



GUEST SPEAKER: Daniel Newcombe
Title: Linking and Moving Auckland



Daniel Newcombe is the manager of the Strategic Projects team in Auckland Transport's Strategy Division. I have a degree in Town Planning and Masters in Engineering. I've worked for transport agencies in Auckland and London for the last 20 years. My current work includes strategic planning for the city centre, plus working on light rail, the next harbour crossing and other major projects that affect the central area. I've been at AT for 8 years and have worked on projects from the Waterview tunnels to cycle lanes and bus priority. I currently lead our business case development for Northwest light rail, ferry development, the future North Shore rapid transit network and various corridor projects. I work closely with Auckland Council on city centre planning, such as the pedestrian use of Queen St/

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last month we enjoyed the second presentation on *Aging* by Dr Paul Spoonley. Thanks to Dr Spoonley's generosity and Garry's expertise this presentation and his earlier one are now on the website so it can be viewed by all our members. His March presentation highlighted future economic problems in New Zealand as the over 65 cohort rapidly increases over the next decades while both the numbers in paid employment and the birth rate decrease. Dr Spoonley's earlier talk had emphasised the importance of immigration to help slow this imbalance. The March talk also noted how keeping mentally, physically and socially active can help older people stay healthy longer. U3A is significant for the mental, physical and social benefits it can bring to our cohort. Keeping U3A strong is not just a nice thing to do; participation in U3A is critical for our long-term well-being and good health. Below are ways members can increase their participation and reap the benefits.

To be sustainable U3A Browns Bay Needs YOU

Every person who joins U3A has the capability to take a turn as a convenor for a year – this is largely an administrative role, communicating with and coordinating the other members.

Many of our U3A members have the skills to join the Committee. By August this year U3A Browns Bay faces a Constitutional Crisis. We need members to join the committee NOW and in September the positions of President, Secretary and Caterer also become vacant.

**We are starting the nomination process earlier and forms are at the front desk.
 U3A cannot survive without a strong committee!**

New Groups:

There are many new groups to expand the range of opportunity and new challenges. Every person who joins U3A Browns Bay can increase their capability by learning more about a topic and sharing that with their group members.

Celebrating 20 years on from the first U3A Browns Bay Meeting in 2000

June is a special meeting to celebrate 20 years since the first meeting. A number of our founding members are still members. The Committee would like to acknowledge them and thank them for their participation through the years. U3A Browns Bay has survived because of your contribution and participation.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Catering: We are concerned about the use of our disposable cups at the main meeting. Though labelled “eco-friendly” they do contain some plastic. Alternatives have been trialled, that do not have any plastic, but they pose safety issues by being too hot to hold. We will continue using the current cups while we explore other alternatives.

Start of our twenty year anniversary: Plans are well in hand for this event starting in June. We encourage all longer term members to be present at the June meeting to share their memories. There will be no guest speaker at this meeting.

Committee members: Our Constitution prescribes the maximum length of service each of our committee members can serve. As mentioned by our President, we need new members to join our committee. Mentoring in the role is provided.

Changes to contact details: Please let the Membership Manager or your SIG convenor know when you change your contact details, especially your emergency contact details and email address. Our Convenor Co-Ordinator and our Membership Manager spend hours checking and cross-checking to ensure our databases are up to date.

NOTICES

Bring 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.

SIG REPORTS from previous month

Archaeology

Our presentation for March was about two Irish Bog bodies, Old Croghan Man and Clonycavan Man dug up by peat cutting machines in 2003. Extremely well preserved, they were both dated to between 400 BC and 200 BC [Iron Age]. An international team of experts were able to analyse hair, finger prints, stomach contents and finger nails. Both met violent deaths and were buried on tribal boundaries, maybe as offerings for the local king's success in ensuring bountiful harvests.

Art History

Patricia talked to us about Salvador Dali, the eccentric surrealist painter. Last year she had visited the amazing Dali Museum in Florida, which holds the largest collection of Dali's work outside Spain. We heard about Dali's life, his family, his wife, his developing styles of art and his outrageous publicity stunts. Lastly we looked in some depth at several of the large 'masterworks' held in the Museum, all displaying Dali's skill at portraying illusion and symbolism, and challenging viewers' perception of reality. Jennifer followed by telling us about the Dali Theatre and Museum in Figueras, Spain, which holds the largest and most diverse collection of Dali's works, and where he is buried in a crypt beneath the stage

Art Pot Pourri

Colour was the theme with fascinating, varied contributions from members who brought garments and ceramics in favourite colours. Favoured colours can reflect personality or have

strong emotional significance. Human eyes, with 6 -8 million retinal photoreceptors, can discern 10 million different colours. Crepuscule (twilight), an apricot colour favoured by Turner, is a member's beautiful old French rose. Red is a festive, lucky colour in Japan and China. The history of red in art was outlined. NZ artist, Gretchen Albrecht creates vivid works with intense colour. Synaesthesia (joined sensation), merging of senses that aren't usually connected, affects 4 % of people. Our group will welcome new members.

Books and Beyond

Greta spoke about *Picnic in Provence: A Memoir with Recipes*, a sequel to *Lunch in Paris*, by Elizabeth Bard. The young American couple, expecting their first child, move to Provence, and the book tells of their adventures with country life, a new baby, learning French, and discovering a love of cooking with daily fresh ingredients. Recipes are included. Later the couple make and sell artisan ice cream - truffle ice cream could be one to try. Our 'challenge' for this month was to each talk briefly about a book that connected in some way to the theme of **Earth**. An amazing selection was revealed, fiction and nonfiction, and stimulating discussion followed.

Book_Group

John presented the PowerPoint he gave at the main meeting on *Lethal White* by Robert Galbraith, *The Lost Man* by Jane Harper and *Scrublands* by Chris Hammer. Then the following books were discussed: *It's All a Game: the history of board games from Monopoly to Settlers of Catan* by Tristan Donovan, *A Time to Scatter Stones* by Lawrence Block, *When They Come For You* by James W Hall, *When You Can't Stop* by James W Hall, *Cold Shot to the Heart* and *Some Die Nameless* by Wallace Stroby, *Bridge of Clay* by Markus Zusak, *Out of the Dark* by Gregg Hurwitz, *Elevation* by Stephen King, *The Way of Kings* by Brandon Sanderson, *Redeployment* by Phil Klay, *Meet me in Atlantis: my obsessive quest to find the sunken city* by Mark Adams, *Milkman* by Anna Burns, *Spiced to Death* by Peter King, *The Good Mothers: the true story of the women who took on the world's most powerful mafia* by Alex Perry, *The Music Shop* by Rachel Joyce, *Cry to Dream Again* by Jane Hawking, *The Wall* by John Lanchester and *Trust No One* by Paul Cleve.

Classical Music

Our classical music group, for March, watched a DVD on the music and times of Hector Berlioz (b 1803-d 1869) who was a French Romantic composer. An eccentric and sometimes unbalanced personality, whose music, romantic in spirit, ranges from vivid imagination to utter banality. He wrote 3 operas that were not well received, orchestral and choral works. The *Symphonie Fantastique* is his best known work, from which we listened to the 5th movement with much enjoyment.

Computing Skills

Three sessions have been held in this workshop series of creating a PowerPoint presentation and inserting video clips. The second workshop series will start in June.

Creative Writing

Our subject this month was "coming home" or "homecoming". I never cease to be enthralled by our writers' varied and interesting takes on any particular subject. This month was no exception, ranging from memories of welcoming cathedral bells, details and facts about the migration of one of our shore birds, to the complicated human emotions of simply moving house.

Cycling

The Wattle Downs ride took us around a picturesque part of the Manukau Harbour coastline through Mahia Park and Wattle Downs. The gently undulating paved route hugged the shoreline and had many seats and picnic tables to catch one's breath and admire the view. The ride went past the Manukau golf course, and had opportunities to reach the water and two

playgrounds. The path was in two parts, connected by about 400m of quiet residential road. We rode from Frangipani Avenue to Bluewater Place and returned by the same route. We enjoyed the quiet, peaceful environment and stunning views of the Manukau Harbour.

Film Appreciation

The March meeting involved viewing the second half of *Some Like it Hot* Starring Marilyn Munroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon.

The film won the 1960 Golden Globe awards for Best Motion Picture – Comedy or Musical, Best Actress in Motion Picture – Comedy or Musical for Monroe, and Best Actor in Motion Picture – Comedy or Musical for Jack Lemmon. Orry-Kelly won the 1959 Academy Award for costume design for his work on this film. Many of us had seen the film multiple times but still appreciated the comedy and precision of the production.

Films viewed recently and recommended are: *The Favourite* and *Green Book* and *Colette*.

Français pour rire

At our last meeting we had a couple of stimulating exercises in French vocabulary, and a talk about Philippe Petit. He is best known as the tightrope walker who crossed between the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York, in 1974. Prior to that he had walked above Notre Dame, Paris, in 1971.

His expertise was due to lots of practice and extremely good planning and preparation. Nowadays, he divides his time between New York City, where he is an artist in residence at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, and a hideaway in the Catskill Mountains, where he lives with his partner, Kathy O'Donnell.

International Studies across Countries

Our first country study saw Heather H presenting her findings on Croatia. Many members had been to the former Yugoslavia and were able to contribute to the interesting discussions which followed.

This country's geographical position made it a junction between Europe and the east, so centuries of wars between Croatia and its neighbours were talked of. Since the USA brokered Dayton treaty of 1995, stability has arrived and reasonable relations between Croatia and its former enemies inside Yugoslavia have followed. It is now a member of the European Union, NATO and its flag proudly flies over the United Nations HQ in New York.

Inventors and Inventions

John Ewen gave us an entertaining and educational talk on the Danish mathematician, inventor, author and poet Piet Hein who used a mathematical formula to create super-ellipses that became the basis of the rounded egg shapes that characterise Danish buildings and furniture. He also penned over 7000 short poems or Grooms often with philosophical meanings. Eugene gave us a mini talk on the innovative gadgets he noticed while recuperating in hospital in Japan. One in particular is the sink and tap for handwashing, on top of, and attached to the toilet cistern.

Late Afternoon Walking

In February and March, we enjoyed both a beach walk from Browns Bay towards Murray's Bay, and a walk through the picturesque Centennial Park in Campbell's Bay.

Local History

An interesting talk on the history of Great Barrier Island from when it was attached to the Coromandel Peninsula - through Maori times and wars,- Copper mining,- Gold & Silver mining.- Parkhurst boys.- Boat Building,- Pigeon Post airmail service, (Fifty minutes by Pigeon; thirty by plane.) - Kauri logging and Forest Service's importing of Kauri seedlings. - Gum digging, - Farming, and honey amounting to 10 tons leaving the Barrier in a year. - Whaling and Orama

Christian Community's rehab settlement which operated with Fraser McDonald's support following Carrington's closure.

Medical Science and History

The March topic was skin cancer which is the most common form of cancer in New Zealand. It is the result of abnormal cell growth, often due to repeated exposure to the sun. The presentation looked at the different types of skin cancer, and the treatment options, both non-surgical and surgical, including Mohs Micrographic/ CCPDMA (Complete Circumferential Peripheral and Deep Margin Assessment) surgery. This is claimed to be the best method of making sure that the skin cancer is completely excised, resulting in the highest cure rate. The presentation concluded with a reminder of how to protect yourself from the harmful effects of the sun.

Modern History

An interesting and thought provoking presentation was given on Tax Havens by Gordon. He described the many British Crown colonies which were at the centre of the tax evasion industry in partnership with the City of London. The obscene amounts of money being funnelled out of third world countries far exceeded the amount of aid being given to those countries. At the same time the political, business and entertainment elites as well as criminals have been using these tax havens to reduce their tax liabilities thus increasing their wealth at the expense of ordinary tax paying citizens or for money laundering. In the last few years that has included the social media giants. Belatedly governments have attempted to curtail these activities with very limited success.

Music - Mainly Classical

This month we met at Greta and Alf's home and watched a concert from The Waldbühne, Berlin, filmed 14 Sept 2018. The orchestra was the Berlin Philharmonic with the theme *Dolce Vita*, meaning the Good Life. The singers were Judas Kaufman, tenor and Anita Rachvelshvilli, soprano. They performed a great selection of well-loved Italian opera arias & music. This outside theatre held an audience of around 200,000, showing their appreciation for this wonderful concert.

Philosophy

Our first session looked at the earliest recorded Sumerian origins of philosophy, definitions and we started to explore several traditional philosophical questions.

Photography

Introduction to digital photography exploring the components: subject, composition, light, focus. Composition was the topic for the planned shoot to bring to the next session.

Puzzles Patterns & Paradoxes

Our main presentation was about the greatest airline mystery – what happened to Malaysia Airline Flight MH370? [almost exactly 5 years ago]. Despite spending between US\$135 - 160 millions, the search for this plane was fruitless. The final search by Ocean Infinity was called off in January 2017. Suggestions as to how such disasters could be mitigated - such as having the Black Box in the 'cloud' were discussed. Scott's contribution was about ellipses and their presence in the solar system. Penny brought a mysterious object dug up by her mother in Canada when Penny was a girl which turned out to be a (peace?) pipe of the First Nation.

Renaissance

Fay spoke about the Medici family's influence on the Renaissance. Becoming bankers to most of Europe they used their money and power to sponsor many artists such as Brunelleschi, Michelangelo, Botticelli, and Leonardo. They produced two popes and two queens of France. Over the years, this group has had talks about most of these people but this tied it all together. Galileo was so happy to be sponsored by them that he called the 4 largest moons of Jupiter [which he discovered], the Medici Moons. Despite this, when taken by the Inquisition, the Medici abandoned him. Anne followed with a quiz which was received enthusiastically by members.

Te Reo Māori

Sue led a vocabulary session introducing the use and pronunciation of the vowels. PowerPoint told creation Story and looked at the Origins of the Polynesians and Māori to New Zealand.

Travel

At our last meeting Shirley & Robin told us about their cruise around Central America. They embarked at the port of Guayaquil in Ecuador, visited places in Costa Rica before sailing through the Panama Canal into the Caribbean and ending their cruise in Martinique.

Ukulele

At the first meeting of the group, we shared our experience with the Ukulele. Gloria W. provide a demonstration on different aspects of her experience. We played a couple of numbers. There were a couple of videos of Professional Ukulele Orchestras which demonstrated the fun and entertainment possible of this type of group. At the second meeting it was decided on having group sessions now twice a month. Sue presented a tutorial on strumming. The song selections are starting to rock along. The website has tutorials for all levels of skill.

<http://u3abb.net.nz/ukulele.html>