



## May 2024 Newsletter

### Our April speaker

Douglas (Scotty) Wingfield painted a thorough picture of the operations of No. 41 Squadron RNZAF during the Vietnam War. Scotty and many of his comrades were refused service medals from this conflict because crucial files had been lost. Scotty's tenacity in tackling the authorities responsible for issuing war service medals was reminiscent of the saga of "Mr Bates vs the Post Office". Through meticulous research over many years, Scotty was able to provide irrefutable evidence that enabled Vietnam service medals to eventually to be awarded to himself and around 100 Vietnam War comrades. Scotty's talk focused mostly on the role that his squadron played in the war effort and the challenging conditions that the airmen encountered on the ground and in the air. His story is a valuable record of a war that has been largely ignored by the country.

### Upcoming speakers

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May** (note that the date of this meeting is the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday)

**Major Graham Hickman DSD, FTCL, LTCL(T) Dip Man, Dip Applied Man, AIRMTNZ** is Director of Music of the New Zealand Army Band. He was a Territorial Force member of the Royal New Zealand Air Force Base Ohakea Band as a 14 year old! We are very fortunate that talented and busy people such as Graham give their time to educate us.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June** (note that the date of this meeting is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)

**Professor Bronwyn Hayward** - *"Why changing the way we "do" politics can help our climate?"*

Professor Hayward is a professor of political science at UC and a lead author for the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change the United Nations climate science body where she has worked on leading the international chapter on cities, and a special report on trying to retain climate warming to just 1.5 degrees. She leads the Sustainability and Civic imagination research group at UC where she studies sustainability issues particularly where they impact child and future generations. She also lectured at Lincoln University for a decade before developing the new Social and Environmental sustainability degree at UC. Professor Hayward was awarded an MNZM in 2021 for services to climate sustainability and youth, and recognised by Westpac and Stuff in 2022 as the influential woman of the year for her work on climate. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

## Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July

**Peter Howorth** – “WW2, prison escape, books, monks, maps and NO women’ - 1939 to 2024”

A highly interesting talk is assured. Peter writes – “A relative of my wife Gina, Sandy Thomas, was the start of the whole thing. During World War 2 he was wounded in the Battle for Crete, captured, and sent to a German prison hospital in Thessaloniki. He escaped from there, and walked across the top of Greece and arrived at Mount Athos, a closed enclave containing 20 monasteries. Although some monasteries were 'German', Sandy was sheltered there until three of them stole a boat and reached Turkey, and then to Syria where one of the first people Sandy saw was his brother. Sandy was made a full Colonel when he was 23! I will talk about his career - he retired from the British army in the 1970's with the rank of Brigadier General as the final commander of the Far Eastern Forces. After the war he wrote a book called 'Dare to be Free' about his Greek adventures. This was a best-seller, and became a prescribed school text in the UK.

Sandy retired to Brisbane, but we saw quite a bit of him here, as Gina's family came from Hororata. Sandy was always on the lookout for more cash, and as the family here had published some books, he wanted to re-issue 'Dare to be Free', and I was asked to provide some maps. Although I had some CAD skills, as an engineer, I had never produced any maps as such. However, I agreed to assist. I became fascinated with Mount Athos, and found an English society that sent volunteers in annually to clean the pilgrim paths between monasteries. I volunteered and was accepted in 2010.

Off I went. (I have now been there 14 times). During the first trip, one of the team members (an analyst from GCHQ) asked me why I had come. I said that I had done some maps for a book. 'Ooh good', he said, we need a new map'; and he gave me a CD of GPS tracks. I knew nothing about the cartographic process, but said I'd do it, and that it would take about 6 weeks.

I came home, rang the NNZ Cartographic Society for advice - was told in that call about a Mountain Cartography Conference in Turangi in a few weeks' time. I was asked to present a paper - and away the whole thing went, including meeting HRH Prince Charles (now King Charles III) at Highgrove. All shall be revealed!”.

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### **Te Papa Hauora brings you its free annual ‘we’re talking hauora’ research talks.**

This year’s Future of Health research talks will once again showcase health researchers from Canterbury and their work. We are joining the Ōtautahi Learning Days this year, encompassing their theme of Future of Learning.

**Topics include:** Diabetes service driven by the community, Pacific people’s heart health, how technology is impacting our children – including from their perspective, breast cancer tissue recovery using light, AI and cancer treatment, teaching nutrition through the form of video games, and research’s influence on driving quality assurance of medical school admissions.

We have an excellent line-up of speakers and topics, and we hope you can join us.

**When:** Wednesday 15 May, 5.30pm – 7.30pm (doors open at 5pm for refreshments)

**Where:** Manawa Foyer, 276 Antigua St, Christchurch

Information on speakers and topics [here](#).

Registrations essential – link to register [here](#).

## Would you like to exercise while sitting down?

### **Zumba Gold Seated (a seated dance fitness exercise class)**

A new exercise class for young and old is being initiated by Justine Holmes. She says that it is ideal for those who love music but whose balance and mobility don't allow them to easily exercise while standing. With fantastic music and done in a chair, it is a safe and fun way to exercise!

The class will run every Friday at 9.45am at the Lincoln Event Centre.

The charge is \$6 per class, (which covers the hire of the facilities but Justine is not running the class for profit)

For more information call or email Justine 021 147 0206 / [zumbahappywithjustine@gmail.com](mailto:zumbahappywithjustine@gmail.com)

You can also see a video of this exercise in action on her Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/zumbahappywithjustine](https://www.facebook.com/zumbahappywithjustine)

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### **The committee for 2023/24 is:**

**President** – Errol Wood, **Vice-President** – John Prendergast, **Secretary** – Nancy Borrie,

**Treasurer** – Neal Borrie, **Interest Groups Coordinator** - Lyn Minchington

**Tea Team coordinator** – Warren Greenwood, **Membership Coordinator** – Dorothy Jordan

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