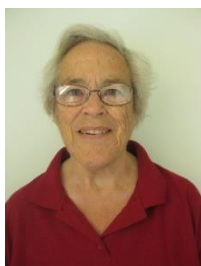




University of the Third Age
The Age of Active Retirement: People Exchanging Knowledge

Newsletter June 2025

Message from the President



This newsletter has been compiled by a very amateur editor this month as Jane has gone overseas. It makes me appreciate how much work she has put in to getting it looking professional for us. I hope she has a very enjoyable trip.

Near the end of the newsletter, you will find a recipe for a feijoa loaf from the Garden Group. It could be useful for you as feijoas are abundant this year.

Information about Previous Meeting

19th May

The Importance of Sleep

Richard Jones

Richard is a professor at Canterbury University, a biomedical engineer, researching brain disorders. He began by telling us we spend $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ of our lives asleep. Some animals can function with only half their brain asleep, e.g. migrating birds.

There are several stages of sleep starting with REM, rapid eye movement, when the body is paralysed and dreams. REM sleep consolidates memories, helps with emotions and controls concentration and moods. Non-REM sleep is when we are dropping off, then light sleep and finally deep sleep. These 4 stages occur in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hourly cycles. There are two sleep rhythms, Process S refers to the homeostatic sleep drive, which builds up as a person stays awake and increases the need for sleep. This is strongest from 2-4am and 1-3 pm. Hence the afternoon nap. The C Process is the Circadian Rhythm, linked to night and day. The average person sleeps 6-8 hours though a few manage on about 3 hours. Less than 4 hours leads to sleep debt which can contribute to Alzheimer's Disease. More than 9 hours is bad and can lead to heart problems or stroke.

We need sleep because the brain works hard and needs recovery time and to clear toxic proteins from the synapses. There are 100 trillion synapses. We can have microsleeps while awake but these can shut down responses. Up to 20% of road accidents are probably due to these, more than drugs or alcohol. Research showed we may have 79 microsleeps of 0.5-15secs in an hour.

Common disorders are insomnia (27%) to obstructed sleep apnoea when the throat muscles relax, tissue collapses and blocks the airway starving the brain of oxygen. In severe cases this can happen over 30 times an hour and needs treatment by wearing a CPAP (continuous positive air pressure) mask. If untreated it can lead to Alzheimer's Disease where toxic β -amyloid proteins, or Parkinsons Disease where α -synucleins, aren't cleared because oxygen levels are low.

Richard suggested that if driving long distances, stop for black coffee and a 30-minute nap to ensure alertness.

Latest News & Updates

This month Katherine has arranged a talk by Jim Wilson. Here are the details. Tues 24th June at 1.30

The influence of religions in the present perilous state of the world: A discussion led by Jim Wilson who studied and taught philosophy and religious studies at the University of Canterbury. His theme will consider the contradictions between the ways religions encourage compassion and tolerance and the ways they incite division and hatred and intolerance.

We are asking for a gold coin koha so I can buy some goodies for Jim.

Our speaker at the June meeting is Dr. Reuben Woods. His topic is Street Art in Christchurch



Reuben is an art historian, writer and curator. His PhD thesis explored graffiti and street art within post-earthquake Christchurch.

INTEREST GROUP UPDATES

We have someone willing to host a Mahjong Group. If people are interested there will be a sign-up sheet on the table at the next meeting.

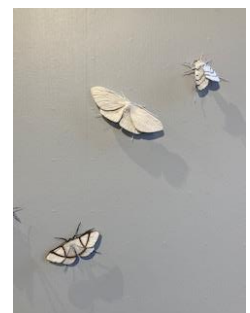
Art Appreciation

A short time ago, it looked as if we would lose the Central Art Gallery in the Arts Centre. However, it reopened on May 8th under new stewardship of the Arts Centre Trust. The next day, following coffee at Atawhai Cafe, we visited the gallery to view "Speak of Homeland," described as "artworks as different from each other as they are relative, through artists' own expression of place, identity and connection." Simon Edward's oil on ACM (aluminium composite material) Kekerengu Dreamtime #5 (see photo 1) is a landscape both familiar yet mystical and a total contrast to Wellington's William Hadwen's "Negativland" series (see photo 2) Described as an interdisciplinary experimental artist, Hadwen draws on his time in Antarctica with Heritage Expeditions. Perhaps looking more like sand



than snow and ice, these works are acrylic paint on canvas.

Unrelated to the main exhibition, Wellington's Elizabeth Thomson's "Moths" (see photo)



intrigued us. These realistic moths are individually created using cast bronze, paint, nylon flocking and acid-etched stainless steel.

Book Group

The Book Group continues with Mary Lynch as co-ordinator, and will meet after our June U3A meeting. We will meet in the Cafe and are going to talk about Anita Sheve at June Meeting. We will also discuss the meeting day and time, and explore further what format we will follow to the end of 2025. The Book Group is open to men and women; we currently have 2-3 vacancies!

Cycling Group

This month 4 members of the group met at MPCC on a rather gloomy morning. The first part of the ride was on the Rapanui Shag Rock cycleway into the city where we joined the Avon River trail. By then there was a light misty rain falling. A stop for coffee had been planned at the Richmond community cafe but a decision was made to divert to Jan Dobson's place for a dry, warm sit down. We rejoined the Avon River track at Gayhurst Road and followed the river all the way to Bridge Street and then home. We all enjoyed being able to ride on the recently opened upgraded section of the track through the red zone from the city. We always welcome new members.

Garden Group

Our visit this month was to our member, Jane Cowan-Harris' home high up on Clifton Hill. The lane she lives in was developed in the 2000's by an architect who had a vision of a number of environmentally friendly homes. He sold a number of plots of land up to 1800 sq metres which were all to be designed by him with the windows facing north or northwest to capture as much sun as possible.

Jane showed the members around the very undulating garden which a number negotiated and she talked about the many rare trees including fruit trees she had growing. She also had a variety of native plants growing on their property. Jane had planted a cactus garden in front of the window of their lounge and had some very interesting varieties growing.

She had an amazing Herbaceous Border with all the plants grouped according to colour from pinks to yellows and there were so many in the border that no weeds could become established. She explained that she had had advice from a colleague at the Botanic Gardens, where she volunteers as a 'Friend of the Botanic Gardens'. Overall, it was a delightful garden to explore.



The Succulent/Cactus Garden



View looking South



View overlooking the Estuary

We concluded the afternoon with a delicious array of food. We all enjoyed Jane's loaf which was so delicious, I am sharing it with you as she kindly sent the recipe to me to share. She was a busy lady as she and her husband were departing the next day for Europe for two months so we were very honoured she gave up her precious time for us!

History Group

What an amazing visit we had on Monday morning! The fine weather and the excellent turnout helped make this a really pleasant outing at Ferrymead. We were able to learn a lot from our speaker Stephen Taylor, who belongs to the Historical Tramway Society based at Ferrymead.

Way back in 1880 the first trams began their journeys in Christchurch. They were steam trams and from there horse trams were used extensively before the introduction in 1905 of electric trams.



Private companies built lines out from Cathedral Square and by the 1920s Christchurch had the largest tramway system in the country. As the years passed, the trams and their support systems gradually wore out and in 1954 Christchurch said "Goodbye" to



the last of the trams. But with the advent of the Tramway Historical Society and extensive teams of volunteers, old trams were collected, upgraded, stored, then used once again - for tourists in the city centre and for visitors to Ferrymead Historical Park. How fortunate we were to have such a fun ride at the end of our morning's visit. It brought back old memories of riding to school on the tram each day for some.

A big thank you to Ann Newsome who organised the Lions Clubrooms for us and for those who assisted with the morning tea. It was an enjoyable morning for all.

Geo/Bot

Visit to Graeme Worner's Forest and to Fern Factor



Graeme has a large section just outside Lincoln. Years ago, he started planting native trees there and now has an area of mature forest with about 150 different species of trees. Narrow paths wind through the different areas and he has to keep trimming the growth back so they stay navigable. A lot of the trees have seedlings growing near them, especially pittosporums and mahoe which try to take over.

After about an hour wandering through his forest, Graeme led us to Fern Factor, the only New Zealand fern nursery. He works here and also does research to maximize germination rates of the spores. He and the owner, Paul, took us through all the stages of fern growth from collecting spores to selling mature plants a year or so later. He sends ferns round all over New Zealand, in tiny plugs costing \$1.90 to mature plants at \$12. Garden firms buy them by the hundreds so the size of the business is amazing. Thank you to Alison Harrington who arranged this trip.



CLUB DIRECTORY

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Feijoa, date and ginger loaf

Ingredients

- 1 cup feijoas, peeled and diced
- 150g dates, chopped
- 100g crystallised ginger, chopped
- 250mls boiling water
- 150g brown sugar
- 50g butter
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 270g flour
- 1 tablespoon ginger
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C on bake and grease a loaf tin.
2. Place the feijoa, dates, ginger, water, butter and sugar into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool.
3. Sift together the flour, ginger, baking powder and soda and add to the fruit mixture once cooled along with the egg and vanilla. Do not over mix (this mixture is quite thick).
4. Spoon the mixture into the greased tin and bake for 45 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.

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 helenharkness294@gmail.com
BOOK DISCUSSION	Meets monthly after the U3A lecture, 3 rd Monday of the month in the Mt Pleasant Community Centre. Contact Mary Lynch email granmarylynch12@gmail.com or Judy Eden edenjudith@xtra.co.nz (This group is now full.)
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 Wednesday. Contact Jane Cowan-Harris Email: janechbythesea@gmail.com , Mob 021 043 5342
DVD INTEREST GROUP	Lists of the DVDs are held by Lyn Russell. Contact her on Ph: 0212388788or Email nylrus1951@gmail.com
GARDEN GROUP	Meets 4 th Monday of the month. A mixture of speakers, garden visits and 'tea & cuttings'. Contact: 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@outlook.co.nz
INTEREST GROUPS COORDINATOR	Mary Lynch Email: granmarylynch12@gmail.com