



## June 2024 Newsletter

### Our May speaker

Major Graham Hickman gave us an excellent presentation on the history of military music, in particular, the predecessors of our iconic New Zealand Army Band (NZAB) of which he is the current Director of Music. He also demonstrated instruments that many of us hadn't seen before. We also heard about the wide range of musical treats the various NZAB teams provide today, all over the world.

If you are interested in seeing the NZAB in action, there are dozens of videos on YouTube – just search for “New Zealand Army Band”. There is also a NZAB Facebook page.

*(For the member who would like to invite Graham to a Probus meeting, his email address is: [graham.hickman@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:graham.hickman@nzdf.mil.nz))*

### Upcoming speakers

**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 Professor of Political Science at University of Canterbury, and a lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This is 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. Professor Hayward 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 entertaining 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. 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 to Mount Athos. (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 NZ Cartographic Society for advice and was told 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!"

## Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August

### **Barry Maister** – “Behind the Rings – an insiders view of the Olympic Movement”

After 20 years of engagement with the Olympic Movement, and 10 years as an IOC member, Barry has the experience to address some of the myths and misconceptions about the Movement, and explain his concerns for the future. He is an Olympic Gold Medallist (Hockey, Montreal, 1976), and a former Rector of St Andrews College.

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## Interest Groups update

As we have quite a few new members it seems timely to include some information about some of the existing groups and their activities.

### ***The following groups have vacancies for new members.***

The **Gardening Group** meets at 1.00 p.m. on the same day as the U3A meeting at the Events Centre. Some attendees going down to the Robert Harris Café for lunch in between the two meetings. This is proving to be a good way to get to know each other better. Numbers at our meetings usually range between 10–15. There is general discussion on current gardening issues, with a wealth of knowledge in the group, however, it isn't necessary to be an experienced gardener to attend. Occasionally there is a visit to member's garden. Our meetings are informal and friendly. The Convenor, Irene Grether, prepares some notes on what to do in the garden for the coming month as a basis for discussion. Any queries please contact Irene on [grethers@xtra.co.nz](mailto:grethers@xtra.co.nz) or 027-3533-4240.

The **Movie Group** continues to meet on the second Tuesday of the month. The convenor, Karen Ayton chooses the movies, but is open to suggestions. A café visit is usually included. This month everyone was busy, so Karyn went on her own. Last month seven of us went to see the Francis Hodgkins doco. Our current membership is 10, but there is room for more. So if you would like some company to see a movie with, please sign up. Karen's email address is [karenaamair@gmail.com](mailto:karenaamair@gmail.com)

The **Travel Group** meet for lunch on the first Thursday of the month at 12.30, usually at an ethnic restaurant, which promotes discussion about different countries. However, many members are travelling at present and sometimes our number attending are quite low. We have a membership of 12 but can accommodate a few more.

The **TED Talks** group held its first meeting last Tuesday. Four people attended, and they viewed and reviewed three videos. There are vacancies for the next meeting on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June. If interested, contact the convenor Chris McCabe 325 6165.

***The following groups are full. However, many convenors would be happy to assist anyone in starting a second group.***

**U3A Ellesmere Science Group** convened by John Smith, has been running since 2018, and meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Each session lasts about two hours.

Our interests have morphed into Music-and-Science, with a Classical or Opera entrée before the main serving. Any science related lecture is viewed, followed by wherever the discussion takes us. Past topics include Autism to Algebra, Clouds to Craniology, and Perception and the Periodic Table. Occasionally we have a full film viewing such as “*The Imitation Game*”, “*Rainman*” and “*Oppenheimer*”. Our last topic was “How microscopy has helped in virus research”.

We are fortunate that every member who comes long adds to the menu with their own particular scientific interest. Unfortunately, since our venue has capacity for 16 and we have 18 members we don’t have any room left for new members.

If anyone wants to start a second Science group we would be pleased to help with a programme of likely topics and setup.

The ‘**Out to Lunch**’ group meets monthly and we try to go somewhere different that members may not have been to previously. Over the last two months the group enjoyed a visit to Bonobo, a vegan restaurant in Sumner and Gelato Helado in Rolleston. We can recommend both.

At this stage we are not open to new members. (However, the convenors have previously indicated they would be happy to assist a new group starting up).

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## Overdue subscriptions

There are 26 members who have yet to pay their 2024 subscription! If you are one of these, and wish to maintain your membership, please pay your subscription without further delay.

The U3A Ellesmere Westpac Account **03-0767-0001025-000**.

Please enter **Family Name** in the “Particulars” box and **Given Name** in the “Code” Box. Enter **U3A sub24** in the “Reference” box. If your names are more than the available characters, enter just those that fit. This will be enough for the Treasurer to identify your payment.

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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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