



HAMILTON NEW ZEALAND

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Newsletter September 2023

Life is for learning.....learn for life

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 20 September at 10 am** (meet and greet at 9.45 am) at the Church Hall of Chartwell Co-operating Church located on the corner of Comries Road and Belmont Avenue (opposite and near Chartwell Mall). Following the guest speaker's presentation, we have morning tea/coffee and a chance to chat.



Our speaker on 20th September is **Richard von Sturmer** who is a New Zealand writer. He was born on Auckland's North Shore in 1957. His recent books are the acclaimed memoir, *This Explains Everything* (Atuanui Press, 2016), *Postcard Stories* (Titus Books, 2019), *Resonating Distances* (Titus Books, 2022) and the recently published *Walking with Rocks, Dreaming with Rivers: My Year in the Waikato* (Titus Books, 2023). He is well-known for writing the lyrics of 'There is No Depression in New Zealand,' which has become the country's alternate national anthem.

In 2020 he was the University of Waikato's writer in residence. During his residency he explored the Waikato region, writing on its towns and geographic features. The result is now a book, *Walking with Rocks, Dreaming with Rivers: My Year in the Waikato*.

President's report

Tēnā koutou – greetings to you all.

We were fortunate to have 'Space Dave', aka Dave Owen as the guest speaker at our September meeting. Dave runs the Te Awamutu Space Centre, which has grown into a nationally recognised museum and education centre. Since 2014 Dave has been working full-time operating the space centre and teaching astronomy. He gave us an enthralling talk about the big bang (or expansion) theory, our location in the universe, and the rapidly advancing state of our knowledge deriving from the James Webb and Hubble telescopes, and numerous other observations, including those by amateur astronomers around the world. Mind expanding stuff!

Our web site has been updated to show the Committee personal and their various roles. Please feel free to contact us if you have a good idea for a speaker or an activity that you think would be of interest to U3A Hamilton. We have a new Almoner. Please contact Colin Williams if you know of any member or a family member who is unwell or otherwise in need of moral support. Colin's contact phone number is 021 157 3470.

Gorham Milbank has indicated that he intends 'retiring' at the end of this year from setting out the chairs and tables at or monthly meetings and returning them afterwards. On behalf of you all, I wish to thank Gorham for coordinating that over the past 2-3 years. Gorham is a former committee member and Almoner and has been a real asset to U3A. If anyone would like help out by coordinating the chairs and table organisation at our monthly meetings, please let me or another committee member know, either by email or at one of our meetings.

Bob Wilcock, President

Online learning Blog

During August 2023, these posts were made to our online learning blog <https://u3ahamilton.org.nz/online-learning/>:

- **The new bus service is open**
- **Garden History Talk**
-

Suggestions for new postings are always welcome.
Beverley Bell hamiltonnzu3a@gmail.com

Groups

Interest group news

Hiking Group

The Hiking Group walked around Lake Puketirini in Huntly on Thursday 10th August. The lake was formed when the old Weavers Open Cast coal mine was retired and the pit was allowed to fill with water.

Our next walk will be around Lake Ngaroto between Ohaupo and Te Awamutu.

Des Johnston

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Singalong Group

The Singslong Group decided to take a break for September. We will resume on **Wednesday 4 October**. If you like singing old time songs, come along and join us at our next gathering at 1.15 pm at the Hukuanui Reformed Church, 159 Rototuna Road, Rototuna. Wayne Wright 027 408 3653

The Computer / Technology group

The Computer / Technology group meets at the convenor's home at 10:00 on the first Wednesday of each month.

We research a topic to explore each time, then after coffee discuss our current technological interests & issues.

This month we are revisiting the task of 'digital housekeeping': decluttering unwanted apps, emails, images, contacts etc. on phones & computers.

We are also looking at the privacy settings on our apps: whether to allow camera, microphone & location access.

- An appropriate time of the year for a review and 'spring clean'.

If interested in joining the group, contact Carol at: carcarr04@yahoo.com

Antiques and Collectables August meeting

The August topic of paperweights provided much interest and we were treated to an extensive and impressive collection of Royal Crown Derby examples. The classic antique paperweights became popular with the development of the Penny Post in the 1840's and as paper also became cheaper, letter writing was encouraged. Fashions changed but their popularity increased again after World War II with glass versions becoming very popular. Crown Derby also produced paperweights modelled on dogs and cats who served in the war alongside British Military. The Lest We Forget Gallantry medal was hung around the animal's neck. Limited Edition models have a higher value and the Collectors' Guild Exclusive pieces e.g. Poppy mouse decorated in rich colours were quite beautiful.

We also saw examples from Caithness to the Isle of Wight, from Finland to New Zealand's own fossils. Colin Terris, who is hailed as the father of modern paperweights, joined Caithness Glass in 1968 and revolutionised the modern paperweight world with his modern, abstract style. He also recognised the potential for producing paperweights as factory items. The Caithness brand acquired a Royal Warrant as a recognised supplier of glass to the Queen Mother. Colin Terris passed away in 2007 but some of his designs are still present in the Caithness catalogue.

Raeburne Bourke

The Mah-jongg group

Our group was originally set up by Murray Belchamber several years ago now and he is back with us supporting new learners and helping us all extend our knowledge and skills. We play the Hong Kong version of the game and are currently focussing on building higher scoring hands across a session. We meet at Matte Black, the café attached to the St Andrews Golf club on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 1 to 3 pm. Lots of fun, chatting, coffee, and increasing (slowly!) our ability to strategize.

Our group is now at capacity however, so for the time being, if you want to join us please contact Graham Harrison, gfharrison26@gmail.com , 07 855 6217, to go on the waiting list.

Lesley Dunn, Convenor, 021371314

Environs group

Another beautiful winter's day and a walk along the Waikato River towards Ngaruawahia Esplanade from Matariki Street, Horotiu, accompanied by a couple of canine friends! On the way back to the cars we came across a subgroup from Waikato Tramping club enjoying morning tea at one of several picnic tables available along the route. They were doing a round trip from Horotiu Bridge! Te Awa walkway and cycleway is well used even on weekdays!



New Groups

It's been a while since we started a new group, but we're really close with several, including

- Board games
- Men's book discussion
- Gardening
- Scottish Country Dancing
- Scrabble
- Wine appreciation

So, if you're interested, please give me a call and I can put you on the list.

Many thanks.

Graham Harrison 855 6217 Gfharrison26@gmail.com