



September 2020

## Browns Bay Newsletter

**General Meeting for Members: Tuesday 1 September 10am – 11 30 am**

### *Our second Zoom meeting*

This month we are again having our main meeting using Zoom/Webinar. This will be a shortened meeting, with just a recorded guest speaker. The meeting will last approximately one and a half hours. Details on accessing the meeting and the required link will be sent out prior to the meeting by Garry Clark.

#### **GUEST SPEAKER: Professor Kevin Flude**



Title: "The origins of London"

This talk is part of the Road Scholar programme. Road Scholar is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to inspire adults to learn, discover and travel. The organization is headquartered in Boston Mass.

Today's talk is archeological, cutting science through myth. Great for anyone who has been to London or who wants to go there.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

#### **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 within the Alert Levels set by the Government. To that end, your committee recommends that we still focus on the SIG aspect of our club in the short term. Many SIG groups have been using Zoom to keep in touch.

#### **Wanting to learn more about getting your SIG group started with Zoom?**

Zoom has the capacity to allow presenters to include video clips, powerpoint etc in their session. Contact Fay Weatherly ph 4730324 for help to get started.

#### **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

#### **AGM**

Our AGM will form part of our November meeting. Nomination forms will be attached to the October newsletter if you want to nominate someone who is prepared to take on a role on the committee. The nominee must be agreeable to being nominated and must have a proposer and seconder.

## NOTICES

### 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.

### Change of Contact details

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

## SIG REPORTS

The close off for the next newsletter is **Friday 23 October 2020**. SIG groups who meet in the **4<sup>th</sup> week of the month** have an extension until **Monday 26 October**. Please send your SIG reports to [u3abbnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:u3abbnewsletter@gmail.com)

Editor's note: Please send only one report per SIG group. It is confusing when I receive more than one report – which one is the definitive report?

### Report of the Month

#### Local History

As we indicated our August presentation, we are changing the format of our meetings. We now choose a subject and each member prepares a short input. The subject for our September 14th meeting is Heritage Buildings. Topics for this meeting have been decided on, so new members are welcome to come along and listen.

### Active Travellers

Active travellers group enjoyed a wonderful presentation by Lucy Casey of her intrepid and varied experiences in a 4WD van with a friend through the Australian outback. The month-long trip, which covered over 6000km, began in Adelaide and worked its way up through to Darwin, but getting off the beaten track to take in some of the spectacular geography, colours and landscapes of places like Uluru, the Bungle Bungles, the Mornington Wilderness Wildlife Sanctuary and Kakadu National Park and in doing so traversing extremely challenging corrugated red dirt roads and encountering an amazing range of animals, birds, reptiles and flora. Being exposed to some of the aboriginal art that has survived as much as 26,000 years was an added bonus. We were all enthralled and seduced to visit these amazing places.

### Archaeology

No report this month.

### Art History

We watched a video on the Sagada Familia in Barcelona via Zoom. The Basilica was commenced 13 decades ago. It is unlike any other house of worship in the world with its spiky fanciful mud- castle-like ensemble of twirling towers and twisting columns. It's the expression of architect Antoni Gaudi's highly idiosyncratic vision. The hope is that it will be finished by 2026, a hundred years after Gaudi's death. They are now able to use a computer driven approach. Models are being made using 3D printers enabling them to construct a lot off site and sophisticated digital imaging shows how it will all fit together. With intensive research into Gaudi's vision structural problems that would have daunted previous builders can now be solved with a click of a mouse. Ongoing search throughout the world for new stone is still underway as the most used durable sandstone from Montjuic quarry in Catalonia closed in the 1970's. Red stone from Iran, Blue granite from Brazil, dark basalt from Italy and bright white granite from Madrid are some examples of the stone being used. We enjoyed a chat together after the video and would like to thank Fay for making our meeting possible via Zoom.

### Art Potpourri

Susan gave a fascinating presentation on the 91 year old Japanese avant-garde artist, YaYoi Kusama. Her parents opposed her wish to be an artist but she persisted in studying Japanese techniques. She went to New York when aged 28 and was a prolific artist but very poor. Recognition was achieved in 1993 when she exhibited at the Venice Biennale.

Since 2000 there have been many exhibitions of her work, including Auckland in 2017. She has been living in a Tokyo psychiatric hospital but has a nearby studio. Many of her works have repetitive motifs -polka dots and pumpkins express radiant energy.

Denise followed up with information on artist John Drawbridge and his wife , sculptor and jeweller Tanya Ashken.

## **Book\_Group**

We held a Zoom meeting with most of our group attending. People are not reading as much as usual and several people have read the same books. These are the books we discussed: *Warning Light* by David Ricciardi; *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes; *Most Dangerous Place* by James Grippando; *Haven't They Grown* by Sophie Hannah; *The Good Killer* by Harry Dolan; *The Ruin* and *The Scholar* by Dervla McTiernan; *And Fire Came Down* by Emma Viskic; *Pantheon* by Sam Bourne; *The Last Train to London* by Meg Waite Clayton; *A Respectable Trade* by Philippa Gregory; *The Girl in the Mirror* by Rose Carlyle; *Pull No Punches: memoir of a political survivor* by Judith Collins; *Island Song* by Madelaine Bunting; *Tightrope* by Simon Mawer and *One Bright Moon* by Andrew Kwong

## **Books and Beyond**

No report this month.

## **Classical Music**

Our August meeting was held at Elaine Rankin's home, where Ian Rankin provided a presentation on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart was born on 27 January 1756 in Salzburg, Austria. He played harpsichord by age 3, and was a competent violinist at age 4. He composed his first piece as a 5-year-old, and went on a family musical tour when 6. In 1764 he played for Louis XV at Versailles and George III at Buckingham Palace. He became Concert master for Archbishop Prince of Salzburg at age 18. After being dismissed from employment in 1781, he became a freelance musician and composer. In 1785, he was described by Haydn and "the greatest living composer". During his lifetime, he composed more than 600 works, and it would take around 202 hours to listen to all of these. He died in 1791 aged 35 and penniless.

We then watched a documentary on the composition of Symphony 41 – "Jupiter", before enjoying the full performance of that work. Finally, we listened to three of his better-known works – Overture from "The Marriage of Figaro"; Piano Concerto No. 4; and Serenade "Ein Kleine Nachtmusik".

## **Creative audio visual**

No report this month

## **Creative Writing**

No report this month

## **Current Affairs**

No report this month.

## **Cycling**

Ten keen cyclists met at Ambury Farm, Mangere, and biked – we hoped – to Stonefields. However we discovered extensive Watercare works blocked our way, so we explored these areas, discovered a quiet road to ride on and marveled at the numbers of birds in the foreshore area. Luckily one of our members, Ted, is a keen birder, and we were able to take advantage of his knowledge about them. The walking/cycling tracks are very good, and we were able to bike 20 kms, to where (ever?) we got to and back. Again, we were blessed with great weather for biking, sunny with not much wind. We supplied our own morning tea refreshments this time. And photographs were taken, which you can see on the Browns Bay U3A Website.

**Film Appreciation** No report this month

**Français pour rire** No report this month

## **International Studies across Countries**

International studies have had another rest just like all of you. However we plan to meet again on the second Thursday, 10th September at 1.30 pm, in the Sherwood Room of the Community Centre. Don't forget we look at and discuss international affairs as well as a focus on one country. Next month we will look in some detail at Australia. What lessons can we / have we learnt from other countries? Come along and share your views!

**Inventors and Inventions** No report this month

**Mah Jong** No report this month.

**Māori / Te Reo** No report this month

**Medical Science and History** No report this month

**Modern History** No report this month

**Music Appreciation and History** No report this month

## **Music - Mainly Classical**

Our August meeting was held at Pat's home and she presented us with Tony Palmers' documentary film of Igor Stravinsky's life and music compositions. All the virtues of the film seemed to stem from himself and no higher tribute could be paid to the technical virtuosity of Palmer's film of Stravinsky which achieved miracles of compression, lucidity and respect. This British Documentary provided an excellent and thorough overview of the interesting 20<sup>th</sup> century times that Stravinsky lived through.

**Puzzles Patterns & Paradoxes** No report this month

**Renaissance** No report this month

**Travel** No report this month

## **Ukulele**

**New online Meeting times** Zoom on line every Wednesday 1.15pm

With Level 3 in Auckland the Ukulele Group is meeting online until further notice. At our last meeting with the wet weather prevalent, it was a chance to play songs with Rain in the title such as "Singing in the Rain", "Fire and Rain" and others. With a catalogue of 3000 Ukulele charts and a growing list of play along backing tracks with lyrics, chording and original singers, there are enough resources for beginners and established players to easily fit in and progress. The learning resources have been gathered and are on [www.ukulele.u3a.nz](http://www.ukulele.u3a.nz) The play alongs are not on the website, but on a list with web links and are updated to members after each session.

## **Walking**

The following are the tentative walks planned. Whether they go ahead or not depends on what Alert Level Auckland is under at the time.

### **Friday September Long Bay**

Meet at 9.45am at the first car park on the right after crossing the bridge into Long Bay Regional Park. As we don't have a leader and I will be away on that date, walkers can meet and decide the route for the morning.

### **Friday September Parry Kauri Park Walkway.**

Meet in Freyberg Park 4 Woodlands Crescent, Browns Bay at 9.45am to car pool or at Parry Kauri Park at about 10.20am. The walk is about half an hour on boardwalk but allow extra time to look around and watch the birds. After the walk we can go into Warkworth for coffee and more walking for those interested.