



General Meeting for Members: Tuesday 2 June 10am – 11 30 am
Our first Zoom meeting

GUEST SPEAKER 2 June: Louise Allnutt
Title: FosterHope



Louise is Auckland Co-ordinator as well as the Chairperson of Foster Hope which she started in 2010. She grew up in South Africa where her mum taught her the importance of helping others less fortunate.

When she found out about how some children arrive in foster care with only their clothes on their backs, she joined a friend to make up their first “Bears 2 Care” and then “Kits 2 Kids”. Since then, life certainly has been busy as she has 2 children, a business and has her fingers in a few more pies from Beanies for Africa to Project Jonah. She loves the difference that they’re making to so many vulnerable children. Starting Foster Hope has given her the opportunity to meet and learn from some awe-inspiring volunteers and social workers from all over the country.

FosterHope was one of 3 finalists in the recent Mitre 10 NZer of the Year Awards in the Community Category. It is a registered charity. In 2019 they supplied over 5,200 filled backpacks to foster children and 132 flatpacks to young people transitioning from foster care. These are 2 examples of the many ways foster children are supported by FosterHope.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Could you be our next speaker?

Many of our members have led very interesting lives – some in New Zealand, but many from overseas. Also for some, the Covid lockdown has been a chance to try out new skills. If you would like to share this with our club, see one of the Committee who will put you in touch with the appropriate people. Not sure how to prepare a 10 minute presentation for Zoom? Again not a problem. We can assist you there.

Keeping in touch

Our ability to once again have our main meetings in the church hall will depend on several factors all aimed to keep us safe. To that end, your committee recommends that we still focus on the SIG aspect of our club in the short term. Many SIG groups are using Zoom to keep in touch. Fay Weatherly and Garry Clark have become experts in this programme. As well, Garry and Fay have been hosting coffee mornings via zoom twice a week. These have proven to be very popular. People are given the start time via email, and it’s a simple matter just to log into that “chat”.

SIG meetings at the Community Centre

Our Conveners Co-ordinator Elizabeth McNee has been advised by Debbie from the Community Centre that the centre is currently closed to community groups until further notice because of Covid 19 restrictions. Elizabeth will advise SIG conveners when the community centre will again be open to SIG groups.

POP UP SIGs

If you wish to organise a Pop Up please contact the Convenors Co-ordinator Elizabeth McNee. Elizabeth's contact details are listed in the committee members table.

The Coffee Club Pop-Up Special Interest Group has provided a short catch-up opportunity to anyone who wants to join. It meets on Tuesday and Friday at 10am on Zoom. It is only for a maximum of 25mins. We have a chat and a secret guest each time. We have had Dr Susanna Campino from the London Tropical School of Medicine taking questions on the Covid-19 research in Cambridge and Oxford. Roy and Mary Boston from Blenheim another time and Kevin from Napier talked with images of the most destructive earthquake in NZ at Napier. One never knows the Secret guest till one attends, except the host. A Zoom link will be sent early on the day of the meeting. If you are new to zoom you can either just click on the link before the meeting or view on your browser. Alternatively you can download the Zoom application (Free version). Tablets and PC. This will enable you to do much more with friends and family. Zoom Guide here <https://www.u3a.nz/meetings.htm>

SIG REPORTS

Active Travellers

Our April meeting took place online via Zoom. Gay and Barry gave a PowerPoint presentation with photos of their 2017 cruise to Scotland, Iceland and Norway. In Scotland, a special highlight for Gay was fulfilling a lifelong ambition to go to the Edinburgh Tattoo. The cruise took them into the Arctic Circle around Iceland with stops in Reykjavik, Isafjordur and Akureyri, where they explored the Icelandic countryside including spectacular waterfalls, lakes, volcanic and geothermal areas, including the erupting Strokkur geyser. In Norway they sailed through stunning fjords while visiting six ports: Alesund in the Art Nouveau style style built after the devastating 1904 fire that destroyed 850 of its 1000 buildings; Bergen's beautiful harbour and Bryggen area with 62 old wooden buildings from the Hanseatic League period; Flam and the scenic railway up into the mountains; Stavanger with a cruise through the fjords to Pulpit Rock; pretty little Kristiansand; and finally the lovely city of Oslo where they visited the Fram museum and City Hall where the Nobel Peace prize is presented."

Archaeology

At our May meeting via Zoom, together with our presenter Sylvia Dixon, we looked at two recent archaeological digs in Britain. Gary Bankhead, a resident of Durham, has searched the bottom of the River Wear in central Durham and found thousands of small metal objects dating back to the middle ages. His findings have thrown new light on Durham's ancient cloth dyeing industry. In Cambridgeshire, prompted by the construction of a new motorway, a consortium of archaeologists excavated 1.4 square miles of land and found evidence of settlements from all the main periods of British history – Neolithic, Bronze age, Iron age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval.

Art History

Thanks to the magic of Zoom we were able to see and hear a presentation from Patricia at our May meeting about Rita Angus, one of New Zealand's best loved artists. A pioneer of modern painting, Rita Angus was a complex and colourful woman, articulate and intense and dedicated to her art. We explored her life story, her relationships with family, friends and lovers and admired many of her art works. Two short YouTube clips rounded off the meeting and we can now look forward to a major exhibition of her works next year at Te Papa with heightened expectations.

Art Pot Pourri

During the lockdown, Art Potpourri members have enjoyed exploring online resources provided by large and small art galleries around the world during the lockdown. Members have shared humorous interpretations of famous paintings, a video of beautiful anamorphic china produced in Korea and the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square. The curators of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum from Home) have made fascinating short English videos about exhibits that intrigue or that are pertinent to current circumstances such as a socially isolating dress. They are well worth viewing. Virtual tours of famous galleries provided opportunities to compare different ways of displaying art. Auckland Art Gallery currently offers a virtual tour of the Japanese artist, Hokusai's works which is also recommended viewing.

We are all looking forward to our June meeting with presentations on Don Binney and other New Zealand artists planned.

Book_Group

No report this month

Books and Beyond

Books and Beyond had our May meeting via Zoom. Nine members took part and we each gave a brief review of a book we had recently enjoyed while in lockdown. It was nice to chat and to see familiar faces again.

Classical Music

No report this month.

Computer Skills Workshop

If there is interest, these will recommence

Creative audio visual

No report this month.

Creative Writing

Ellen gave us a charming story demonstrating a child's instinctive capacity for the need to nurture and protect all the creatures who inhabit the world around them.

Kathy wrote for us an entertaining tale about an old lady who felt taking the law into her own hands was the way to go ! Get your gun Annie ! Brenda showed us that for many, advancing age seems to deepen a need to know our family history . Delving can sometimes turn up things we never imagined .This was perfectly captured by Brenda . Something to make us think.Elizabeth's story about a marriage built on lies and deceit , a familiar story . I was firmly assured it was pure fiction and not based on personal experience ! Very readable. Irene wrote about the secret lives of creative writers. Who knew ! We will continue our meetings via email for the time being

Current Affairs

No report this month.

Cycling

No report this month.

Film Appreciation

No report this month.

Français pour rire

We had our Zoom meeting of Francais pour Rire on our regular 4th Monday of May.

Helen Brown described a trip around southern France with patchwork quilting as the main theme but time enough to enjoy Roman and Medieval sights in the summer sun.

And Fay led the French translation describing how a New Zealand couple transformed a truck they drove around in into a French chateau.

In June we will be having a visual trip around Monet's garden at Giverny, near Paris; and hopefully we will be able to enjoy a coffee together!

Inventors and Inventions

On 20 May 7 members attended our second Zoom meeting at which Geoff Hancock gave a most interesting illustrated talk on the history and development of respirators. His talk covered the early 1900's, through to the iron lungs of the polio epidemic in the 1950's and on up to 2020 with the development of a cheap, but practical respirator developed by three Kiwi inventors. His talk resulted in some lively discussion around polio and the respiratory effects of Covid-19.

Local History

No report this month.

Mah Jong

No report this month.

Making History

No report this month.

Māori / Te Reo

No report this month.

Medical Science and History

We held our second ZOOM meeting with thirteen participants including our ex-members from Blenheim (Roy and Mary Boston). Pauline's presentation was on "Quarantine" discussed by looking at the History of the Quarantine Station at Sydney. A timely look at the misery and suffering endured by immigrants suffering from smallpox, bubonic plague, typhoid etc. arriving in diseased ridden ships from the early 19th century. They were forced to Quarantine for a mandatory 40 days. Many similarities of our current Pandemic COVID-19 were identified the main one being "susceptible to diseases that were generally misunderstood and untreatable!" The Spanish Flu Pandemic of 100yrs ago identified more similarities - hand washing was stressed but "you should rinse hands in 1/2 % Kresolvo solution, and then wash them in Lifebuoy Soap and water" The differences included the use of Gas Inhalation Chambers which involved forty men at a time in a closed chamber being forced to breathe Zinc Sulphate Gas. There were also Disinfecting Showers where everyone was required to endure Carbolic Acid showers. All clothing and belongings were put through an autoclave to be sterilised. The Q Station is usually open for visitors, tours and overnight guests – except is closed at present because of COVID-19.

Modern History

No report this month.

Music Appreciation and History

No report this month.

Music - Mainly Classical

No report this month.

Philosophy

No report this month.

Puzzles Patterns & Paradoxes

Ian Graham made a presentation about Polish born, French/American Mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot, who is known as the Father of Fractals. What are fractals? They are mathematical calculations that are infinitely scalable to allow measurement of irregularly shaped objects. They can be used, for example, to understand the growth pattern of bacteria, image compression, signal patterns, etc. Fractal patterns can also frequently be seen in nature - through fern leaves, snowflakes, flower buds, etc. Three brain teasers were also presented and alternative methods for solving these were explored. Great challenging fun!

Renaissance

Ruth spoke about John Cabot who was a Venetian entrepreneur who persuaded Henry VII to support his plan to explore a route to China across the Atlantic. After one failed attempt, he left Bristol in 1497 in the small ship 'Matthew' and finally reached Newfoundland. He raised the English and Venetian flags as well as the Papal banner but did not venture inland or meet any inhabitants. This gave England a footprint in the New World and laid groundwork for claims to Canada.

Heather then spoke about the Mary Rose, Henry VIII's flagship. She was built in Portsmouth in 1511, a carrack style warship built of over 600 oak trees, with 4 masts and a huge sail area. She fought many sea battles against the French Navy, mainly in the English Channel. Henry named her after his sister Mary and the rose was the Tudor emblem, hence she was his favourite. He had many warships built in the early part of his reign and this was the start of the Royal Navy. Mary Rose always had 2 High Admirals, from the Howard family on board and Henry and a Spanish Admiral visited the ship in the Solent after a major successful battle against the French. In the Battle of the Solent in 1545, many RN ships were gathered; the French ships slipped into the Solent audaciously and sank the Mary Rose in 40 metres of water. 400 lives were lost.

In 1965, 420 years later she was finally found by divers and 19 thousand artefacts were recovered. In 1982 the "world's most ambitious underwater archaeological operation" raised the Mary Rose to the surface. Only half the keel is intact and the Trust who look after the ship have kept her on display in the Royal Naval dockyard in Portsmouth, along with many of the artefacts. Heather recommends a visit there to see Victory, Warrior and the Mary Rose, a comprehensive display of naval history through the centuries.

Travel

No report this month.

Ukulele

We have been meeting twice a week at 2pm Tuesdays and Thursdays on Zoom meetings. Have found that by displaying the lyrics and ukulele chords on the screen along with the popular song means one can feel part of the band as one plays along. One of the best producers of song with Ukulele, is Cynthia Linn. Many of her tracks we have played to on Zoom sessions, are from Youtube. Other songsters have been Abba, Neil Diamond, Roy Orbison and Neil Finn. The aim of the expanded meetings has meant everyone has been practicing more and I'm sure that everyone has benefited. As we come near to the end of level 2 it is felt that it will be good to meet together. All members will be notified if there is any change to the type of meeting we will have whether it be Zoom or in person.

Walking

No further walks planned due to pandemic: