



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

Newsletter May 2024

Welcome to this May newsletter

Our next meeting will be on Monday 20 May 2024

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 will be Barbara Garrie who will talk about
Conceptual Art: It's Origins – what it is and why we should like it.**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Welcome to this autumn edition of our newsletter. Our April speaker, Simon Challies attracted a large membership and we are sure this month's speaker on 20 May – Barbara Garrie, will be equally welcome. It is always good to see a high level turnout at our monthly gatherings.

Our June meeting will feature our usual lecture and also a Special General Meeting, when we will ask members to support a simplification of some of our rules and a specification of the committee's obligations. In due course, we will mail you details of the proposed changes and the reasons for the changes.

The committee has unanimously expressed its wish to be the approving body for both members and life members. We will suggest a maximum of 5 life members at any given time and will commit to an annual review. Your committee will also request your permission to determine the yearly subscription fee. Deciding at the AGM is not practical because members usually start to renew their membership then or immediately after.

While the committee needs the authority to ensure the smooth running of our organisation, it is also important that members maintain their right to decide what they want.

Now is therefore an excellent time to remind you of some of your rights as members. 10 members of Pegasus U3A can call a Special General Meeting at any time. Any member of Pegasus U3A can nominate a member for life membership. Any member of Pegasus U3A can stand for office or a position on the committee. There is a form to fill in, and it must reach the committee no later than seven days before a meeting where such an election takes place.

As always, I welcome your suggestions or thoughts on any governance issues you wish to bring to my attention. I look forward to seeing you on the 20th at the Community Centre.

Jorgen Schousboe

LATEST NEWS & UPDATES

- **If members are hard of hearing, please sit in the front of the auditorium. Sometimes the microphones don't give a good sound for people with hearing aids.**
- **The report of our April guest speaker Simon Challies is on our website. It was included in the April Bulletin, however if anyone wants to read it again you will find it on <https://u3apegasus.org.nz/speakers-2/> Just click on this link.**
- **After having advised members that Spark intended charging a fee for people who use the email address xtra.co.nz, we were very pleased to see so many of our members changing to another service provider. If you have changed your email address can you please advise our Membership Secretary Christine Toner: email: christinetoner139@gmail.com**
- **Diary note for Monday 17 June when our guest speaker will be Peter Field talking about religious influence in the US.**

Our Guest for May



Introducing Beth Bradley.....

Beth is petite, charming and enthusiastic with a self-deprecating sense of humour. We talk over a cup of tea and a muffin in her sun-filled living room and discuss her family – her five grand-daughters and their career paths – and her own activities of which there are many. ‘Girls can do anything,’ she says firmly, maybe something she learned at Avonside Girls High, and she encourages her grand-daughters in their studies – one still at Cashmere High, and the others either in the midst or at the end of their university years.

When it comes to her own career, Beth tells me she was a lab technician at Rangi Ruru School for 34 years. ‘My work aligned with the Science Department. I was responsible for providing all the materials for the girls

to undertake their experiments. I was regularly with the girls while they were working to help and make sure everything was running smoothly.' When she retired in 2009, there was a brief hiatus before the first of the earthquakes and although her home was 'under cap', it still meant she was out of the house for six weeks while repairs were done. 'At that stage Pegasus U3A wasn't able to meet at the Community Centre so we went to the Woolston Working Men's Club until the rebuild was completed.'

'John Hicks asked whether I would be interested in going on the U3A committee and I agreed,' she explained. It was but a short step from there to becoming co-chair with Judy Calder for four years. 'Our aim was to expand the interest groups and invite quality guest speakers to our monthly meetings. We also wanted the meetings themselves to be of a high standard and I think we achieved that.'

Taking on the responsibility of finding good speakers was quite a task, Beth said. 'It wasn't particularly difficult because we had a list of potential speakers who had talked at other U3A meetings and we had friends in other organisations who recommended speakers. I tried to find speakers who would be interesting and stimulating for our members. We cater for a wide variety of interests and usually we get it right. I tried not to get too many speakers talking about health or ageing because we all have an issue in either one or the other.'

Beth learned the art of public speaking at Toastmasters which is another group she has belonged to for several years. 'I learned how to structure a speech and how to deliver it,' she said. Toastmasters is also about public speaking and leadership, traits that stood Beth in good stead while she was co-chairing the U3A committee. Now she is a keen member of the Art Appreciation and Canterbury History interest groups and enjoys the friendships and collegiality they bring. It is what U3A is all about she says.

INTEREST GROUPS' UPDATES

Adventures in Travel (formerly Armchair Travel)



Heather and Robin Fear spent two weeks touring Tasmania in late November-early December this past year. They rented a car in order to see as much as possible of the state and taking time to enjoy the many walking and hiking tracks that abound from east to west, north to south. Originally a convict settlement, Tasmania was built predominantly by convict labour. There are many fine original sandstone buildings, but Heather and Robin were more interested in

the landscape, the lakes, mountains, sea views and the beautifully maintained walks. Their holiday

took them from Hobart (smaller than anticipated for the capital), to Strahan (pronounced Strawn), to Cradle Mountain, Launceston, Swansea, Port Arthur and back to Hobart.



Being the start of the summer season, the climate was similarly to home as was, in many places, the rural landscape. 'We could have been on the West Coast of New Zealand,' Heather said. The walking tracks were excellent, some built with large stones, others with wooden planks, and there were plenty of well maintained pedestrian bridges. The views were 'stunning' and there was an abundance of birdlife. 'The Australian birds are very loud,' Robin said.

They photographed many wombats, wallabies and other creatures that scavenged for food.

Known as the 'star of Freycinet National Park', Wineglass Bay was a highlight with white wines and delicious local food to enjoy. Cradle Mountain, the lovely Lake St Clair and Maria Island were also parks of pristine beauty. 'Tasmania requires its tourists to pay to visit its national parks – something we could learn from in NZ,' Heather said. 'It means they can be well maintained.'



With a love of the outdoors, perfect weather and walking tracks that were easily manageable, Heather and Robin spent an enjoyable two weeks before

going on to Adelaide for their daughter's graduation. (Photos: Top left p3: Painted cliffs on Maria Island, top left this page: Heather and Robin at the Mt Wellington Lookout. Above right: the Cascade Brewery. (Contributed by Robin Fear.)

Art Appreciation



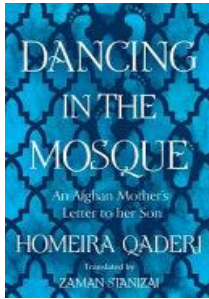
With umbrellas aloft, we met outside the University of Canterbury's Fine Arts Department for our April meeting before seeking out Café 1894. It was mid-semester lecture break and we easily slotted in amongst the few students, grateful for the central heating. Umbrellas up again, we located the Ilam Campus Gallery where '*Bringing Art into the Lives of Everyone*' celebrated 50 years of art history at UC.

As explained in the handout we were given, the art historian's role is 'conveying the key features of visual interest in a work of art through language.' Here, works of art from UC's art collection used for teaching and researching, were matched with staff

interpretations e.g. Eileen Mayo's 'Moths on the Window' a stencil print (see photo) is described in text by Jillian Cassidy's 'Shifting Boundaries: the art of Eileen Mayo' 2000 p251, 93-4.

Our next outing will be on Friday 10 May meeting at the Oddfellows Café on Disraeli Street for morning tea and a chat before going to City Art Depot 96 where we will see Francis van Houts 'Portraits, Idols and Robots.' (Contributed by Helen Harkness).

Book Discussion Group



Our March book was 'Dancing in the Mosque' An Afghans Mother's letters to her Son

By Homeiraa Quadira. Translated by Zaman Stanizai.

Homeira, a human rights advocate, tells a moving memoir of her childhood in Herat Western Afghanistan and her early adult years in Tehran, Iran. The desire for gender equality is at the heart of this story and is Homira's reason for writing the book, first published in 2020. Born in 1990 during the Russian occupation of Afghanistan, she increases our knowledge of this part of the world during that era. As she grew to a 13-14 year old, her world changed from Russian

occupation to Civil war, then to Taliban Militant Islamist. Schools closed and women and children stayed hidden in their homes. No ordinary Afghanistan woman, she refused to cower under the structures of a misogynistic social order. Defying the law at thirteen, Homeira began to teach young children in her family home, and risked her life to join a writing group, even having one of her stories published.

She was forced to marry an older man and moved to Tehran. Making the most of this change she studied at the Tehran University. She moved back to her home town and eventually had a son. Due to a difficult marital situation, in the end she had to leave her son behind, a sacrifice to her survival. Her son was fourteen months old.

The book is divided by her letters to her son and the true story of her life, a most unusual and beautifully written autobiography, one that almost crosses the boundary between fiction and non-fiction. At times her book is of an ethereal, poetic and Persian quality.

Our group enjoyed this book, we entered into a robust discussion around how women were treated, a mother leaving her baby, the hardships in these cultures where women are treated so cruelly and the sadness that they endure in the face of harsh religion, no education, and very difficult marriage arrangements.

We gave this book a higher rating than most, some read it twice, three gave it five out of five averaging a four and a half. So a good read if you are looking for something to make you think about this subject and era in our world history. (Reviewed by Stella Kinniburgh.)

Note: We start our next year's book list this month. Although our group cannot take any more because the cut off for BDS is 12 members, Pegasus U3A can start a second book group if there is sufficient interest. Ed.

Café Group

For our April meeting, we met at Dot Com in Sumner, a café we always enjoy with lots of lovely food and good coffee. As usual our group discussed a wide range of topics currently making news – news about friends we all know, how the government is doing with its 'great reversal' and new things to do in Christchurch. As usual opinions varied widely and the resulting conversation was most enjoyable. (Contributed by Jenny Long.)

Canterbury History Group

Exploring Ripapa Island in March



From a fortified pa during the times of the Musket Wars, to a Quarantine Station for immigrants trying to survive smallpox, typhoid fever and scarlet fever, to a Prison for the Parihaka passive resistance Māori protesting about the confiscation of their Taranaki land, to a military fort (protecting Cantabrians from the perceived “Russian Scare.”) Ripapa Island is situated in the



Lyttelton harbour basin and has known and survived a great deal. We crossed the drawbridge and with our torches we explored dark and damp tunnels that let us through narrow access ways to the cells tucked on either side of the corridors. Balancing carefully, on mossy, uneven steps, with water dripping overhead, we went down further to the site of the Disappearing Guns. We heard many stories – Jonathan Roberts who escaped from the island and later wrote a diary of his exploits, Count Felix von Luckner, a German who also spent time on

the island, Māori who were imprisoned there and many others. (pictured above left: The entrance to the tunnels. Above right: Robin Fear climbs up onto the ‘disappearing gun.’ Left: Walking towards the quarantine station.)

A Visit to the New Brighton Museum in April



Tucked away in a back street behind the New Brighton Mall is a little gem of a building. Before it united with another congregation, this former church building was known as St Enoch’s, the oldest building in New Brighton. Now, as a museum, it began in 2002 with a group of enthusiastic supporters in a room above the old Woolworths and in

2005 it leased St Enoch’s. Our U3A member Margaret Coghill was one of the founders. But when the church came up for sale, the volunteers decided to put in a big effort to raise funds for the purchase of a permanent home for their growing collection. The final challenge to raise \$175,000 was large, but in time it all became possible with grants and donations.

The museum is a real delight. It houses a wide variety of material related to local families, events and organisations. When schools or groups cease to exist, they often forward their historical

material to the museum. The volunteers work hard to house what will add value to the collection, to display what people are interested in, and to share community information.



But its not just about 'stuff' – the bits and pieces, the books, registers, certificates, medals, records etc. that make this museum so valuable. It's the stories that accompany the images and the memorabilia. We listened avidly to our guide Quinton who delighted in telling us many takes of the local people. We heard about the speedway boys who drove wildly along the

beach front in days before their names became internationally famous, like Ronnie Moore, Ivan Mauger, Barry Briggs and others. We heard about the boasting days – which beachside is better – New Brighton or Sumner? When New Brighton built a clock tower, Sumner built one too.

With a cup of tea in hand and a home baked cheese scone, we sat and listened to these stories. Then it was time to view a short film of Christchurch in the 1950s. Many of the well-known landmarks remain. A bonus film of the inner city in the 1900s had us rather surprised as we saw no signs of traffic or pedestrian control. People jumped off trams that were still moving, they darting in front of moving cars, they rode bicycles speedily around corners without giving way to anyone. It looked like utter chaos. One lone white-gloved traffic officer dealt with his patch by standing in the middle of it all, waving his hands importantly, hoping for some kind of control. (Nothing has changed, has it? Ed.)



(Contributed by Judy Calder.) NB: The March and April reports are on our website in greater detail with more photographs. You can access them via this link <https://u3apegasus.org.nz/history-group/>

Cycling Group



Six riders started off from Mount Pleasant Community Centre on a beautiful day, meeting up with two more of our group at Linwood. Our riders have a mix of electric and basic bikes, and we all seem to manage surprisingly well. Cycling through the Bromley and Ruru Lawn cemeteries opened up a whole new area to us. We then biked around the back of the Bromley Ponds and over the bridge to South Brighton checking out both road and cycle tracks. It was good to see Redcliffs from the 'other side'. Then it was back

to Dune Café at South Brighton for coffee. What a great addition to the café circuit. Chatting over our drinks took up further riding time so we just did a quick exit over the busy ponds road, home. It was a very pleasant ride in gorgeous autumn weather. (Contributed by Judy Eden.)

DVD Lecture and Documentary Groups

Committee member Yvonne Boulton has taken on the organising of the use of the DVD series that we own. We have sets of DVDs which cover a range of topics including France Through the Ages, the World's Best Paintings, The British Isles, Greece and Turkey, and many others. These sets are available at no cost to any group of members who wish to learn more about the topic. They are in sets of half hour lectures and people usually meet in member's homes at a mutually agreed date and time to watch the lectures and have a discussion about the topic. There are no sets being used currently. For more information about the DVDs, what they are, and how to activate a group, please contact Yvonne on 3844243 or Email yvonneboulton@xtra.co.nz

Garden Group

The Garden Group meeting on 22nd April was at the Smith Street Community Farm. This 2-3 acre community garden is situated opposite Eastgate Mall and Linwood Swimming Pool car park.

Four years ago this was a CCC Depot/dumping ground for excess materials. Now it is a work in progress but evolving as a flourishing garden of organic vegetables available for the community.

Many trees have been thinned to let more light into the garden. No carbon material is allowed to leave the premises and this wood has been cut up and used for borders, piled high in huge mounds for a "hugelkultur bed" composting system or mulched and used on the foraging paths. Sheds and multiple built structures have been removed and bushes culled for safety reasons. Fruit trees have been planted along the foraging path for the neighbourhood to enjoy. A third of the garden is being planted in pick-your-own beds.



Everyone who volunteers or visits is welcomed and valued as part of a stronger community. The labour force is all volunteers who work the back garden area by growing vegetables to feed up to 30 families twice a week (ie 60 families in summer) with a week's supply of fresh vegetables for a very affordable price. Pea straw is sold to pay for the chicken feed, volunteers and locals regularly drop in with veggie scraps to feed the chooks.

The other third is for plot holders who lease 10m x 1.2m plots to grow their own vegetables and the occasional flowers. They share their knowledge and skills with each other. Plot holders are supported with compost every year as no artificial fertilisers are permitted.

Volunteers work hard and now and then get free eggs from the chickens and ducks along with some left over vegetables and a huge dose of comradery. The chicken manure, vegetable waste and weeds are all used for part of the "hugelkultur" beds.

Our members were amazed at the wide range of vegetables - leafy greens, root vegetables and herbs, which feed so many people from such a small area. Impressive too was the progression



planting and succession planting to keep the supply of vegetables available for most of the year.



There are plans afoot for a new building with a toilet block alongside the continual development of the nursery, tunnel houses and seed club area.

The application of an organic/permaculture style of gardening difficult to do on such a grand scale is managed well by Georgina Stanley (Manager). She has great horticultural skills and enthusiasm. Along with her team of volunteers, the Smith Street Community Farm has won many awards in the short time they have been there. Watch this space on Facebook or at smithst.nz for what is next at Smith

Street. Following our visit, a number of our group made our way to 'Leeves' at Portstone to enjoy a cup of tea.

Our next meeting is at Eileen Ballards place for 'Tea and Cuttings' on Monday, 27th May.

(Contributed by Lynne Haslett and Gaynor Button.)

Geology/Botany



At our 6th May meeting, Peter Langlands gave us a fascinating talk on the many foods we can forage to add interest to our diet.

The foods were classified into fungi, berries, flowers and leaves, ferns and seaweeds. Many we knew, like porcini mushrooms but others, like stewing pohutukawa stamens to make a syrup, were new to us. Pollen was another food source and is a popular superfood which can be used in baking or to flavour ice cream, he said.

Many

mushrooms and seaweeds were best to be dried and ground up to make a savoury seasoning.

Peter is keen to work with chefs to encourage them to experiment with foraged foods. He has just published an excellent book about this and at \$50 it is excellent value. The early reviews say that the book is the 'ultimate guide to unearthing more than 250 of our tastiest wild plants. Packed with stunning photography, up-to-date information and helpful tips, this book will have you venturing into the countryside, viewing urban weeds with fresh eyes, and returning to the larder with zest.'

'Peter Langlands has spent a lifetime compiling Aotearoa's largest database of wild foraged species, running workshops and sourcing wild produce for chefs as one of our only licensed professional foragers.'

(Contributed by Pat Whitman.)



Scrabble Group

Scrabble is one of winter's great activities. Great for the mind and fun to play.

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

We are always on the lookout for more members.

You don't have to be a super wordsmith to come along.

(Contributed by Alison Harrington.)



Writers' Group

At our April meeting, we were highly entertained by our budding writers who had written about their earliest memories of primary school days. They were descriptive, sometimes amusing, sometimes cautionary, always fascinating. The 'task' for the May meeting is to write about first days at secondary school, where it was, what it was like, the uniform, what mode of travel to and from school, what subjects taken and a description of teachers if possible plus anything else that comes to mind.

While our group is full, another group can be established if members would like. (Contributed by Vivienne Allan.)

Interest Groups Reminder

A reminder to all members that we have a great range of interest groups all of which are listed at the end of this newsletter with their current details. If you would like to know more, contact Caroline Carlton. Email: carolinecarlton52@gmail.com or phone 2040395980

CLUB DIRECTORY

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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.

ADVENTURES IN TRAVEL	Meets monthly in members' homes on 1 st Tuesday of the month at 3pm in members' homes. Contact Lyn Russell 021 2388 788 Email: nylrus1951@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 Mt Pleasant Community Centre. Contact Vivienne Allan on 021 067 9420 Email ayndavar@outlook.com
CAFÉ GROUP	Meets monthly, 2.30pm on Tuesday of the week following 3 rd Monday of the month. Contact Jenny Long jennylong@xtra.co.nz 384 8463.
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 Philippa Rendall Email Roper.rendall@gmail.com Ph 33763605
INTEREST GROUPS	Contact Caroline Carlton Email: carolinecarlton52@gmail.com Ph: 2040395980
GARDEN GROUP	Meets 4 th Monday of the month. A mixture of speakers, garden visits and 'tea & cuttings'. Contact Lyn Russell Email: nylrus1951@gmail.com or Gaynor Button Email: buttonmg@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
WRITERS' GROUP	Meets once a month on the second Thursday at 10am. Contact Vivienne Allan on 021 067 9420 or email ayndavar@outlook.com (This group is now full.)

U3A Pegasus email address: u3apegasus@protonmail.com

U3A Pegasus website address: www.u3apegasus.org.nz