



HAMILTON NEW ZEALAND

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Newsletter April 2025

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

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be a week later on the fourth Wednesday of the month, on **Wednesday 23 April** 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 Bellmont Avenue (opposite and near Chartwell Mall). Following the guest speaker's presentation, we have morning tea/coffee and a chance to chat.

Speaker

Terrorism and Nihilists and The Northwest Frontier: How Spy Thrillers Evolved in the 1880s and 1890s. Jillene Bydder

I've been reading spy thrillers and writing about and presenting papers on spy thrillers and spy thriller theory for over 30 years now. I was a research librarian at the university before I retired and I've also spent a lot of time at the British Library in London, reading the thrillers no longer available in New Zealand libraries.

All spy thrillers, even the bad ones, tell us about the social conditions and the politics at the times in which they were written. They're about history, and attitudes to women, and the problems facing security services, and ethical dilemmas, and attitudes to other countries. Sometimes they're about real spies, like Kim Philby, and they're often based on real events. Authors with specialized knowledge have always tried to warn their readers. The thriller author Michael Shea, a diplomat, expressed this by saying *'one way to write about diplomacy but to ensure that national and international feathers remain unruffled is to put something of the truth into novel form.'* In the last few years I've been teaching courses on spy thriller history for EarthDiverse in Hamilton. The classes have been huge fun, and my new book, *Out from the Cold: An Illustrated History of Spy Thrillers, 1880-2000*, is based on them. The talk will be taken from the book's first few chapters, because how it all started is important. If you grew up reading your parents' copies of Kipling and Buchan and Henty and Sapper, and maybe even Le Queux, as I did, or if you like hearing about quirky bits of history, I hope you'll enjoy the talk.

Meet and Greet Roster:

April Play Reading Group
May Plantaholics
June Shakespeare for Everyone

Morning tea Lesley and Joy

If anyone is interested in helping out with the morning teas once or twice a year, please contact Lesley at the next meeting or on 0225 121945

Website Upgrade

We are going to update our website - we would like to make it really interesting and current - a place that we as members will want to visit regularly to see what is happening - especially for news and events in all our interest groups. We have set up a small subcommittee to work with our web designer, but the site can only be as good as what we put on it!!

Once we have the new set up, our webmaster or groups administrator will be able to regularly upload your latest photos and news from your group. Each group will have its own page.

We are asking you all to think about what news, information and photos you would like to see on your page, and we will soon make contact through the convenors.

If you have any questions or other ideas for us, please get in touch with one of the subcommittee - Bob Wilcock, Judith Hickman or Chrissie Williams.



President's report

Tēna koutou – greetings to you all.

We were entertained last month by 'two old birds on bikes', viz. Barbara Hill and Judy Patterson, telling us about their adventure on Hadrian's Cycleway. We learned about the wall's history, the difficulties the cyclists had in interpreting signs along the way, and the many delights they encountered such as Grant's Bakery at Corbridge.

Brian Findsen, a new member and speaker at the July meeting last year, made a brief announcement at our March meeting, which he has expanded upon here: 'A travel and learn programme is being organized for a group of 15-20 seniors from China to visit and engage with New Zealand residents and visit tourist sites. Essentially, this programme in which I am a local contact, is designed as an education and cultural exchange. It is planned that U3A Hamilton hosts the Chinese group to coincide with the May 21 meeting. This plan has been discussed with Bob Wilcock and Catherine Gurnsey on behalf of U3A Hamilton. I anticipate that the visitors join the lecture at 10.00am and then volunteer members remain for discussion (probably in small groups) on topics related to U3A interest groups. Recruitment of the Chinese seniors is currently happening. I hope you can support this innovation.' Enquiries: Dr Brian Findsen, brianfindsen@gmail.com or 021 0819 5972.

It has been my pleasure to be your President and Meeting Coordinator for the last few years and it is now time for me to step down. It is not an onerous job and is a chance for someone to make a real contribution to U3A here in Hamilton. You get to meet and talk to many people who are experts in their fields. I have enjoyed working with our committee, who get things done in a friendly and efficient manner. Thank you all for your support and encouragement and best wishes to my successor. Please give serious consideration to being on our committee. We currently have seven members but could increase this to ten. We would especially like people with expertise or experience in IT and/or PowerPoint, and website development.

A special thankyou to my colleagues on the committee and to the volunteer helpers who make the monthly meetings run smoothly. In particular, thanks to: Neil Curgenvan for the health and safety announcements and helping in numerous other ways; Michael Anderson for setting out and returning the chairs at our meetings; our AV team of Carol Carr, Brett Robinson and Wayne Wright; Beverley Bell for editing the newsletter; and Lesley Lee and Judy Bougher for coordinating the morning teas. Beverley is stepping down after being the treasurer for three years, newsletter editor for two years and doing the online blog since the first covid lockdown, some five years ago. Lastly, special thanks to Mary Arvidson and Margot Buick who are 'retiring' from the committee as Secretary and Groups Coordinator, respectively. My apologies for any names I have omitted; it was unintentional.
Kind regards, Ka kite anō, Bob Wilcock, President

AV Team

A new member is still being sought by the AV team who run the speakers' presentations each month, to assist as backup.

Experience with PowerPoint slideshows is essential, and training can be provided about the AV setup in the Church hall. We have our own U3A laptop and equipment. Speakers provide us with their presentation sent as an attachment, or bring it on a data stick.

If interested please contact Carol at: carcarr04@yahoo.com for further information.

Membership

This month our membership is 229. During March we received 12 resignations and six new members joined. We are pleased to welcome Renate Bellve, Janine King, Ruth Ivey, Kay Johnstone, Stella and John Hoyle who come to live in Hamilton and have transferred from an English U3A.

Please invite your friends or neighbours to come to a meeting or two as visitors to see if U3A is an organisation that might appeal to them. We are keen to continue to grow our membership, and widen the potential for new interest groups with the knowledge and skills new members bring to U3A.

Online learning Blog

During April 2025, this post was made to our online learning blog <https://u3ahamilton.org.nz/online-learning/>:

- **Another SH1 Sculpture**

Suggestions for new postings are always welcome.

Interest Groups

Hiking Group

Our March walk, a small group of five took in a climb to the Hakarimata summit from the car park on the Waignaro Road and return. The walk was quite a challenge but the view from the summit and hearing the birds singing was ample reward.



The April and May walks will be arranged by Jackie Larsen and Barbara Brook as Viv and I will be overseas visiting Keukenhof tulip gardens in the Netherlands, then walking along Hadrian's Wall across the UK.

Des Johnston

Phone: 027 702 0247

Email: desnviv@xtra.co.nz

Mah Jong

The Mah Jong group have settled in to our new playing venue at the Waikato Bridge Club. We have the whole room to ourselves with tables and chairs already set up. No more moving tables and chairs .

We have some new members already enjoying playing. In fact our last playing day we had three tables of four which we haven't had for a long time. We are keen to welcome new members as many of our members are now confident at teaching and we have room to accommodate them. We play the Chinese version of Mah Jong which is quick to learn but offers plenty of challenges.

If you're not sure if this is for you come along and check us out. We meet every second and fourth Wednesday from 1pm to 3pm at 56 Brookfield St Hamilton East.

Carol O'Meagher

Environment Group

On a pleasant Wednesday morning, a group of enthusiasts from the U3A Environment Group met at the start of the Hakarimata Rail Trail and Walkway. This was part of the now disused railway line that linked Ngaruawahia to Glen Massey. It was closed in the 1950s when the Glen Massey coal mine ceased to exist. It made an easy, thirty-minute walk through a wetland restoration area until reaching a picnic area complete with toilet facilities. From here it took a further five minutes up a few steps and along a narrow track to the picturesque Cascade Waterfall.



After returning the same way to our cars, most of us headed to Breaking Bread, a café in Ngaruawahia for coffee, cake and 'of course' time for a good chat with friends, old and new.

Bev Wood

Walking Group

15 April (led by Kathleen Early)

Our next walk on the 15th April will be around the Taitua Arboretum. Autumn is a great time to enjoy this part of Hamilton.

Meet at the main entrance at 10.30am. There is plenty of parking.

To get there, head towards Raglan on State Highway 23. After about 3Km, turn left into Howden Road, then left into Taitua Road. There are signposts to the Arboretum.

6 May

The walk will explore the Western Rail Trail. Meet by the intersection of Bryce Street and Seddon Street. Parking is available at the south end of Seddon Street.

All walks start at 10.30 am.

Noeline Alcorn, Convenor.

Uke3A Ukulele and Singalong Group

We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at Hukanui Reformed Church 159 Rototuna Road from 1.00 pm – 2.45 pm.

Koha - \$2 at each session for the use of the hall.

We invite anyone who can play a few ukulele chords to join us. We also provide tuition for those who wish to begin learning this friendly little instrument. We welcome anyone who would like to come along for an afternoon to see if our group would be of interest, or just to come along and sing with us. Our songs are varied, dating from the war years onwards and you will find many of them are very well known.

Judith Hickman 027 664 6712Janet Pope 824 8079

