

GUEST SPEAKER: Derek Firth.

Title: The Dilworth Legacy



Dilworth is a boarding school for good boys from poor families who demonstrate the potential to become good and useful members of society. The present roll is about 610 boys aged between 9 and 13 years. All boarding and education is free. The present value of the endowment is about \$850m of which the school assets comprise about \$160m. The original legacy was settled by the Protestant Irish settler, James Dilworth.

Derek Firth is a Dilworth old boy who became a trustee in 1975 and retired in 2015 after 40 years' service as a trustee. The last 20 years was spent either as Deputy Chairman or Chairman. Derek is a Commercial Barrister specialising in construction law and construction projects. He practices mainly as an arbitrator and adjudicator and has conducted a number of arbitrations outside of New Zealand.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello to all U3A members,

Last newsletter I mentioned the U3A Aims and Guiding Principles. The second aim: "To demonstrate the benefits and enjoyment to be gained and the new horizons to be discovered in leaning throughout life." The third aim: "To celebrate the capabilities and potential of older people and their value to society."

A Working Party of three Past Presidents and three committee members has been reviewing several key aspects of our operation: Hall set-up and associated health and safety issues, marketing for new members, our heart – the interest groups, competition with other clubs to get an interesting range of speakers and how to encourage members to take on roles as convenors and committee.

In August and September we will start to involve all members in the discussion; get your thoughts and ideas and share ours. Already though, Heather has been liaising with the convenors with the annual Interest Groups' audit. This allows us to up-date member numbers in each interest group, check addresses and e-mails and compile a Members' Emergency Contact list so a master copy can be held at the meeting. This is a health and safety initiative. If your emergency contact person is not listed you can go to the front desk at our meeting and let them know.

Speakers: If you have heard or know of a speaker who would be suitable send Sherryl an email.

News up-date:

On 31st August the Auckland U3A Network holds its annual event at St Chads Auditorium, Meadowbank. Brochures are available at the front desk if you are interested in attending.

Glen Plaistowe

(edited for the website)

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Active Travellers

April Rpt. Maureen recalled a 56-day Prinsendam cruise of the Med that began in Ft Lauderdale! Our enjoyable and enlightening experiences began at Lanzarote one of eight Canary Islands that are recent volcanic remnants East of Morocco. Famous residents include: Cesar Manrique an artist, architect and cactus grower and Gaudi. Next was Gibraltar, with its sharp, tunneled rock, tough Rh monkeys and a pedestrian crossing over the airport runway! Next we visited the Villa and Gardens of Beatrice Rothschild in Monaco, a delightful, art decorated Villa, with a view over the Med. Peggy Guggenheim's Art Gallery in Venice where the beginnings of Modern Art with a NY flavour was shown. Patmos was our final stop, it was here he St James' Revelations were written. It was nice to 'book end' a Cruise with a soul search. **May Rpt.** Gay and Barry Brennan talked about their two week trip to Russia last year, which they organised and booked themselves rather than joining a tour group. Instead they just booked four private tours in Moscow and another four in St Petersburg. The rest of the time they explored both cities on their own, visiting museums, churches, palaces and parks. Highlights included a trip outside Moscow to Sergiev Posad Monastery, the spiritual centre of the Russian Orthodox Church and also the home of the Matryoshka nesting dolls, and attending a performance of Swan Lake at the Bolshoi theatre.

Ancient Civilizations

Alex provided an insight into the history, development and contribution to our world by the people known today as the Northmen, Vikings or Scandinavians. He traced their beginnings from 18,000 years ago as hunter gathers, primitive farmers, the Bronze Age and finally the Iron Age. Knowledge was paramount for agriculture but was superseded by contacts to obtain bronze. Sourcing bronze enable some to establish control of trade; from Bagdad to Newfoundland and become kings. With iron available locally it allowed the Scandinavians to divert scarce resources into ship building and with warming climate; population pressure saw them spread to all parts of Europe/Nth America; where necessary taking what they desired. France ceded Normandy and William from there took the English crown from Harald at Hastings.

Archaeology

Peter gave a fascinating presentation on the Musica of Columbia, the fourth largest confederation of tribal groups of South America. While the Musica did not build huge temples and buildings as did the Inca, Maya and Aztec cultures, their wealth and ritual focused on gold. The sacred lake of Guatavita was where each king travelled to give golden offerings to the lake's goddess, and now there is thought that these offerings may still remain in the bed of the lake. There are now 14,000 direct descendants of the Musica in Columbia today and their gold treasures are now able to be seen in the Gold Museum in Bogota. Gill brought wonderful shell fossils from America where a long gone sea has left these behind. We then enjoyed a further trip into Viking Territory when Fay gave a brief presentation on another Viking ship site at Ardnamurchan.

Art History

Anne gave a short history of Renaissance Art in Italy in the 14th century, Raphael and Michelangelo dominated this high period. Many other artists were also influential: Titian and Giorgione developed a method of oil painting on canvas dominating Western art even today. Donatello was a master of early Renaissance sculpture. The Medici family commissioned many art works in Florence at this time. Vasari claimed the High Renaissance was the culmination of all Italian art. New members welcome.

Art Pot Pourri

At our May meeting we had a talk about the New Zealand artist Max Gimblett and watched some videos about him and his art. He was born in Auckland in 1935 and though he has lived in New York since 1972 he maintains strong links with this country. His abstract work has been influenced by both Eastern and Western spirituality, and comes in a variety of shapes particularly the quatrefoil for which he is well known. His paintings can be found in major NZ and Australian art galleries and in the Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Book Group

Evelyn gave us a presentation on books associated with Botswana. These included *Colour Bar* (Susan Williams); *Twenty Chickens for a Saddle* (Robynn Scott); *The Number 1 Ladies Detective Agency* series (Alexander McCall Smith); *A Carrion Death* and *A Death in the Family* (Michael Stanley) and *Saturday is for Funerals* and *Far and Beyond* (Unity Dow). We then discussed *Once Upon an Alphabet* and *Here We Are* (Oliver Jeffers); *The Stakes* (Ben Sanders); *Money in the Morgue* (Ngaio Marsh and Stella Duffy); *First Blood* (David Morrell); *The Chalk Man* (C J Tudor); *The Woman in the Window* (A J Finn); *Max Gimblett* (Max Gimblett); *Drawn Out* (Tom Scott); *Emma's War* (Deborah Scroggins); *Good Wives?* (Margaret Forster); *My Father's Island* (Adam Dudding) and *Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk* (Kathleen Rooney).

Classical Music

Creative Audio-Visual

The May meeting was at Geoff Haycock's. The subject of the meeting was the presentations of the members A/Vs to meet the challenge of the March photo shoot conducted at the Viaduct Basin. All of the A/Vs showed a high level of creativity and all took a different approach - from an A/V based on owls to one based on graphic patterns. One emphasised the opulence displayed whilst one took a high level approach from a crane in the area! The next meeting is a general one and will be at Fay Weatherly's home in Torbay.

Creative Writing

April Rpt: This month's subject was "Autumn". Patricia wrote a sad tale of a bus driver who, upon his retirement after 25 years realised that no one even knew his name, he was simply addressed as "driver". Ellen wrote about a 4 year old's understanding of Autumn and how the leaves fall once a year to make way for new growth. Irene's story told of the fall of a

great Oak. Then a charming story from Elizabeth about an anxious leaf that was fearful to leave the tree and fall into the unknown. Kathy's interpretation of Autumn was a good clear out of summer clothing to make way for the winter wardrobe! Finally Doreen told a story of a middle aged couple who sold their property to embark on an adventure of a life time while they still could!

May Rpt: This month's exercise was about perspective. Kathy and Elizabeth both wrote about cats and dogs. Ellen's story involved a stolen fish! Doreen wrote about animal instinct. An encounter with an angry driver and a Bear's eye view of the forest came from Irene. Our next meeting is on 28th June and the subject is unwanted gifts.

Current Affairs

Jasmine provided an article for discussion dealing with discrimination against women, and harassment, Maori claims and rights, and minorities. Much discussion followed. Heather provided some local issues for consideration, including parking for bus users and new crossings at Bute and Beach Rds. Stuart raised the question of leadership in times of crisis-run or stay? Glen specified concern over Chinese loan possibilities for New Zealand.

Cycling

The April bike ride around the city environs saw nine riders, five with E bikes take on the undulating cycle way. The E bikers proved their worth easily passing the deep breathing manual riders on some of the hilly parts. Some great views of the city surroundings were experienced including the pink pathway, Viaduct Harbour, historical buildings and lots of large new construction sites. Eric led this ride, with assistance from Lucy. Members exchanged views and experiences over morning tea at the ASB Theatre. The enthusiastic cyclists arrived at the Point Erin start point some three hours after take-off. On May 2nd ten cyclists turned up for our Orewa-Te Ara Tahuna Estuary Shared Path bike ride. We entered the cycleway by Kingsway School riding in an anti-clockwise direction along a mainly flat path, passing attractive estuary homes and gardens and Maori carvings illustrating the estuary's cultural and historical significance. To extend the 7.58 Km ride we included Orewa beach front as far as Riverside Rd, cycling over bridges, through parks then gradually uphill to the highest point, then a downward swoop back to Millwater Parkway. Our coffee was enjoyed outdoors at Millwater cafe. On 6th June our ride will be at Devonport.

Exploring Art for Fun

Exploring Art for Fun was treated to a presentation from Marion Bennie which covered the work and ideas of three artists - Raghava KK, Phil Hansen and Shea Hembrey. Marion used Ted talks to show the five different artistic lives of Raghava KK, how Phil Hansen used the physical disability of a tremor in his hands to develop a new approach to pointillist art and how Shea Hembrey developed one hundred different approaches to art to stage his own biennial international show. Three very different but all interesting artists!

Film Appreciation

We had a very entertaining presentation about Julie Walters. She won her first Bafta for "Educating Rita" in 1982 and has now won seven Baftas as well as other awards. Other popular movies she has starred in are "Billy Elliot", the "Harry Potter" series, "Calendar Girls", "Mamma Mia", "Paddington", "Film Stars don't die in Liverpool" interspersed with TV films, documentaries and TV series. We watched the film "Driving Lessons", also starring Rupert Grint, which won her The Silver George for Best Actress at the 28th Moscow International Film Festival. It was so enjoyed we went 20 minutes over time.

Français pour rire

Our very interesting talk with slides was presented by Barbara. She explained that, at the beginning of the Loire Valley in Northern France, is the chateau and gardens of Villandry. These gardens are considered the most beautiful in France

and have a theme from the Renaissance age. They consist of two parts, Vegetables and Flowers. Both are planted for functional and aesthetic reasons. Box hedges give structure to the garden. The idea originated with a Dr. Carvello who had visions of growing vegetables to supply his patients after WW1. Today the vegetables are sold to local people at the market.

History of Europe

Inventors & Inventions

In May, we were given an illustrated talk by Peter on the development in the late 19th century of techniques to separate plant colours by 'chromatography' (*chromos* – colour, *graph* - display). In 1952 two American chemists proposed that the component vapors of an organic liquid mixture passed through a heated tube by an inert gas such as helium could be separated out. The word chromatography stuck and the technique of 'gas chromatography' was born. With the development of the mass spectrometer detector it allowed thousands of laboratories around the world to chemically identify mixtures from medicines and cosmetics to the soil on Mars. Terry gave us an update on the use of driver free cranes in Auckland's container port and Scott kindly produced a sample of the latest food fad – Chicken free chicken pieces. Verdict – not to our taste!

Literature

We looked at how fiction writing maybe influenced in the future. Fiction has traditionally been classified by genre and the specific words, themes and images used by the author have been appropriate to the genre so the story line and characters are supported. Today cinema, television, media and gaming now mix imagery: ancient gods, warfare, myths and legends, science fiction etc. blend to form new exciting imagery. Written fiction is in competition, so could the writing of fiction become irrelevant to future generations?

Local History

Heather described the local history of her home town of Bolton, Lancashire. In 1240 (when Maori were settling in NZ) Bolton was a small market town to evolve to a leader of the Industrial Revolution. She described the inventors of textile machinery: Arkwright, Hargreaves and Crompton; a steam driven mill built in 1770 (when Captain Cook left NZ) and when Prince Albert visited Barrow Bridge a "model" industrial village. Lancashire cotton was supplied around the world. Supporting the factories was the bleaching process with the arrival of chemical bleaching and the development and building of all kinds of machinery. Engineering and cotton manufacturing reached its zenith in the early 1900s when thousands of workers were employed. The town's fortunes declined as its skills and enterprise were sold overseas.

Mah Jong

Making History

In March 1867, the British Parliament passed the British North America Act which established the Dominion of Canada. The Dominion used the British Parliamentary form of government with an elected House of Commons and an appointed Senate. The Prime Minister was the leader of the political party with the majority of seats in the House of Commons. Britain continued to handle Canada's foreign affairs with the British Monarch as head of state. Sir John Macdonald leader of the Conservative Party became the country's first Prime Minister.

Medical Science and History

The main presentation was on circadian rhythm. The 2017 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to three American scientists, Jeffrey C. Hall, Michael Rosbash and Michael W. Young, for their research into the workings of our inner clock, our circadian rhythm. Our biological clock helps to regulate sleep patterns, feeding behaviour, hormone release

and blood pressure. Dysfunction of the circadian clock is associated with a range of diseases including sleep disorders, depression, bipolar disorders and neurological diseases. An aim of ongoing research in the field of chronobiology is how to regulate circadian rhythms to improve health. Other topics included a new screening tool to detect tumors and a possibly "new organ" spanning the human body just under the skin.

Modern History

Murray gave us a presentation about the Falkirk Wheel, the innovative engineering construction in Scotland that provides a connection for canal boats between the Union Canal and the Forth and Clyde Canal. The Falkirk Wheel eliminates the need for boats to traverse 11 locks with a height difference of 24 meters. Built as a Millennium Project in 2002 and costing £78 million it was modelled on an ancient Celtic axe, a ship's propeller and the rib cage of a whale. The wheel has a diameter of 35 meters with two large diametrically opposed water-filled caissons. The hydraulic motors required to operate the wheel only require 1.5 kilowatts of power which is the equivalent of heating eight electric kettles. The site is popular attracting 400,000 visitors each year.

4Music Appreciation and History

This morning's presentation was a Verdi concert performed in Red Square, Moscow June 2013. Featuring: soprano Anna Netrebko, baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky and directed by Constantine Orbelian. Best performances included Il Torvatore, Forza del Destino, Rigoletto and Nabucco.

Music – Mainly Classical

At our May meeting, Alf showed us a documentary DVD on the life of Misty Copeland. She is the first African American to become one of USA's top ballerinas and this documentary showed the many obstacles she had to overcome due to her skin colour. She was able to continue her career after undergoing surgery for a leg stress fracture. For details of her very interesting life see.* We then watched the first part of an "Orchestra de Paris" outdoor concert held under the Eiffel Tower. *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misty_Copeland

Puzzles, Patterns and Paradoxes

April Rpt: Fay spoke about the Voynich Manuscript, an as yet untranslated 230 page codex reliably dated to circa 1420. It is full of pictures of unidentified plants, cosmology diagrams and ladies bathing. A puzzle indeed! Many people have tried to make sense of the script. Their methods were unsuccessful in producing anything that made sense. In January 2018, a Canadian of Turkish extraction, Ahmed Ardic and his two sons identified the language as Old Turkish and have translated parts of the document. We await the full translation and the purpose of such a book. Ian entertained us with more rebus puzzles and John demonstrated yet more puzzling computer games available as apps on a mobile phone.

May Rpt: A game-show host has three doors. Behind one is a car. Behind each of the other two is a goat. You choose one door. He opens one of the others and shows you a goat. You choose again. Are you better off to change your mind or stick to the original choice? The tricky Monty Hall puzzle! Other puzzles were provided by Penny and John who specialised in sequences.

E.g. 1,3,1,1,1. What is the possible reason for this sequence?

Renaissance

Anne spoke about Mehmed II who, after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, restored present Istanbul to the largest city in Europe. He captured the Balkans, and in 1461 Trebizond (Trabzon) in eastern Turkey. He captured Otranto, Italy in 1480 intending to create a world empire and rule a reunited Roman Empire. He spoke six languages. During his reign the sciences, mathematics, astronomy and Muslim

theology reached their highest level ever among the Ottomans. He died in 1481. The Voynich Manuscript was the title of Fay's talk. An early Renaissance codex, hand written on vellum, its script was unrecognisable despite continuous efforts by academics at various universities to translate it. Yale University who looked after it made copies available, this enabled Ahmet Ardic [Canada] to come nearest to translating it. [See Puzzle group report]

May Rpt: Heather talked about the life and works of Pieter Breughel the Elder (1525 to 1569). His art provides a colourful example of ordinary people at weddings, markets, feasting, hunting, dancing and games. His snowy scenes are part of the Dutch school of painting and he became known as the Peasant Painter. Greta talked about Michaelmas, also known as the Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, the Feast of the Archangels. She showed the art of Renaissance artist Raphael, of St Michael, in six paintings, Vanquishing Satan. One painting was of Gabriel, visiting Mary relating the news of what lay ahead for her, another painting was of St George slaying the dragon.

Travel

Walking

Friday 8th June. Brookfield Reserve. Meet 9.30 at the end of Vanderbilt Parade Albany. This is an easy to moderate walk of one to one and a half hours and is flat most of the way. We will be walking on concrete paths and some grassy areas so have dry shoes to change into at the end of the walk. Coffee en route as parking is in demand in the area.

Friday 22nd June. Rothesay Bay – we will meet at Armidillo Café in the Rothesay Bay shops at 9.30am. Bring walking poles. We will walk along Knight's Road to the water tank then down through the bush to Saddleback Drive and Murray's Bay beach. Then return up the clifftop path to Montgomery Ave for coffee at Armidillo's. Estimated time: 1 hour 30mins, some up and down hill but not too arduous.