

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley  
**Title: Aging**



**Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley** is the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University.

He has been involved in some major research projects on immigration and diversity in New Zealand, including Capturing the Diversity Dividend of Aotearoa New Zealand (2014-2020).

He is the author or editor of 27 books ranging from political extremism to the nature of work, and he was Ranginui Walker's biographer (Mata Toa, Penguin).

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the Auckland War Memorial Museum. He was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of California Berkeley.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our speaker in February was Dr. Mels Barton who gave us a sobering account of how Kauri Die Back is affecting the Kauri in a number of areas in Auckland. A cure has not yet been found so communication, monitoring and respecting the rāhui placed on the tracks in the affected areas are the main tools for containment at present. This is a story I have been sharing with friends, my children and grand-children. When a Kauri fails so does the echo system of thirteen other native plants that exist symbiotically, together they contribute to our unique podocarp forest.

It has been a successful start to 2019 with most Special Interest Groups resuming with vigour and enthusiasm. Art for Fun, Ancient Civilisations and European History have closed but are being replaced by eight new groups that are getting underway: Philosophy, Ukulele, Te reo/Māori Studies, Computer Skills Workshops, Afternoon Walking, Photography, What's on in Auckland, International Studies Across Countries. Refer to the calendar to find the days, times and contact so you can join these new SIG's. Thanks to Elizabeth McNee for an outstanding effort in getting these groups started and to Debbie in the Community Office for all her support.

**U3A is run by Volunteers. Everyone needs to take a turn.** The Committee still needs someone to be the Speaker Manager (we already have plenty of speaker contacts). Two new groups: China Present and Engineering need someone to act as the convenor before they can get started. In six months the President, Secretary and Caterer stand down from the Committee and need to be replaced. If you have not had a turn as convenor or on the committee we

need you to step-up now. Constitutionally U3A Browns Bay will not be able to operate if members do not fill these roles. What can you do to help?

**The Auckland U3A Network Celebration** is again being planned for Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August. This year it is going to be held on the Shore at the Netball Courts in Onewa Road, Mike King will be the main speaker on mental health. If you would like to be one of the 10 minute speakers you can put your name forward now. On-line registration will start in April, this is a great day.

## Committee News

**Speaker Manager still urgently required:** We need a Speaker Manager to join the committee for 2019, ideally a male to support Pier's male voice on committee decisions. The speakers for the first four months are already organised. Please contact Glen 027 5412241

**Membership Numbers:** 25 members have still not paid. They are ineligible to attend our activities.

**Convenor Folders:** Elizabeth has worked hard to review and up-date the procedure notes given to the convenors. They are ready for hand out at the March meeting. If you are a convenor and cannot attend please ask someone to collect your new SIG folder. **NOTE:**

**Meetings at the Community Centre:** Convenors who meet at the Community Centre now need to fill-in the Community Rooms Booking schedule that is in each room.

**Keeping our database up to date:** To ensure you get our mail-outs (including this newsletter) please advise our Membership Manager Val Lloyd if your contact details change.

## NOTICES

**Bringing a Guest to our Meeting?** Please contact Val and let her know so she can have a name tag waiting and have put their name on the list so the President can welcome them.

**Name Badges:** please wear at the monthly meeting.

**Meetings at the Community Centre Rooms.** There is occasional disruption to the cups and water in the Community Rooms: Members please be aware that Debbie (from the community centre) does not work on Fridays and some other days has meetings to attend. This means the provision for cups and water may be disrupted. Please, go along to the kitchen and help yourselves if this is ever the case.

### Archaeology

Evelyn gave a presentation on Crossrail which is the new addition to the London Underground. Excavations for the line have unearthed many artefacts and skeletons from previous centuries which archaeologists are conserving and studying to reveal more about the history of the city and its citizens. The new technologies have revealed the bacteria which killed in the Great Plagues and other fascinating information for all to share. Coming up soon, the UK will start the work for HS2 the intercity rail link and it will be the biggest archaeological work done in Europe. Watch this space, lots online to follow.

### Art History

Fay presented a very interesting artist to us he was Maurits Cornelis Escher who was a Dutch graphic artist (1898-1972) who made mathematically-inspired woodcuts and lithographs. His work features mathematical objects and operations including impossible objects, explorations of infinity and tessellations (inspired by a visit to the Alhambra). Unrecognised as an artist, he was 70 before a retrospective exhibition was held. Most of the group had not heard of or seen anything like Escher's work so it gave us food for thought and inspired us to look up more about him.

### **Art Pot Pourri**

In February we all spoke about the art we had seen during the holidays and any books we had read recently about art and artists. We also enjoyed doing a quiz about art works in central Auckland.

### **Book\_Group**

We discussed the following books - and more. *'No One Can Hear You'* by Nikki Crutchley; *'Crisis'* by Felix Francis; *'Kill Shot'* by Garry Disher; *'In a House of Lies'* by Ian Rankin; *'The Late Show'* by Michael Connelly; *'Transcription'* by Kate Atkinson; *'Make or Break'* by Catherine Bennetto; *'Elevation'* by Stephen King; *'Resume Speed and other stories'* by Lawrence Block; *'Uprooted'* and *'Spinning Silver'* by Niami Novik; *'Bannerless'* and *'The Wild Dead'* by Carrie Vaughn; *'Retribution'* by Richard Anderson; *'Vox'* by Christina Dulcher; *'To Obama: with love, joy, hate and despair'* by Jeanne Marie Laskas; *'Hillary's Antarctica: adventure, exploration and establishing Scott Base'* by Nigel Watson; *'The Lost Man'* by Jane Harper; *'Scrublands'* by Chris Hammer; *'Past Tense'* by Lee Child; *'Smile of the Wolf'* by Tim Leach; *'The Survivors'* by Kate Furnivall; *'A Double Life'* by Flynn Berry; *'The Quaker'* by Liam McIlvanney; *'Fire and Blood'* by George R R Martin; *'Once Upon a River'* by Diane Setterfield; *'The Silence of the Girls'* by Pat Barker; *'Becoming'* by Michelle Obama; *'First Lady: the life and wars of Clementine Churchill'* by Sonia Purnell; *'Sisters of Spicefield'* by Fran Cusworth; *'Two Men in a Trench'* by Tony Pollard and Neil Oliver; *'The Terracotta Warriors'* by Edward Burman; *'Rising From the Rubble: a health system's extraordinary response to the Canterbury earthquakes'* by Michael Ardagh and Joanne Delly; *'Imaginary Men'* by Anjali Banerjee; *'The Mirror Crack'd From Side to Side'* by Agatha Christie; *'Mr Mac and Me'* by Esther Freud.

### **Books and Beyond**

Our year got away to a great start with our holiday reading reviews uncovering an amazingly large, and diverse, number of books read over the holidays. Many titles were noted for future reading. Our tentative programme for the coming year

includes a number of reading 'challenges' as well as some topics suitable for more 'in-depth' studies. We welcomed Robyn Duffy to our SIG.

### **Classical Music**

Our first meeting for 2019 was held on Friday 1st February. We enjoyed viewing a DVD about Karl Bohm, one of the greatest conductors and recording artists of the 20th century. We also enjoyed listening to the Enigma Variations by Elgar (1857-1934) which is dedicated to various friends including the well known movement, Nimrod.

New members welcome on the 1st Friday of each month at 10am.

### **Creative audio visual**

We welcomed two new members to our first meeting of the year, John and Colin. We agreed the format of the meetings should remain the same as previous years. On alternate months we will explore the technical side of creating a show and the next month produce a show using the knowledge and experience we gain. This allows members to explore the many effects available through questions and demonstrations of various techniques and try to put them into practice.

The challenge we set ourselves this year is to produce a video from a photoshoot of the beautiful Muriwai area. We showed our new members the basics of starting to produce a video show and reviewed some videos members had made in previous years.

### **Creative Writing**

Our first meeting of the year was attended by only two hardy souls, as the other lucky writers were otherwise busy with family and holiday activities. However Elizabeth and Irene had a very enjoyable time talking "shop" over a cuppa in the sunshine. I so enjoyed Elizabeth's contribution I have asked her to read it again this month for our other writers.

### **Cycling**

The first ride for 2019 was the Harbourside Ride, where 10 cyclists left from Pt Erin Pools carpark on a beautiful (hot) day, and cycled along the Wynyard Quarter, Quay St, into Tamaki Drive as far as Kohimarama where we stopped for coffee. Around 30 kms was the return trip count. It was interesting to see what a vibrant atmosphere has been created along this route; boating and cafes at Wynyard Quarter into an area of road works, then well made cycle lanes to Tamaki Drive, where the shared path became narrower. All of the route was appreciated by cyclists, walkers, runners and lime scooters resulting in the need for extra vigilance while riding, not a bad thing.

### **Film Appreciation**

At our February meeting we watched half of "Some Like it Hot" Starring Marilyn Munroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon which is today considered to be one of the greatest films of all time and is voted # 1 on the American Film Institute's list of 100 Funniest Movies. Orry-Kelly won the 1959 Academy Award for his costume designs.

Films viewed recently and recommended were "Mary Queen of Scots". "A Star is Born". "Roma", "Vice", "The Favourite" and "Green Book". "Colette" and "On the Basis of Sex" are on the radar for this month.

## **Français pour rire**

We met on our usual Monday at Settlers, due to Anniversary Day. Cecily led the study of the verb dire, to say or tell, and we translated various phrases using different tenses. The homework was associated with Noel festivities and we learnt about La Galette des Rois and the 13 desserts all associated with that time of year. She brought us a sample of the galette to try - delicious!

Heather H then presented us with a tour of the northern French battlefields and wartime cemeteries including Tyne Cot and Thiepval. Some pictures were of Ypres in 1919 and today, as well as of the daily Remembrance service at the Menin Gate. Her last visit was to her great-uncle's grave, who had been killed on the Somme, and it is in a small country town surrounded by fields.

## **International Studies**

The group met for the first time in February and exchanged ideas about what we want to cover and how to do so. We agreed that, initially we will take turns to study one country each month, led by a member who chooses a country, does the research and presents their findings. This topic could cover the location, recent politics, trade, language and recent history, occupation/invasions etc. New members are welcome to this interesting group.

## **Inventors and Inventions**

February presentation was on "Trends in NZ power generation using new innovative techniques" plus a demonstration of a folding electric Scooter and Group problem solving.

## **Local History**

At the February meeting of the Local History group, June and Dave Thorpe gave an illustrated talk on "Pioneer Boat Builders of Devonport." At one stage in the early 1880s there were no less than 26 boat builders scattered along the Devonport waterfront. They constructed boats of all description from small Whale Boats to paddle steamers, one of which was used to start a ferry service between Devonport and Auckland. They group were also told of the history of the Masonic Hotel, a well-known local watering hole, and of the grisly murder of a naval officer and his wife and daughter. The culprit, Joseph Burns, was found guilty, rowed across the Waitemata Harbour seated on his coffin and publicly hanged. A memorial plinth to his hanging stands on the waterfront by Windsor Reserve.

## **Medical Science and History**

February's topic was Osteoporosis centred around AMRF's excellent free public lecture with Distinguished Professor Ian Reid, Dept of Medicine, University of Auckland entitled '**Osteoporosis and Bone Disease: Big Steps Forwards**' Keeping bones strong over a lifetime is a longstanding challenge in medical health research and treatment.

Prof Ian Reid's 30 year research career has led to discoveries and new treatments that can improve bone health. In this lecture, he discussed the impact and treatment of bone diseases, including osteoporosis and Paget's disease.

The morning included mini talks around electrical stimuli causing faster stroke recovery, managing distribution of medical supplies and the ethics of using Macau monkeys for gene manipulation in China. The morning included mini talks around electrical stimuli causing faster stroke

## Modern History

Warwick spoke about the life of Norman Kirk – from humble cottage to prime minister's mansion. Kirk was born in 1923 to very straitened circumstances, forced to leave school at 12. He was a voracious reader and taught himself. Mayor of Kaiapoi-Hurunui at 30 and MP for Lyttelton 1957. A powerful debator he inspired people with his vision. Prime Minister in 1972, introduced many reforms but sadly died aged 51 in 1974 causing a national outpouring of grief.

Frank gave a talk on Vichy France 1940 – 1945. Set up to prevent total take-over by Germany. Collaborationist but refused to declare war on Britain although there were conflicts as Britain attacked French fleet and Allies invaded various colonies. A difficult moral problem for France – what would we have done?

## Music - Mainly Classical

Our February meeting was at Terry's home where we watched a concert by The Berlin Philharmonic given on a beautiful summer's day in an open air venue at the harbour of Pafos in Cyprus. Mariss Jansons was conducting and they played works by Weber, with his overture to the opera "Oberon" followed by his Concerto for clarinet and orchestra No 1 in F minor with Andreas Ottensamer on clarinet. Andreas then played Koncz's Hungarian Fantasy on themes by Weber. Their final work in this concert was Dvorak's Symphony No 8 in G major, followed by an encore of Brahm's Hungarian Dance No 5 in G minor.

## Renaissance

1400-1600 Music was significantly influenced by rise of humanistic thought. The printing press invention spread Northern European music to Italy. We heard Renaissance music and learnt about the instruments; many have disappeared. The sackbut was previously the trombone, the shawn the oboe. Without the mould breaking musical ideas, classical music today would have been drastically different. The composers with most impact were Guillaume duFay and Willam Byrd. Anne spoke on Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536), Henry VIII's first wife 1509-1533. She was married briefly to Prince Arthur, Henry's brother. She was staunchly Catholic. By 1525 Henry sought an annulment to marry Anne Boleyn but Catherine claimed her earlier marriage had not been consummated and she was therefore his rightful wife and rightful queen. She was pregnant seven times but only daughter Mary survived.

## UKULELE



Our first meeting was on the 26th Feb, however because of the newsletter deadline, a report will be next month. We have a good cross section of members already signed up to this group. However there is a need for more males and it would be good if someone was a Bass player (electric or otherwise). Singers are a possibility too. The main aim is to have fun. Those who can contribute in any way, please contact Garry via the Ukulele page on this website.

