



University of the Third Age
The Age of Active Retirement: People Exchanging Knowledge

Newsletter December 2022

Our Christmas Meeting is on Monday 12 December. (note it is a week earlier than usual)

It is also a celebration of our 21st birthday which we delayed because of Covid.

We invite you to attend at

Mt Pleasant Community Centre, 3 McCormacks Bay Road, Christchurch.

10-10.20am: Social time in the foyer. Meeting starts in the main hall at 10.30am.



Our guest speaker is Wallace Woodley , well known among music and choral circles in Christchurch, who will delight us with his interpretation of the History of the Piano. His presentation will be followed by our Christmas and Birthday Party. We look forward to seeing you.



Message from the President



Greetings to all our U3A members -

I write my final comments for the year as the Committee prepares for U3A's end of year function-a combined Christmas and 21st birthday celebration. A full summary of the year's activities will appear in my annual report that will be presented to the AGM -so I will not attempt in this column to summarise the year's activities.

I wish to bring to your attention the changes to our Rules that will be submitted to members for their approval at the AGM.

There are three main changes proposed to the current Rules. The first change is to enable committee meetings to be held remotely, such as by Zoom, where all members attending and constituting a quorum can hear each other throughout the meeting. This change simply brings U3A into line with other similar organisations.

The second change is to provide for members who have given outstanding service to U3A to be elevated to life membership. A proposal to grant life membership can only be made by the Committee and then must be approved by members at a General Meeting. The Committee is also charged with setting the criteria a member needs to meet to qualify for promotion to life membership. This criteria must be communicated to members by the club's newsletter and website. Any member can lobby the Committee to present an application for the elevation of a member to life membership. A life member is exempt from payment of the annual levy and has all the rights of an ordinary member.

The third and final change is to allow existing Committee members to co-opt new Committee members either to replace a retiring Committee member or to increase the complement of Committee members up to the maximum of 12. The existing Rules only allow the Committee to co-opt to replace a retiring Committee member - but not to enlarge the Committee. Linked to the third change outlined above, the Committee wishes to establish a register of members who are willing to serve on the Committee and with the various Interest Groups. This, it is hoped, will facilitate more orderly succession planning. I will have more to say about this proposal at the AGM.

I wish all members a happy and safe Christmas, and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Warm regards

John Delugar

President

U3A Photographs

From time to time we take photographs of our members to be included in the newsletters, on the website and on the screen before a monthly meeting.

If you would prefer not to be included, can you please let the person know who is taking the photo.

21st November's Guest Speaker: Assoc. Prof Peter Field



Head of School (Humanities and creative arts), Associate Professor of History at Canterbury University, Peter Field is an American and an engaging speaker. He entitled his lecture: 'Life After Trump', acknowledging that it was hard to tell now whether the former President would win the Republican nomination next time and whether, as a result, life after Trump would be short term. 'Trump hasn't gone,' he said, but is seeking re-election.

In 2016, 63 million Americans voted for him and in 2020 another four million were added to the list. Why, Peter asked. The world is chaotic however most of us prefer law and order which is supposed to be provided by experts and governments like the

United Nations or the World Health Organisation. According to Peter, many Americans were concerned that these bodies and other global organisations experience corruption and monies are not being used appropriately. Trump, was seen by his followers as a mover and shaker who would do something. He had no plan, but he promised to change the establishment.

Two years after a presidential election, the US holds a referendum to see how well Potus (President) is going. The referendum is known as the 'mid-terms'. Last month the referendum gave a 4% swing against the incumbent Joe Biden but that was a small margin and the Democrats were pleased. They retained the Senate and lost the House of Representatives by a small margin.

Peter diverted from Trump and talked about Covid and its origin which he said was a virus developed in a Wuhan laboratory and which had somehow escaped. We were lucky in New Zealand, he said, because our government and scientists had worked together to reassure us during the pandemic outbreak. In the US, Trump had ignored scientific advice and while he was popular because the economy was buoyant, he was a disaster and an embarrassment over Covid.

Life after Trump, according to Peter is life with mobile phones with their easy access to knowledge whether it is true or false which is having an extraordinary impact on politics. In the past, he said, we turned to experts for advice but now training to be an expert doesn't have the same 'value'. Peter warned that we shouldn't think we are better than Trump supporters because if we dismiss them we are losing faith in democracy.

There were plenty of questions for Peter about the current state of global and local politics and some good discussions to follow.

Latest News & Updates

Reminder to all members that our first meeting in 2023 will be the AGM. As is tradition, some members will give a brief talk about their lives and experiences.

INTEREST GROUP UPDATES

Armchair Travel



Even in high summer this year (July in the northern hemisphere, the countries that border the Baltic are chillier than their more southern neighbours. Kay Goodman and her husband Paul cruised for two weeks on board *Viking Mars* taking in the majesty of the Norwegian fjords and the beauty of the 19th century Tivoli gardens among the many stops on offer.

(left: Stone sculptures of Norwegian arctic explorers). With 740 passengers, the ship wasn't large but every cabin had its own balcony and was compact and well fitted out. While Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm

were highlights, the smaller villages were equally impressive with their striking architecture, quaint street and diverse communities.



Bergen's famous waterfront was the perfect place for a photo opportunity.

A quick trip to Berlin included a stroll to the Tiergarten and views of the capital's restored buildings as well as a passing glimpse of the remnants of the Berlin wall. The cruise was only part of a wider European tour and Armchair travellers are keen to see and hear more.

At our December meeting, Pat Whitman gave us a most enjoyable slide show of London, a city she knows very well. Starting with the London Eye to give us the best aerial view, her tour of the city embraced many monuments, wonderful architecture, superb sculptures and the Cheese Grater, the



Shard and the Gherkin juxtaposed with St Pauls, the Globe the British Museum and some quaint pubs. For most of us who are familiar with London's traditional tourist spots, it was exciting to see so much within a half-hour presentation, reminding us that London is only 24 hours away which includes a very long plane ride from here to Heathrow not to mention the costs of accommodation which in one of the world's most recognisable cities, can be rather expensive.

Thanks Pat – a great way to end the year for Armchair Travellers.



Art Appreciation

In a modest step outside central Christchurch, Papanui became Art Appreciation Group's October destination. The meeting place at Black & White Coffee in Winston Avenue meant just a short walk to Art Box Gallery on Loftus Street. Paintings line the vestibule and stairway up to Beverley Frost's combined studio and gallery where her paintings along with works from a diverse range of artists throughout NZ are displayed. Bev is working on a large acrylic painting of NZ flax. We crowded round her easel as she explained how in building up her painting she may return to nature to recapture its essence before continuing. Our group enjoyed the variety of work in the gallery and should you decide to visit Art Box Gallery in person, expect a welcome and lots to see. Art Box also has a very good website at www.artboxgallery.info.



Making up for lost time due to Covid, art has really flourished from November, giving our members plenty of choices. Locally, the Ferrymead Rotary Art Show provided a drawcard followed by Cup & Show Week when a number of art galleries had something special to see and enjoy.

In November, our scheduled outing was to the Christchurch Art Gallery to see paintings by Jeffrey Harris and Barbara Tuck.

From the North Island, Barbara Tuck's oil paintings could on one level be described as landscapes, but they also reflect her wide range of interests. Her exhibition has been selected

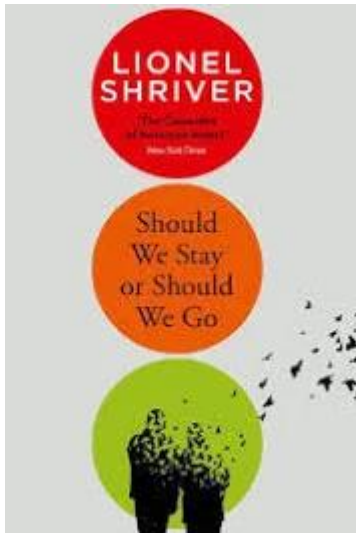
by writers who have collaborated in this project titled "Delirium Crossing," (see left)

Originally from Banks Peninsula, Jeffrey Harris also lived in Otago. Self taught but with mentors such as Michael Smither and Ralph Hotere, many of his works are very personal and relate to family. This exhibition also included some etchings. (see right)

(Contributed by Helen Harkness)



Book Discussion Group



Surely one of the most complex books our group has read, or attempted to read, this year. Lionel Shriver was named Margaret Ann by her parents but she didn't like either name and changed to Lionel because, she said, at the time she was a tomboy and thought the name was more suitable. She is outspoken on many issues including criticism of 'woke' behaviour and has won praise for 'We need to talk about Kevin', her novel which won considerable acclaim. An American by birth, she lives in London where she wrote 'Should we stay or should we go' – a novel that gives everyone over the age of retirement, the shivers when contemplating what to do – whether to stay or whether to go. Shriver isn't talking about where to live. Her discussion through her characters is whether to live or not. It was hard to determine whether she is mocking beliefs and

traditions, or whether she has researched retirement options in the UK and based her book on what she found. Suffice to say, she gave me a severe dose of the heebie-jeebies and a determination to stay where I am and not be talked into going anywhere else.

Our December book is 'The Madonnas of Leningrad', a wonderfully descriptive debut novel by Debra Dean, which, for art lovers, gives a superb account of moving The Hermitage's enormous art collection to safety during the German siege. Just as Sarah Quigley wrote 'The Conductor' based on the musical genre during the siege, so has Debra Dean concentrated on paintings and artworks. (Contributed by Vivienne Allan.)

Café Group 1

It's a busy time of the year from here on in, so we didn't have a full muster at our gathering last Tuesday. However, it was a good session for all of us present. This month's choice was The Metro at Ferrymead, where we often like to go. The conversation focused on the recent trip to England for



one of our members. For our friend it was a time to re-connect again with family and do a bit of sight-seeing as well. However, the talk at the cafe turned to what is clearly becoming an enormous problem for the UK. The arrival of so many migrants, all planning to settle permanently in England, has created a number of problems, including the first hurdle – the paper work and processing of such large numbers of people. None of the migrants wanted to stop off at

any other country en route, as the shared belief was clearly that the UK offered a better deal for the future lives of these migrants. We wondered about the future of these trusting and hopeful people. (Details provided by Judy Calder)

Cycling Group

The cycling group is having its final outing for the year with a 9 km ride from the Dallington community centre to host Jan Dobson's house where they will have a pre-Christmas lunch. It sounds great fun and fingers crossed for fine weather. (Contributed by Jan Dobson)



DVD Series

The DVDs are one of our most valuable and valued resources to inform, educate and delight our members. Whether you are interested in history, art, science, travel – the options are endless. Several groups are currently enjoying such lectures as France through the Ages, The World's Best Painting, and the history of China. Every meeting we put lists on the table in the foyer for our members to check what series they would like to see. Also, if anyone has a particular preference for a subject that isn't currently on our list, please let Judy Calder know. It maybe music, contemporary or the classics, famous authors, and so on. For more information contact Judy on 384 1269 or email judycalder@hotmail.com

Garden Group



The Garden Group has been very active over the past three months – Spring and early Summer are always full of interest and surprises in the garden. October saw the Group touring a number of properties in Redcliffs/Moncks Bay – you realise that lack of imagination is the only thing that hampers!



In early November we toured several properties in Fisher Avenue, and then on the 12th we held our Plant Stall at the Mt Pleasant Market.



It was a fun day; we sold loads of plants that we had diligently raised from seeds or cuttings and shared and received botanic knowledge with the enthusiastic buyers.

On the 28th we visited Julie May (ex Motukarara Iris Garden owner/grower) at her new garden in Springston and then we went for lunch at Cedar Gardens in Rolleston – both wonderful gardens and a tribute to their owners. (Contributed by Lyn Russell)

Geology/Botany Group



For our end-of-year outing, we combined with the History Group and 50 of us went on the Kaiapoi River Queen for a cruise along the River Cam. The paddle steamer is a flat-bottomed boat two-storeyed boat built of

wood and fiberglass and is powered by two-outboard motors. Originally working on the Taylor River in Marlborough, she moved to Kaiapoi in 2019.

It was a beautiful sunny day and we enjoyed a delicious lunch of salmon or ham, potatoes and salad with drinks while we travelled.

Before the meal, Michael Williams told us about the history of the old MV Tuhoe which ended up stranded near the entrance to the Waimakariri and was unsalvageable.

There was plenty to see as we went along, with a flying heron, spoonbills in the trees and lots of colourful yellow irises and lupins. We also passed a rowing eight and several fishermen on the bank.



(Contributed by Pat Whitman)

History Group

In October, the Canterbury History Group visited the family home of Dame Ngaio Marsh which is tucked away, high on a hillside above the Cashmere Tennis Club. Our big group of U3A visitors slowly climbed the steep lane, pausing for a breather here and there, before tackling an even steeper flight of steps that led to the front door of the house.

One of the delightful things about this historic home is that it has been left in its original condition. No new furniture has been brought in to fill empty spaces, nor nooks and crannies filled with bits and pieces. Whatever is there now, was there before. It is just as if the woman herself has left the house clean and tidy and gone out for a while.



Ngaio Marsh was born in Christchurch, but as her father forgot to register her birth until she was about five years of age, there is some uncertainty about her birth date. During her adventurous lifetime she managed to achieve recognition in a number of different areas. Her fame as a crime writer (she published 32 detective novels) was international and she was known as one of “The Four Original Queens of Crime” along with Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers and Margery Allingham. In addition, the theatre was one of her great loves. She produced many Shakespearean plays for Canterbury University Drama Society and later toured other plays with other groups. In addition, she showed some skill as an artist and we were able to see a number of her works on display in

her house. Tucked away downstairs in a basement addition (with a second access point from a circular metal staircase) we ducked our heads and wandered around her “study” - a large space that looked out over the garden and across to the city and mountains. Here are stored copies of many of her works. But it would have been good to know what secrets she destroyed as towards the end of her life she got rid of many of her letters, papers and other documents, so they could never be accessed.

A pleasant walk around the terraced garden set on several different levels, showed us that the volunteer group that maintains this historic homestead and its grounds, proudly displays the life and times of Dame Ngaio Marsh. And coffee and cakes at Zeroes ended a delightful morning's outing. (Contributed by Judy Calder.)



(Ngaio Marsh features in Peter Simpson's superb book: *Bloomsbury South: The Arts in Christchurch 1933-1953* together with such Christchurch artistic luminaries as Mary Ursula Bethell, Olivia Spencer Bower, Douglas Lillburn and Doris Lusk to mention a handful. Ed)

Scrabble Group



We continue to meet fortnightly at members' homes starting at 1.30pm on alternate Tuesdays.

It is great fun and we look forward to welcoming more members in the New Year.

(Contributed by Alison Harrington.)

Writing Group

Coming to grips with the nuances of tenses, past, present and future when writing, was the theme of last month's session. In October Jocelyn Johnstone, former journalist and public relations consultant gave us insights into her memoir entitled 'Who you are' which she published earlier this year.



She researched her maternal and paternal histories and has put them into the context of Christchurch and Canterbury in the relevant decades. For those of us in the group who are intent on writing our own personal stories for our children and grandchildren it was a morale booster to know it can be done.

December's meeting will concentrate on accessing photographs, scanning, placement, where to go to find suitable images, costs if using Archives NZ, libraries etc.

(Contributed by Vivienne Allan.)



Happy New Year: U3A Pegasus

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INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

Below is the list of U3A Pegasus Interest Groups, their convenors and contact details. If you would like to join any of the groups, please contact the convenor.

Details of the groups are highlighted on the table in the foyer of Mt Pleasant Community Centre.

You can also read past and present reports by different interest group convenors on our website at <https://u3apegasus.org.nz/interest-groups/>

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL	Meets monthly in members' homes on 1 st Tuesday of the month at 3pm in members' homes. Contact Robin Fear Ph 9664278 or Mob 027 430 9937. Email randhfear@gmail.com
ART APPRECIATION	Meets monthly, 2 nd Friday of the month. Contact Helen Harkness Ph 384 2890 Email donandhelen@xtra.co.nz
BOOK DISCUSSION	Meets monthly after the U3A lecture, 3 rd Monday of the month in the Café Mt Pleasant Community Centre. Contact Vivienne Allan on 021 067 9420 Email ayndavar@outlook.com
CAFÉ GROUP 1	Meets monthly, 2.30pm on Tuesday of the week following 3 rd Monday of the month. Contacts Frances Cole Ph 326 8522 or Erin Higgins Ph 384 4385
CAFÉ GROUP 2	Meets monthly, after the U3A lecture, 3 rd Monday of the month in the room off the Café Mt Pleasant Community Centre to meet the guest speaker over a cup of coffee. Contact Norma Hampton Ph 332 8990 Email colin-norma36@xtra.co.nz

CANTERBURY HISTORY	Meets monthly, 2 nd Monday of the month. Contact Judy Calder Ph 384 1269 Email judycalder@hotmail.com
CYCLING GROUP	Meets monthly, 2 nd Tuesday. Contact Jan Dobson Email donandjanclear@gmail.com Ph 381 8925
DVD: SERIES	Several groups have started again this month. Check the section Interest Group Updates for more information or contact Judy Calder Ph 384 1269 Email judycalder@hotmail.com
GARDEN GROUP	Meets 4 th Monday of the month. A mixture of speakers, garden visits and 'tea & cuttings'. Contact Lynne Haslett Ph 027 229 2294 Email lynnehaslett@gmail.com
GEOLOGY/BOTANY	Meets twice a month on 1 st Monday at Redcliffs Bowling Centre and 3 rd Wednesday for an outing. Contact Pat Whitman Ph 384 3475 Email patwandpate@gmail.com
SCRABBLE	Meets fortnightly Tuesdays 1.30pm. Contact Alison Harrington Ph 022 307 4039 Email Alison.harrington@xtra.co.nz
WRITING GROUP – OUR LIFE STORIES	Meets once a month on the second Thursday at 10am. Contact Vivienne Allan on 021 067 9420 or email ayndavar@outlook.com