



GUEST SPEAKER: Henry Tuipe'a



Title: Duffy Books in Homes – More than just Books (It's our fight against poverty)

Henry went to UNITEC School of Performing and Screen Arts and graduated with a BA in acting. He became involved in Duffy Books in Homes after auditioning for 'Duffy's Big Day Out' in 2000. Henry played 'Scruffy', Duffy's little brother.

He was a former presenter on TV3's 'Pacific Beat St' on Saturday mornings; host of the 'Stage of Origin' shows as seen on Maori TV & TV3; host on 'Home grown' a parenting programme for TVNZ; has made guest appearances on Maori TV shows 'Code' and 'Head 2 Head'. Henry also spent 10 years as a radio DJ on Niu FM (103.8FM) and is better known as 'Jandals'. He is now the Relationship Manager for Duffy Books in Homes.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

At our August meeting, David Boyle, Group Manager Investor Education for the Commission of Financial Capability, skilfully entertained and informed us on how to cope financially in retirement covering aspects such as future changes to KiwiSaver, the ageing workforce and "rightsizing" your house. The websites sorted.org.nz and invested.co.nz provide useful information.

I must admit I am enjoying the first signs of spring in my garden. I love picking the first freesias from my garden and watching my herbs come back to life after struggling through the winter. Sadly, winter seems to have returned for the next few days...keep warm!

Monette Ewen

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Active Travellers

In May and June this year, Ian and Gabrielle travelled via San Francisco to Alaska for a two week tour overland from Fairbanks, through Alaska via Denali National Park and onto the Noordam to cruise via the inside Passage to Vancouver. The cruise through Glacier Bay and its majestic glaciers, and with stops at Haines, Juneau (Alaska's capital) and Ketchikan was especially relaxing. From Vancouver they drove over the border to Bellingham, before journeying on to Seattle, where they experienced the trip highlight, visiting the Chihuly Garden and Glassworks before venturing down to the famous Pike Street Markets and taking in an excellent exhibition of the Chinese Terracotta Warriors.

Ancient Civilisations

PARTHIA: The Parthians were a nomadic Oriental people from the central Asian Steppes. They rode south to inherit the eastern portion of the enormous empire of Alexander the Great from his Seleucid Greek successors (c.238 BC). When Mithradates, a brilliant commander, came to the Parthian throne, he pushed west and by 141 BC had annexed much of Babylonia and Mesopotamia. Parthia entered into direct contact with the Chinese empire. The Silk Road was opened. Tolls exacted were a useful source of revenue. Agriculture and trade formed the basis of

the Parthian economy. Complex irrigation and canal systems supplemented inadequate rainfall. Zoroastrianism was born in Parthia and is still practised. Conflicts with Rome were frequent. Each had successes but the Parthian capital, Ctesiphon, was captured three times and weakened the empire in the second and third centuries. A rebellion within the loose federation proved fatal. The emperor was killed in battle. After 450 years, the empire fell.

Anthropology

The small west Scottish island of Iona was inhabited by holy men at the time of the Romans with evidence of earlier Bronze Age civilisation. By 500 AD it was part of Dal Riata with links to Ireland. In 563 AD Columba arrived with followers and founded a monastery that was to become famous for education, religion and book illustration. Raided repeatedly by the Vikings in the late 700 and 800s the treasures were moved including the illustration of the four gospels, now known as the Book of Kells, which can be viewed at Trinity College in Dublin.

Archaeology

The Gresham ship sank in the North Sea just off the Thames estuary in 1646. In 1846 her remains were plundered of 2700 lead ingots and other saleable items by "hard hat" divers. Completely forgotten, she was rediscovered by the Port of London Authority in 2004 during a dredging operation to deepen the channel. In zero visibility, her remains and some artefacts were recovered by feeling around in the dark in an underwater "dig". Her timbers, after desalination, are at rest at Stoney Cove, a flooded quarry in Leicestershire where it is part the UK's National Diving Centre.

Art History

Helen did a presentation on Paul Gauguin. He was born in Paris in 1848 and died in 1903 in Tahiti. At 17 he went to sea but, on the death of his mother, he gave up the sea and took a position in a brokers' office for 11 years. In 1873 he married a young Danish girl. At this time he painted as an amateur until he met up with some of the impressionists and decided to paint full time. Unsuccessful, he went to live with relatives in Copenhagen. He was not happy so he went back to Paris. He did not like climate so headed to Martinique but this was too hot so he returned to Paris. In 1890, he sold all his works to go to Tahiti where he lived a frugal lonely life but achieved with his painting.

## Art Pot Pourri

The topic was modern NZ architecture looking specifically at the Group Architects. We looked at the factors that helped create a new architect style in NZ during the late 1940s onward. Some of the driving forces were the diverse and older student body in the post war years who were aware of prominent European Architects, the reaction to the Beaux Arts teaching convention, the new building materials, and receptive clients. The 1940s was the key decade in the establishment of NZ's identity with 1940 marking the centenary of the Treaty of Waitangi. A sense of NZ regionalism was emerging.

## Book Group

Monette discussed *The Stars are Fire* (Anita Shreve), *My Name is Lucy Barton* [aka *Anything is Possible*] (Elizabeth Strout), *Man Alive: a true story of violence and becoming a man* (Thomas Page McBee) and *The Wish Child* (Catherine Chidgey). Then we heard about *We Had it so Good* (Linda Grant), *The Zookeeper's Wife: a war story* (Diane Ackerman), *The Last Runaway* (Tracy Chevalier), *The Gate* (Francois Bizot), *Island to Island* (Alistair Campbell), *The Underground Girls of Kabul: in search of a hidden resistance in Afghanistan* (Jenny Nordberg), *The Other Hoffmann Sister* (Ben Fergusson), *At First Light* (Vanessa Lafaye), *Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage murders and the birth of the FBI* (David Gann), *A Life in Parts* (Bryan Cranston), *Since We Fell* (Dennis Lehane), *Fallout* (Sarah Paretsky) and *Parting Shot* (Linwood Barclay).

## China: Past and Present

**June:** Georgie outlined China's one child policy established by Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

**July:** Colin spoke of the composition and structure of the current Chinese Government. Contrary to popular belief there are 8 legally recognised political parties in the People's Republic of China (PRC) apart from the dominant Chinese Communist Party (CPC). Fay concluded by talking of the endangered Tibetan antelope (chiru) being hunted for its fine wool. To help protect the antelope the Chinese authorities are currently building a railway underpass to assist the chiru get to their birthing grounds.

## Classical Music

We watched a DVD "In the Footsteps of Mahler" about his life and family with background music from his symphonies. This was followed with a YouTube programme of Leonard Bernstein's 1960 young people's concert with the New York Philharmonic orchestra playing the last movement of Mahler's 4th symphony. We finished with Chicago Symphony orchestra playing the finale of his 8th symphony accompanied with 1000 voices. Thank you, Lew and Helen. We meet next month at Thelma's home.

## Creative Audio-Visual

The Creative Audio/Visual Group met for a technical meeting on the Audio Editing program Audacity but, before delving into the techniques of improving voice over, we enjoyed the first A/V that we had seen from new member, Lucy Casey, who was using a Mac rather than a Windows machine. The discussion on improving voice overs was led by Jim Clegg who showed members a number of techniques that would be of great value in improving our A/Vs. The meeting ended with several YouTube tutorials on the same subject. The next meeting will be held at Sue Dobson's and will be the A/V challenge "Abstract".

## Creative Writing

This month was murder and mystery. We had an interesting viewpoint on land development and the inevitable changes it brings to how and where we live thus giving in to progress. Life and family as viewed through the eyes of a child prompted much motivational discussion. Our next meeting is on 24th August.

## Current Affairs

Our group number continues to fluctuate with some escaping our winter and others returning from their escape. Myfanwy gave us an interesting update on her recent visit 'home' to Zimbabwe which included a comparison with her last visit five years ago. On the local scene, we briefly discussed the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of Auckland's Sky Tower, Sir John Graham's death and influence, the closing of Caughey Preston Home after 60 years of providing aged care, Max Harris's interview at Auckland University re his book, *The New Zealand Project*. We watched the video, *Humans Need Not Apply* which focused on how automation will lead to a future where human labour is no longer required. (Due to early voting taking place in the Sherwood Room, our September meeting will be in the Inverness Room.)

## Cycling

Despite inclement weather all week, we managed to find a break from the rain to ride for a few hours. We started at the entrance to Rosedale Park by Jack Hinton Drive. We rode through some lovely bike paths in Unsworth Heights and surrounds - places some of us had never been to before. A great way to get to know our beautiful city of Auckland. We ended the bike ride with a well-deserved cup of coffee! Thanks to Jinnty who lead the cycle!

## Exploring Art for Fun

## Film Appreciation

### Français pour rire

We had a challenging exercise from Cecily to begin with and really appreciate all Cecily's hard work. We practised pronunciation with the help of an excellent programme from Fay. Our talk was about Mary Magdalene – a well-known biblical figure who was said, among other things, to accompany Jesus on his travels. Mary Magdalene was reputedly set adrift in a boat with no oars after Jesus' crucifixion and ended up, by the grace of God, in France near Marseilles. There are pilgrimage sites at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, the capital of the Camargue, and also at the Basilica of Saint Mary Magdalene in Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume. This town is in the Var area 40 km east of Aix-en-Provence and Mary's relics are on display in the Basilica.

### History of Europe

We began with a DVD called 'The Dark Ages' featuring a reenactment of The Battle of Hastings in 1066, which helped bring this fatal event alive for us. We talked of William the Conqueror, Hereward the Wake, the Domesday Book, the Bayeux Tapestry and how the Norman Conquest affected the English people. By the 1070s 4,000 Saxons had lost their land to 200 Norman barons, bishops and abbots with barely five per cent of the country left in Saxon hands. Perhaps a fifth of the English population died from slaughter or starvation. We reviewed the Wessex kings from Egbert (802-839) and all the confusing kings beginning with E, Ea and Ethel, in particular Edward the Martyr (975-978) who was the country's first patron saint before St. George.

### Inventors & Inventions

It was good to be able to welcome a potential new member as we explored the changing world of: electric cars, a look into the inner working of Big Ben, 6 ways to break into a locked car, a brief video from <https://www.cityrailink.co.nz/> a behind the scenes tour of the International Space Station, some mind puzzles provided by John, and 2016 competitive drone racing in Dubai. (Due to early voting taking place in the Sherwood Room, our September meeting will be in the Inverness Room.)

## Literature

Shona introduced Luke McCallin's Trilogy. The way the main character, Reinhardt has been developed makes people interested in how and why he changes and the consequences of those changes. He makes readers believe that he is someone to care about and having him simply survive was not enough. His character is of an ordinary man in extraordinary times still trying to believe in what makes sense. Read sequentially 1) The Man from Berlin. 2) The Pale House, 3) The Divided City. This was followed by other members' accounts of recent literary 'experiences' which included a lecture on Jane Austen; visits to locations of literary significance in France, Scotland and Ireland; and the release of Sir Peter Blake's last visit to Antarctica.

## Local History

David presented an interesting talk on the history of Browns Bay School. Pupils originally went to Lucas Creek School (Albany) in 1888, then a basic school became available at Torbay (Deep Creek Road) and finally in the 1940s the present school was built in Masterton and Browns Bay Roads. We learnt too that Browns Bay took a little longer to develop. Roads were of a rutted clay nature and were hard to travel on when wet. After morning tea we saw some coloured photos of the Crown Lynn museum in New Lynn. I wonder how many remember the Crown Lynn Crockery or the strong Railway Cups (with NZR on them).

## Mah Jong

New members are welcome.

## Making History

HANDKERCHIEF: From the French "couvrir" - to cover and "chef" - head. Typically it was a hemmed thin square of cotton, synthetic blend, silk or linen fabric. Believed to have been first used in ancient Greece and Rome, kerchiefs were used for wiping one's hand or face or blowing one's nose. Today handkerchiefs are used for a multitude of purposes - personal hygiene, decorative accessory, traditional accoutrement, cleaning and polishing etc. Once considered an essential personal item, the handkerchief has been replaced by paper tissues or the crook of the elbow.

## Medical Science and History

Dorothy's presentation was on autophagy, which means "self-eating". The 2016 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to Yoshinori Ohsumi for his work on mechanisms underlying the biological process of autophagy. Researchers in the 1960s had observed that the cell had a mechanism for digesting and recycling its own contents, providing fuel for energy and renewal of cell components in response to starvation and stress, and also eliminating damaged proteins and invading bacteria and viruses. Professor Ohsumi outlined the stress signals that initiated autophagy and the mechanism for autophagy. Minitopics presented included new blood tests for early cancer detection and skin disease as a portent of rheumatic fever.

## Modern History

East Timor, a Portuguese colony for over 3 centuries, struggled for many years to gain self-determination. After Japanese occupation in WW2, East Timor remained a neglected Portuguese colony until 1975 when a revolution in Portugal resulted in policy changes towards independence. Before these could be implemented, Indonesia invaded East Timor, with the covert agreement of Australia and US. The violent occupation lasted 24 years and it was only when Suharto was deposed and films of the Santa Cruz massacre were sent around the world that the UN was able to run a referendum.

## Music Appreciation and History

We started by listening to the beautiful Theme with Variations from Schubert's 'The Trout' which was probably composed in

1817. We then watched Episode 10 (about Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughn Williams) and Episode 8 (Rossini and Respighi) from the DVD Classical Destinations 2. These take us to the cities in which the composers lived, to give interesting background about their individual lives and putting their lives in the context of the political and general situations in which they lived. This series, hosted and narrated by Simon Callow, makes the composers' lives and some of their music more meaningful for us.

## Music – Mainly Classical

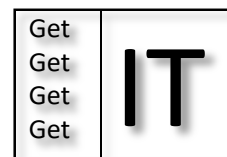
At our August meeting at Jill's home, she played a DVD on 20<sup>th</sup> century composers. This was a BBC documentary series covering the whole spectrum of European and American composers born in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and included recordings from the BBC Archives. It gave a very interesting insight into how the crisis of writing music during the war and post war periods was met in very different ways. Our meeting continued with an interesting interpretation of Ravel's Bolero played on two pianos by Alice Sara Ott and Francesco Tristano. We then watched Yuja Wang playing some of her piano concert encores now available on YouTube.

## Puzzles, Patterns and Paradoxes

More fun this month. Try these.

1. Insert the same letter twelve times in the following arrangement of letters, and so form a sentence:

MBBERSSTNNSSPPNGNSDOUSSPRTS



2. What does this mean?

## Renaissance

Thelma showed pictures of Jan van Eyck's paintings including the Ghent Altar Piece that Hitler wanted to own, his Madonna of Chancellor Rollin, the Madonna of Joris van der Paele and some portraits including The Man in the Red Hat believed to be a self portrait, the first known portrait painted where the subject is looking straight at the viewer. Patricia introduced us to Paracelsus, Swiss physician, alchemist and astrologer. He claimed to cure every disease by combining magic with science and had contempt for conventional methods. He was known as the Devil's Doctor for his treating of the weapon, not the wound, yet had good recovery results for leaving wounds alone. The first to recognize true nature of disease, he is the father of chemical pharmacology and toxicology.

## Travel

At our August meeting, Alan Thompson gave a very interesting talk about his visit to Iran. We all have preconceived ideas about Iran but he was amazed at how friendly, relaxed and liberal the people seemed. The recent lifting of an embargo has certainly helped. He was on an organised tour beginning in Tehran and visiting Qom, Kashan, Yazd, and Kerman. He toured many beautiful mosques with the traditional colourful tiles. Highlights included staying the night in a Caravanserai in the wilderness, walking around the ruins at Persepolis outside Shiraz and the enormous square at Isfahan known for its Persian architecture. Sheila told us about her recent trip to Europe. Using local transport and small apartments instead of hotels kept costs down. In Kent she visited as many Heritage properties as possible including Bodiam, Hever, Scotney, Sissinghurst, Pashley Manor, and Penshurst Place. After a week in Paris and Zurich, she arrived in Budapest for more sightseeing highlights.

## **Walking**

### **Friday September - Newmarket Parks and Hobson Bay**

Meet at Britomart Station (after making your way into Auckland central probably by bus) at 10.10am for a 10.20am train to Newmarket. Bring your Hop card and walking pole or stick. A walk through Ayr Reserve and Thomas Bloodworth Park to Hobson Bay. Coffee at Shore Café afterwards.

### **Friday September - Greenhithe and Wainoni Park**

Meet at Greenhithe shopping centre on Greenhithe Road at 9.30am for a one and a half hour walk around the area. Bring walking poles.