay his hands on. His paintings very much reflect the local art scene and cover most well-known artists from the 1950s onwards.

Paul pointing out how he enjoys watching the changes in style of work as the artist matures, and circumstances change in their lives.

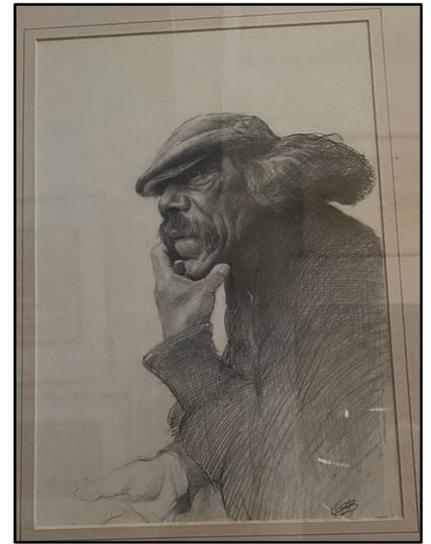
Paul enjoys telling good stories as a background to the paintings and photographs, and especially enjoys the scandals and slightly risqué side of the works. We were engrossed and could easily lose two to three days taking it all in. One room was devoted entirely to cricket!





Examples of the eclectic nature of the collection with so much to study and absorb. Robin White's painting is to the top left.

Portrait of Ralph Hotere.



For the second part of our trip, we moved on to a painting exhibition by Anya Sinclair. This was in complete contrast to our earlier visit.

Anya paints landscapes, and flowers, and has been working on her art for thirty years. Anya has spent time in Brazil, where her brother lives. However, these are not traditional landscapes. They are very much influenced by the Brazilian concept of 'Saudade' that she incorporates into her work. This is a 'longing and ache for a person or place or experience that once brought great pleasure. It is like nostalgia but unlike



nostalgia, saudade can be felt for something that never happened. At the heart of saudade, lies a yearning sense of absence, of loss'.

Anya is pointing out how one can move into the heart of the painting, which is in clear focus, whereas the outer parts are slightly blurred.

Anya extended her exhibition especially for our group for which we are most grateful.



Here is an example of one of her flower paintings.

After leaving the gallery we reassembled at Rhubarb in Roslyn where we enjoyed an excellent lunch with prompt and courteous service.

We all enjoyed another great day out in Dunedin where the hidden treasures in our city and its environment continue to emerge. How lucky we are to enjoy this rich heritage that is so much part of our local culture and to have the pleasure of enjoying it in the company of such a lovely group of members. A big thank you to Paula for organising such a great day.

Maryalycy is hoping to arrange a visit to see Robin White's exhibition at the DPGA in April. Tash

Expanding Musical Horizons Group March

Each year, we start with a session called “Pops Meet the Classics”. It’s an easy-going look at the world of popular music. As kids, we grew up listening to popular music that our parents listened to. Later as teens and into our twenties, we listened to different music as times and styles changed and our musical tastes developed.

A common thread over that period is that some of the music we heard had been borrowed, stolen, nicked, purloined, plagiarised or flogged from some famous composer’s hard work, mostly from centuries ago, and we didn’t know. Almost always, this was done without any acknowledgement of its source.

In the picture are some of the composers and artists we listened to, including Jethro Tull, Simon and Garfunkel, Elvis Presley, Bach, Procul Harum, Mike Oldfield, Praetorius, Perry Como and Chabrier.



In our March session, we looked at a few of these hit parade songs (as well as the original classical pieces) to get us underway with our 2023 series of talks. Our session mixed a trip down Memory Lane with a quick quiz about everything we listened to.

Paul

Gardens and Botanical Group March

Our March trip was a big day out. We set off mid-morning to visit Northview, the hilltop garden of Trudi and David Stewart. It was a brilliant day, sunny and warm without any wind to disturb the leaves when we arrived at the garden.



Quite an entrance for those readers who have not visited here when you turn off State Highway 1 at East Taieri and head for the hills. The garden opens as you drive up the access road, past the feature waterfall designed, built and installed by David over a period of thirteen years. He built

this to drain water after heavy rain in the catchment. Weather conditions meant we were treated to a video of the water feature in action during the last big rain in 2022, rather than the real thing.



On arriving at Northview Garden gates, one beholds the white house atop the hill. The views over Mosgiel town and surrounds from the front garden are stunning.



David and Trudi met our group and welcomed us to their garden. David took us on a tour of the garden while Trudi returned to her weeding tasks. She did say we should pull out any she missed.

David led us around one of the pools close to the house and explained the saga of the goldfish which now inhabit the pool in company with waterlilies and many water insects. He bought six goldfish initially,

despite Trudi saying the birds would bring them, and promptly lost them amongst the lilies. They took some years to re-emerge, but they have never looked back since. Now they sell goldfish!



We spent an hour touring the spacious grounds around the house, hearing the stories behind the sculpture acquired through overseas travel, family talents and no doubt a few impulsive purchases. This part of the garden was established twenty-four years ago. We continued into the park where over one thousand, two hundred rhododendrons have been planted amongst the cherry tree walk, the maples, the heath garden and the autumn colorings of the maples and golden elms.

Establishing these trees was a labour of love. The neighboring cows took a fancy to the tasty tips of new plantings of native trees along the boundary, so protective fencing was required. The poor soils and steep hillside meant that deep holes had to be dug for each tree and high-quality soil added to get the tree roots deep enough to hold the trees against high winds. A special task was to then add drainage so the rhododendrons could thrive. Each tree has its own drainage coil that runs down the hillside.



David says he can now look back and appreciate the physical effort it took to create this park with its walkways, seating, plants and of course the waterfall. He did admit to a favorite tree in this part of the park, notably *Cornus contraversa*, commonly known as the Wedding Cake Tree.



We were in awe of the effort as now the eye just sees a beautiful park with complementary colours, textures and healthy plants responding to expertly prepared conditions.

Following some time to explore by ourselves, we set off for lunch at Wal's. It was nice to sit and talk to members over a tasty lunch and a good chance to get to know each other better. We had a great turnout of twenty members, as our gardeners took advantage of this wonderful day out.



After lunch, we headed off to Hawthorne Cottage to Craig and Jo Inch's garden on Rutherford Road. Jo met us and gave us an overview of the garden and the work they had undertaken. They cleared the paddocks, apart from a kowhai tree and another mature tree, and the rest is their own vision.

Jo said Craig is the plantsman and visionary and she adds the labour and love. Between them they have created their



own paradise with garden rooms, sheltered places to sit and enjoy the scenery, a whimsical playhouse and tool shed, plus real stables in a stone building.

There is a sheltered walkway over a pool, and the latest project is a pétanque court, still under construction. Once more we were in awe of what they have achieved in less than ten years. The variety of perennials,



roses, specialty plants, fruit trees, berries

and vegetables kept us fully absorbed for the rest of the afternoon.



Our next trip will be to Waitati to visit the Taste Nature Organic Garden. Robyne

Wanderers Group March

Bethunes Gully appealed to the Wanderers Group after several excursions further afield. One of our group stopped to admire and explain the workmanship of the Predator-Free traps along the track, recognising the unique marking of the craftsman who built it.



A delightful afternoon across to Quarantine Island was our next wander, thanks to the dynamic, young Rachel who runs the Port to Port ferry service between Port Chalmers and



Portobello. The harbour was calmly bathed in sunshine and most of us had never previously been to the island. We enjoyed the magnificent and different views after picnicking under a sheltering tree during a brief shower.



Back to more local, we again dodged the worst of a very welcome Dunedin drenching while walking along

Portsmouth Drive and around Andersons Bay Inlet where we observed rain drops on the water at high tide, spurring us to get to Nichols for refreshments before we were soaked.

Ailsa

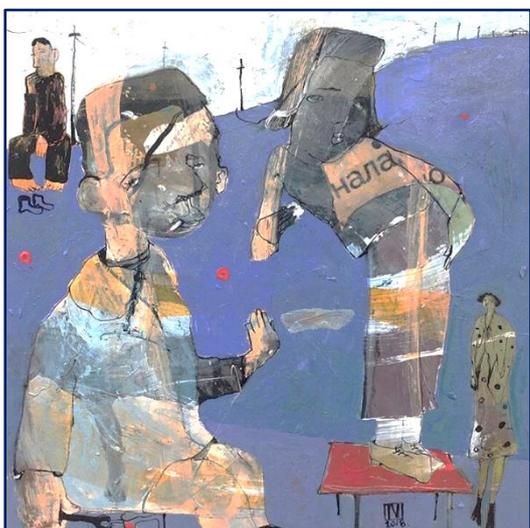
Art Collection Group March



The March visit of our Art Collections group was to the Ebb Hotel in Filleul Street. This boutique hotel, an artwork in itself, features art prints on each floor of its atrium style architecture. The green chevron tiles reflected the spot lit art.



The fourth floor's artwork was all by Sofia Minson. She is an Auckland painter who features her Maori heritage in her prints.



The third floor prints were all by an Auckland painter, Ilya Volykhine and show glimpses of his Russian heritage.



The second floor featured large landscape photographs, as did the stairwells. Many of these works, taken by Irenaeus Herok of Sydney, were of local seascapes and generated much discussion about exactly which area of Dunedin they depicted.

After viewing the works, we moved down to the ground floor café for our usual refreshments and conversation. The group now has a pleasing number of members.
Anne-Marie

Tuesday Current Issues Group March

A discussion about the Census arose when one member said some people have publicly stated that they will deliberately return false information on their Census returns. On discussion we decided it would take quite a bit of thought and then collected effort to queer the census in some material way.

A greater problem is when a significant section of a community does not complete the census form; this can lead to them being given reduced resources. We felt the Census had not been advertised well or helpfully. **'Enclosed is your census form: help bring support to your community over the next 5 years'** would be an honest and compelling encouragement to complete the forms.

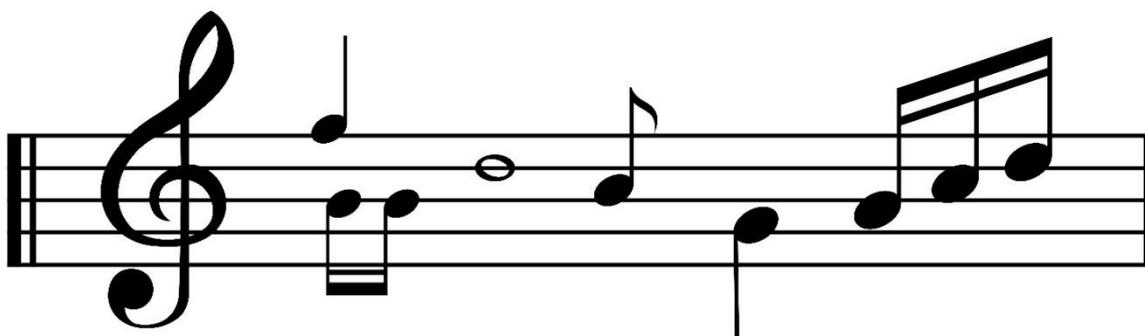
After coffee we discussed the Otago Daily Times front page of the day, ramping up for a campaign re: hospital cuts. This morphed into a broader discussion about the place of this hospital in the Otago/Southland health system, and then to the worth of Advanced Directives and the concern that it is extremely difficult to get current, signed, DO NOT RESUSCITATE wishes to the relevant people at the right time.

Gretchen Kivell

Singing Group March

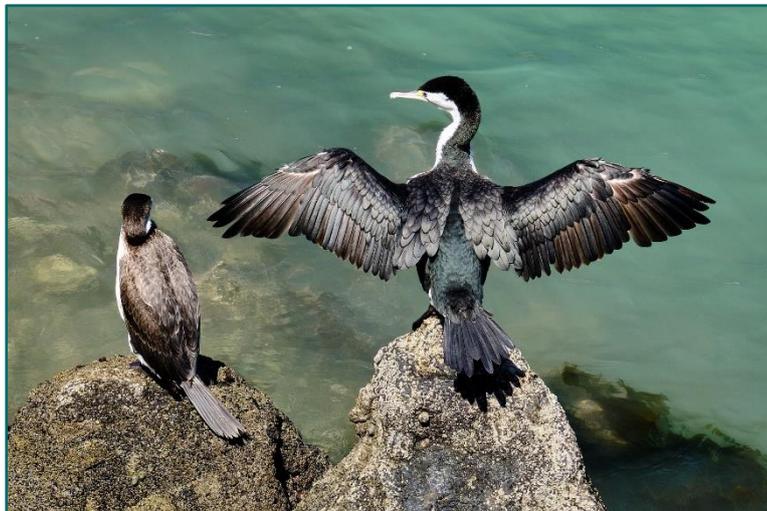
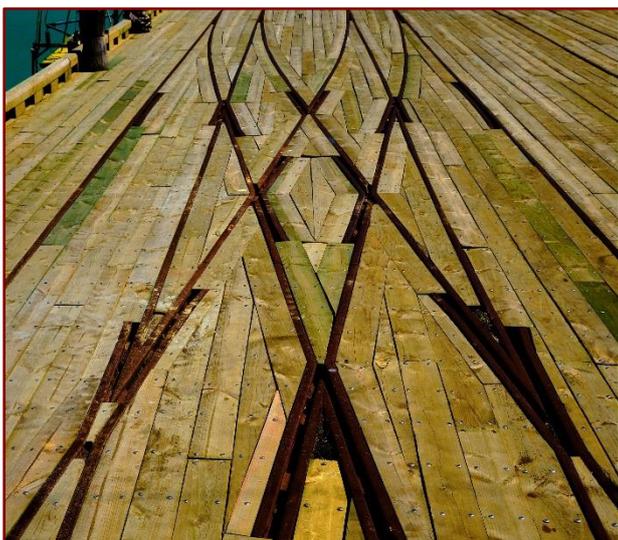
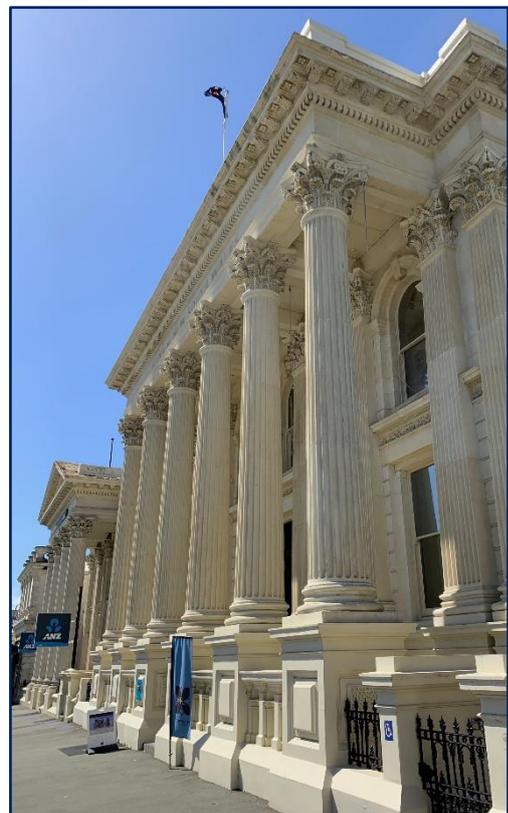
The group has got off to a very good start this year after a long recess due to Covid. Numbers have increased and there are now well over twenty singers on our list. We meet every Monday afternoon to sing together, and there are some very promising harmonies emerging.

April practices will be interrupted by Easter (10th April) and we also can't meet on the 17th, but will be in action on the other Mondays throughout April and into May. Claire



Photography Group March

Eight of us caught the Victorian train to Oamaru on the last Sunday in February. Some met friends for lunch, others found good restaurants to assail their pangs of hunger, and a couple of us wandered to the harbour, via the Farmers Market, where the smell of a bacon buttie was totally irresistible. And a bag of Kakanui's finest, when transported in a backpack for several hours, makes a delicious, squashed tomato salad.



Michael O'Brien, who for many years sold rare books in the old precinct, has finally seen the light and set up a brewery. More money to be made in booze than in books. *Photos this page: Caz, Graham, Ani*



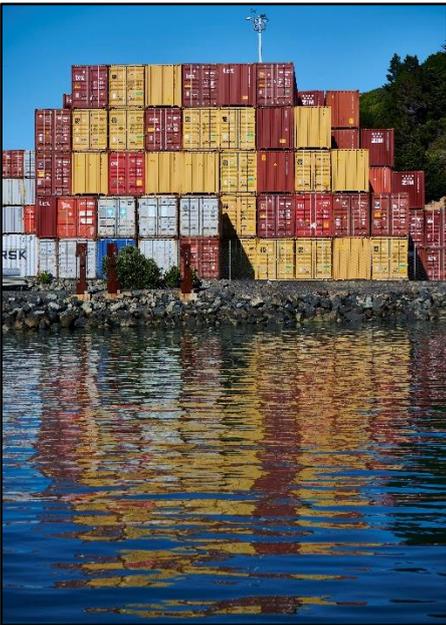
Our first trip in March saw sixteen of us head to Quarantine Island. John from East Coast Charters was most obliging to deal with, and even laid on a canine skipper for the return trip.



We left from John's moorings at Careys Bay, and he went the long route



around Goat Island, so our boat ride was very good value for money.



Clever Anne UK realized there were two sides to the welcoming entrance way. Never judge a sign by its face!



Perfect weather, and sunhats were the order of the day. Thank you, Hildegard, for saving the forgetful one who turned up minus hers. There are some trees on the island to provide a little cover, but there were long stretches of ground with very few.



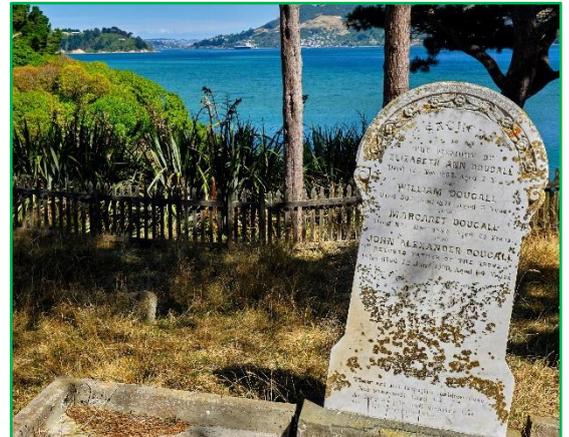


John Burton dug out from his old photos the image (right) he took many years ago before the restoration of the Men's Quarters.

This is it today.



We wandered on the island to points that interested us and picnicked far and wide.



Some, energetically, did a full circuit to view the cormorants nesting area, while some were content with a shorter walk, and then there were those of us who didn't need to be invited twice to have a rest with a view.

Nothing at all structured about the day, so that meant we were able to stop and take photos where we liked and there was no pressure to keep up with the main group.



The architecturally designed chapel with an earth floor and a cool and peaceful interior was a great refuge from the heat of this day.

This island, Kamau Taurua, is well worth arranging a visit.

John and Chris sheltering from the sun while waiting for the Vivienne J to return for our group.





I know this is part of the old wreck, but does anyone else see a cow swimming?



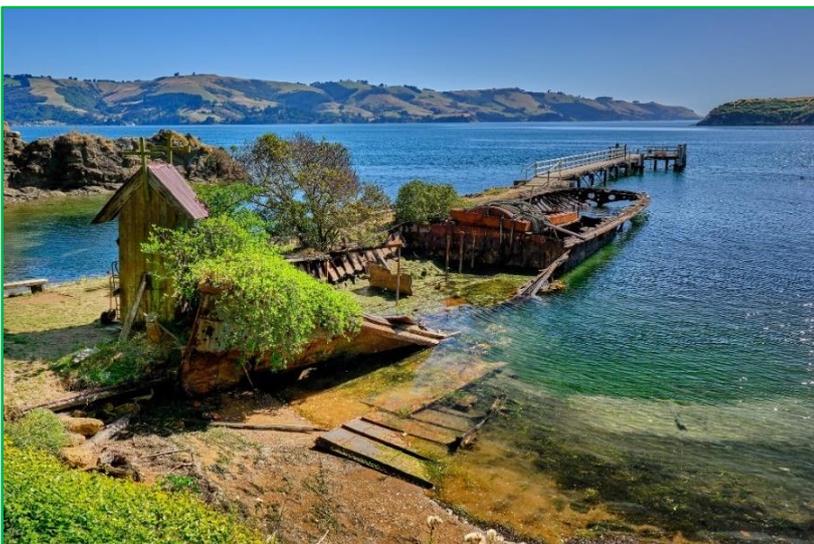
On returning to Carey's Bay and the pub, one or two cold beers and iced coffees



were consumed along with the regular offerings. Ani

Photos from Q Is trip by: Graham, Sue, Hildegard, Ani, Anne UK, Robyne, John, Kevin, Howard.

The gull checking we had left her place.

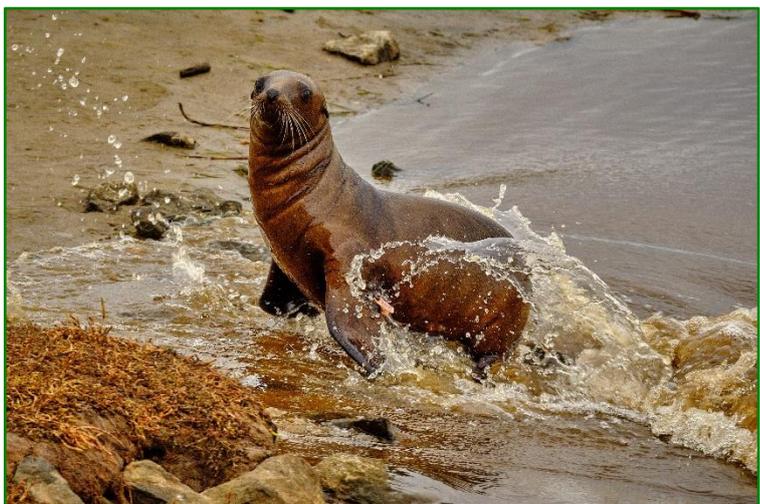


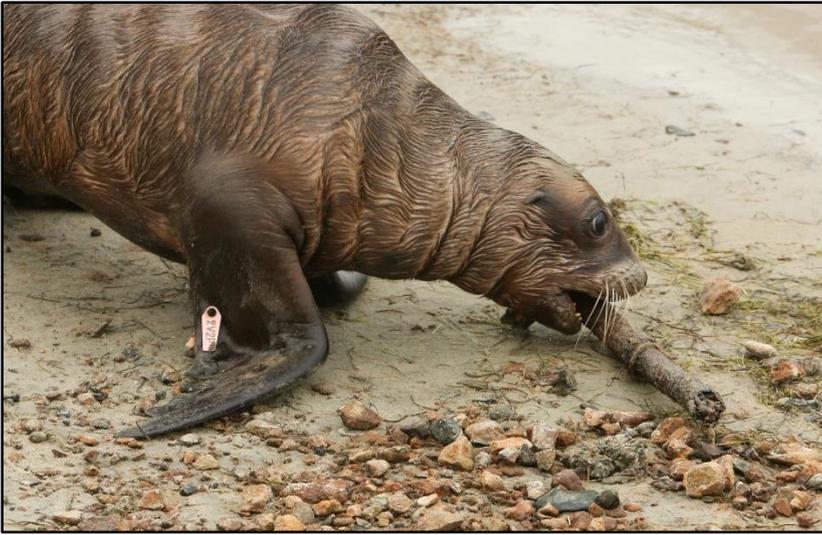
A small group of us went in mid-March to see the pups at the sea lion nursery on Allans Rd at Hoopers Inlet. Others who couldn't go that day managed a trip either before, or a day or two later. A wonderful sight they were.

Some great improvements to the area this year with a sturdy wooden fence erected, and a designated parking spot. I met this stalwart volunteer from the Sea Lion Trust, and took this photo, in 2022, when she was wielding a small boogie board trying to keep the mischievous pups off the road. Two were killed by cars last year and their mothers grieved deeply for the loss of their pup.



Lucky to meet this lady again while we were viewing the antics of the pups. She explained that three were born this season, one is from last season and the big one was, she estimated, four years old.





The four-year-old is the epitome of the boss.

I reckon he is giving the newbies roaring lessons below.



Like children everywhere, the pups seemed fascinated with sticks. They were still suckling their mothers, but were also diving to catch, and eat, small sea creatures.

Photos at Hoopers Inlet from Graham, Sue and Ani. Happy to put my hand up for the very lucky drive by shot of the Canada geese. Ani

