

**September 2021**



**Browns Bay Newsletter**

## **WEBINAR MEETING**

This month we are again having our main meeting using Webinar. This will be a shortened meeting, with just a recorded guest speaker. The meeting will last approximately three quarters of an hour. Joining is just a matter of providing your email address and name on the link. It's that easy!



### **GUEST SPEAKER:**

**Margaret Gane**

This month's guest speaker will talk on 2 topics:

**U3A – the wider context and  
topic 2 -the village of Eyam and the  
Great Plague,**

Margaret will give us a short introduction about how U3A works both within NZ and worldwide.

Her second topic is the story of what happened in the village of Eyam, Derbyshire in the 1660s has some parallels with the pandemic that we are living through today. It is a story of selflessness, courageous leadership, unfulfilled love and tragic loss within a community and how the actions of the villagers saved the county of Derbyshire from the same fate.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello members

I am sure you have survived lockdown 4 and lockdown 3, we have experienced 'life' and are mostly resilient, but for me, the fellowship and mental stimulation in my life of belonging to Browns Bay U3A seems to be more important than before. We were able to provide our September main meeting through Webinar with Guy Slocum, who gave us an excellent talk about his experiences as a fast jet fighter pilot. This talk was so well-received by many members, that we have put him on our list for another invitation to tell us about other aspects of his life as a pilot. Our October main meeting will also be through Webinar, and the President of the Auckland U3A Network will provide the presentation.

It is spring, daylight saving has commenced, and weather is warmer for walking, cycling and gardening. Small green shoots are appearing in the garden, giving us hope for future beauty or healthy vegetables. I have been watching tuis delighting in my kowhai trees, not so good for the flowers as tui don't seem to be tidy eaters. It is a lovely time of the year.

Keep well, Val

# NOTICES

## Upcoming speakers

Our Speaker Co-ordinator Gloria Ward advises the following speakers have been scheduled for the next 2 months. (Note these may be subject to change)

- **November:** Professor Stephen Hoadley will talk about life post Trump
- **December:** Christmas meeting

## Special Interest Groups

All members should be part of at least one special interest group. If there is a talk on in one of the groups that you would like to attend phone the convener and see whether they are happy for you to attend. Members visiting a SIG at another U3A may be required to make a payment at the discretion of that SIG group

## Learning what other SIG groups do

If you know in advance what the topic is going to be for your next SIG meeting you might find it an advantage to broadcast it in your SIG report for the newsletter. (Just as Books and Beyond have done this month) Frequently when I read the reports I often feel “oh I wish I knew they were going to talk about that! I’d have liked to attend.” As long as you clear it with the Convenor first, you are welcome to attend any Browns Bay SIG meeting.

## **Having your SIG meeting on zoom**

It's made such a difference to our club to be able to continue to meet either through Zoom or Webinar portals. Fay Weatherly has already helped many SIG groups continue to have regular meetings via Zoom. She is happy to help other SIGs get started with Zoom. She has also offered to run private practices for people wanting to use PowerPoint on Zoom for the first time. Garry Clark has also been a font of knowledge here too.

## **SIG meetings in private homes during Level 2**

Well when is that going to happen again? Think we need a crystal ball for that! However when this happens we need to remember to follow the Government regulations and restrictions relating to face masks (encouraged but not mandatory) and continuing social distancing (2 meters apart). Meeting hosts have the right to set any other restrictions they require for the safety of all eg they have the right to request only vaccinated visitors.

## **Change of Contact details**

Please let the Membership Manager know if your contact details change so our database can be kept up to date.

## **New Inquiries to join U3A**

If you know anyone who is interested in joining our U3A, please pass their names onto our Membership Liaison Myfanwy Van Hoffen. Your committee has prepared a whole "interest pack" for any such inquiries.

## **Recent U3A Auckland Network event**

A survey was conducted of this event and the results will inform future Network events. For those interested in reading the comments recorded they are available on the Network's webpage at: <http://aucklandnetwork.u3a.nz>

## **Online network learning**

Your attention is drawn again to the online network learning courses available from [u3aonline.org.au](http://u3aonline.org.au). Members from U3A Browns Bay are able to join this resource as individual members. Courses and costs are detailed at this website.

## **U3A Browns Bay Facebook page**

Did you know that we have our own facebook page? If you have a Facebook account please join our newly launched Facebook account: U3A Browns Bay, Auckland. You are invited to contribute any adventure you have had with your Special Interest Groups - Photos and some info about the photos. All content must be related to U3A Browns Bay or from other U3A's in New Zealand.

## **Jenny Hines**

With sadness we report that one of our members Jenny Hines recently passed away suddenly. Some of you may have known her from the Music Appreciation SIG. RIP Jenny.

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

**Active Travellers** No report this month

### **Archaeology**

Our topic this month, was about Patara and the Delikemmer aqueduct. Patara, near the modern day town of Gelemis, in S.W Turkey , was one of the main ancient maritime and commercial centres of the eastern Mediterranean .At one time the population was over 10,000. It can be dated back to the 8th century B.C.

Patara was situated on the Xanthus River, grains were stored and shipped from Patara. After the 16<sup>th</sup> century the river silted up, ships were unable to dock and Patara lost its importance as a port. It was only rediscovered 33 years ago and is still being excavated and restored. Cities of the ancient world required water and infrastructure to support a population. Patara did not have sufficient fresh water supplies and needed an aqueduct. The topography of the land made bridges impossible forcing the engineers to think of a new plan. They invented the system called an “inverted siphon” which relied on building enough pressure on one side of a valley and up to the other side.

The siphon/aqueduct, at Delikemmer, is a brilliant example that still stands almost 2000 years later.



Archaeology's recent zoom meeting

## **Art History**

In our Zoom meeting this month Sylvia presented some of the work of Domenico Ghirlandaio, a painter of 15<sup>th</sup> century Florence, for our discussion. Ghirlandaio is most famous for several fresco cycles in Florentine churches, in which he incorporated portraits of contemporary people and scenes of contemporary Florence into the religious narrative.

**Art Potpourri** No report this month

## **Book\_Group**

We have held two ZOOM meetings in September. Both were well attended and we met two new members at each of the meetings. Books discussed were:

*The Sentinel* by Lee Child and Andrew Child; *Call me Evie*, *In the Clearing*, *Tell me Lies* and *The Last Guests* by J P Pomare; *The Author's Cut* by Owen Marshall; *Acid Song* by Bernard Beckett  
*Portobello* by Ruth Rendell; *The Rising Tide* by Sam Lloyd; *The Alice Network*, *The Huntress* and *The Rose Code* by Kate Quinn; *Death is now my Neighbour* by Colin Dexter; *A Hope More Powerful than the Sea* by Melissa Fleming; *Everything Changes* by Stephanie Johnson; *Time and Time Again* by Ben Elton; *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig; *Islands of Mercy* by Rose Tremain; *The Chief*  
*Witness* by Sayragul Sauytbay; *Spellbound* by Catherine Robertson; *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo; *The Seven Sisters* by Lucinda Riley; *The Starboard Sea* by Amber Dermont; *The Women of Troy* and *The Silence of the Girls* by Pat Barker; *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett; *Sister* by Rosamund Lipton; *Knock, Knock* by Anders Roslund; *Bleed for Me* by Michael Robotham; *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson; *The Woman with the Blue Star* by Pam Jenoff; *Why we Believe: evolution and the human way of being* by Agustin Fuentes; *The Moves that Matter: a chess grandmaster on the game of life* by Jonathan Rowson; *The Darling Buds of May* by H E Bates; *Poor Man's Feast* by Elissa Altman; *Rescued* by Peter Zheutlin; *This is Going to Hurt* and *'Twas the Nightshift Before Christmas* and *Dear NHS: 100 stories to say than you* by Adam Kay; *The Sanatorium* by Sarah Pearce; *The*

*Book of Two Ways* by Jodi Picault and *Billy Summers* by Stephen King

## **Books and Beyond**

At our zoom meeting this month the topic was A New Zealand Novel. The book reviewed was *The Girl in the Mirror* by Rose Carlyle. This is a novel about a family riven by greed, jealousy, secrets and lies, the main characters being startlingly lookalike twin sisters.

Rose Carlyle was longlisted in the Ngaio Marsh Awards 2021 for best first novel and best novel for *The Girl in the Mirror*. As usual our challenge provided us with a wide range of other titles - some familiar and some new to us all. Our thanks to Monette for hosting this session and to John for setting it up for us.

**Our challenge for October** is a continuation of the NZ theme with titles clearly located in NZ.

**Classical Music** No report this month

## **Creative audio visual**

This month Covid reared its ugly head again so we decided to use zoom to communicate but were unsure how showing some videos on zoom would work. However, it was a very successful meeting despite being unable to hear one or two of the voice-overs of the poems. For this meeting each member had to choose a poem and make an audio visual creation around the words in the poem. There was a pretty eclectic mix but all really fun to watch.

Fay's poem "The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred Lord Tennyson (not all verses as that might have used up the whole hour of zoom!) was a really lovely visual of old masterpieces and Sir Launcelot riding his steed framed by the leaves of a weeping willow tree.

Val's poem was "We don't know how lucky we are" by John Clarke, aka Fred Dagg. Very cleverly illustrated with some old Fred Dag drawings and pictures

Geoff's poem - a much loved oldie. "Sea Fever" by John Masefield. "I must go down to the **seas** again, to the lonely **sea** and the sky,. And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;....."Marvellous sailing pictures and videos with each verse. It also included footage from Sir Peter Blake's sailing days.

Lucy's poem " With Spring in Mind" by Brian Turner from his book 'Landscapes'. She depicted some late snow scenes in the South Island heralding the beginning of Spring and the sound of people scrunching through the snow and wax-eyes coming to feed on any scraps they could find.

We were also trialing a new programme called PTE AV as the programme we are currently using is no longer available so we need to have an alternative for new people coming into the group and for people in the group who no longer can use ProShow.

We do have some fun times and would love to have more people join us! Don't forget we are all still very much learners!

**Creative Writing** No report this month

**Current Affairs** No report this month

### **Cycling**

On a beautiful sunny day in July a dozen of us headed across the bridge to explore some foreshore tracks around the Manukau Harbour.

We met at Taumanu Reserve and did a short trip on the Waikowhai board walk then along the extensive redevelopment of the foreshore area. We stopped to look at the ambitious building project for the new Māngere bridge which will be completed in 2022 then took the cycle track on the underpass of the existing bridge with traffic rumbling overhead.

Once across the bridge we headed east on to the Norana Esplanade path through wetlands with amazing scenery and an array of seabirds. It seemed incredible that we were so close to a major industrial area .

Back along Kiwi Esplanade before stopping for a well earned coffee at Ruby Red in Mangere Bridge Village.

**Dance** No report this month

**Early NZ History** No report this month

**Famous and Infamous**

Thelma talked about Aphra Behn, a 17<sup>th</sup> century playwright, poet and translator. She was a woman in a world of men, a staunch Royalist, a spy, and a scarlet woman condemned for loose morals. She was also the first woman in England to identify herself as a professional writer. She wrote to the occasion, and she wrote to make money.

We then talked about famous people whom we had met or been in close proximity to. These included: Neil Wolfe, Paddy Gower, Peter Sinclair, Judy Bailey, Cilla McQueen, Margot Fonteyn, Queen Elizabeth, Harold Wilson, Max Cryer, Jonathan Hunt, Alison Holst and Richard Burton.

**Film Appreciation** No report this month

**Foodies** No report this month

**Français pour rire** No report this month

**Genealogy** No report this month

**International Studies** No report this month

**Inventors and Inventions**

A successful Zoom meeting was held on Tuesday 21 September. Over half of the members logged on to see and hear Scott Whineray give us an enlightened view of the potential difficulties that could arise in the future for NZ, as more vehicles change over to electric. Will the country be able to meet the required generation capacity to charge the

batteries? Garry prompted a lively discussion from the panel on his view of what the future holds.

Following this John Ewen firstly gave us an insight into using the full scope of the Zoom app, and then reviewed the life, achievements, and product disasters of Sir Clive Sinclair, the entrepreneur and inventor who died recently on 16 September.



**Local History** No report this month

**Mah Jong** No report this month

### **Medical Science and History**

Geoff reminded us of an aspect of Covid 19 that is very rarely talked about - Long Covid. This is the term given to after effects up to a third of people who catch Covid 19 can suffer once they have recovered from having Covid 19. The after effects can last from a month to over three months or longer and they can be very light or quite

severe. Up to 80% of hospitalised Covid patients can be readmitted to hospital. Research is continuing throughout the world as this rather concerning aspect of Covid is presenting itself more and more. One researcher claims there are over 200 symptoms that can be directly linked to a Covid attack, including respiratory disease and diabetes. Special clinics have been set up in the UK to cope with this little reported aspect of the pandemic. It is very important that we get immunised and follow the guidelines. Without the vaccination we may recover but the after effects may be serious and linger for months. Mini-topics included Homosexual Aversion Therapy and a TED talk video on “Heart May not be a Pump” -Thomas Cowan.

**Modern History** No session this month.

**Music - Mainly Classical** No report this month

### **Puzzles Patterns & Paradoxes**

Meeting on Zoom, we considered a puzzle found by Shona: [https://www.transum.org/Software/Fun Maths/Online Psychic.asp](https://www.transum.org/Software/Fun_Maths/Online_Psychic.asp) which had been solved by 3 members.

John B had us thinking about dividing 17 camels between 3 brothers, the eldest to get half of them, the middle boy to get one third and the youngest to get a ninth. No camels to be damaged but you will need the help of a wise Afghan cameleer who will bring his camel. Having solved the problem, he will ride off - on his camel.

Put the missing vowels into these words to get three things that can be folded: DCKCHR, DCKCHR, LNDR.

A good time was had by all. We still have a bit of spare space if you would like to join the group.

## **Renaissance**

Fay told us that within the approximately 25,000 pages of notes and sketches spanning across 50 different notebooks composed by Leonardo da Vinci there are detailed drawings for many inventions.. Lost for centuries, these books contain 'blue-prints' for things we use today such as a bobbin winder, a lens grinding machine and a roller mill. Leonardo was fascinated by the idea of flying and after studying and drawing the motion of bats and birds, draughted plans for an 'ornithopter', a helicopter and a parachute. Leonardo was an 'ideas man' and does not seem to have constructed any of these. However his parachute design was made in 2000 and tested by sky-diver, Adrian Nicholes who pronounced the ride smoother and slower than a modern parachute. There are many Youtube videos showing working models of his inventions. He did design and construct a 'majestic spectacle' for the wedding of Gian Galeazzo Sforza with Isabella d'Aragona. This moving display showed 'Paradise' with all the seven planets orbiting round and hosting the seven gods of Olympus, who came to earth to pay homage to the new duchess. A website "Italeri" offers kitsets of 13 of Leonardo's machines for about 42 Euros each - Christmas presents for grandchildren??

Heather talked about Christopher Columbus (1451-1506). As a young Genoese sailor he had travelled to many European countries. He held a belief that it was possible to

reach the spice-rich islands of the East by sailing west . He finally persuaded the Catholic Monarchs of Spain to fund the expedition. His 3 famous ships set sail from the Canary islands in 1492 and landed in the Caribbean Islands only 2 months later. He and his crew were the first westerners to sight San Salvador, the Bahamas and Cuba

**The Maori World** No report this month

**Travel** No report this month

## **Ukulele**

Meetings Via Zoom on all Wednesdays at 1.30pm until level 2

Under lockdown conditions on Zoom is the only satisfactory way to get some tutoring and a timed practise in place. Other U3A Ukulele players from around the country join our group. The sessions include "Playalongs" to music tracks with the chords and Lyrics. One of the resources used is from a Ukulele teacher in Wales, Rachel, who has a website called Ukulaliens. The link to this website with charts and the other ukulele lessons is here.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZjDV\\_1UEbVsAQA\\_q9tyTWw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZjDV_1UEbVsAQA_q9tyTWw)

The tracks are downloaded to ensure the adverts are not included. New Members and friends welcome, even to just Karaoke. Contact Garry <https://www.u3a.nz/ukulele.htm>