

## Next General Meetings

### March - Tauranga

**Date:** Fri 20 March  
**Venue:** Tauranga Yacht & Powerboat Club  
Sulphur Point, Tauranga  
**Guest Speaker:** Tenby Powell  
Mayor, Tauranga City Council



Tauranga's newly elected Mayor, Tenby Powell, will talk about his vision for the future of Tauranga.

### April - Tauranga

**Date:** Fri 17 April  
**Venue:** Tauranga Yacht & Powerboat Club  
Sulphur Point, Tauranga  
**Guest Speaker:** Pim deMonchy  
Coastal Catchments Manager,  
Bay of Plenty Regional Council



Pim will speak about the Kaituna Estuary Diversion and upgrade.

### April – Mount Maunganui

**Date:** Tues 7 April  
**Venue:** Arataki Community Centre  
Zambuk Way  
**Guest Speaker:** Greg Misson  
MD of Eqalis Research Ltd,  
Katikati



Eqalis is the holder of Medsafe Licenses to grow cannabis for scientific research purposes and medicinal use. Greg will give us the “good oil” on the burgeoning cannabis industry.

**Meetings 10.00 am – 12.00 noon. \$5.00 entry fee.**

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### Newsletter Team:

*Jan Holden - Editor and Layout Design*

*Paul Chapman - Quiz and Feature Articles*

*Kit Divehall - Interviews and Proofreading*

*Judy Armstrong - Beachside Notes*

*Cliff Freer & Graeme Wilson - Meeting Photographs*

## Quiz Corner

Test your general knowledge with these questions. Answers on page 19.

- 1 What does 'Mardi Gras' literally mean?
- 2 Which magnet can be turned on and off?
- 3 Who was a scuba-diving pioneer of underwater films?
- 4 What are the last words of Shakespeare's Prince Hamlet?
- 5 Where is the Rialto Bridge?
- 6 Which chemical element has the symbol Ag?
- 7 In which year did humans last walk on the moon? a) 1972; b) 1982; c) 1992
- 8 Who is known as the Taoiseach?
- 9 What did Robert Muldoon say would be raised by New Zealanders migrating to Australia?
- 10 Which is correct: 'The yolk of the eggs are white' or 'The yolk of the eggs is white'?





# President's Report to the AGM



**W**e have again provided a huge range of activities including academic, physical activities and musical. We have had speakers at the General Meetings covering a diverse range of subjects as well as our 'in house' mini-speakers.

## **Membership**

We began 2019 with 901 members and ended the year with 949 members. **Sheila Freer** has again provided great membership administration services in 2019. Thank you, Sheila.

## **Administration Systems**

We continue to use Xero and Infoodle as our core information systems. The Infoodle database continues to be developed to suit our needs. On-going training for Infoodle will be undertaken by key personnel during the year.

**Elizabeth Reeves** and **Sheila Freer** continue to administer the magnetic name badges.

## **Committee**

Two members of the Executive are retiring and moving on to new challenges, thank you to **Marianne Lammers** and **Bruce Furze** for your contributions and expertise and all the very best for whatever you choose to do in the future.

**Raewyn Gallagher** is retiring as a Group Coordinator but has volunteered to stay on as Committee Support. Thank you, Raewyn for continuing to give your time and skills to U3A.

**Peter Simmons** is retiring from the Audio-Visual team but will continue to maintain the Asset Register in Infoodle. Peter has been the most amazing support to U3A. He has spent hours of his time organising, not just the General meetings, but helping groups and individuals. He has sourced new equipment as needed. He has fetched and carried equipment from Wesley Church to whichever location it was needed, and he contacted all the external speakers to make sure that their technology worked with ours. Peter has recruited volunteers to join the AV team and trained and helped them to understand the technical aspects of the role. He has been tireless in his support for U3A and I can't thank him enough for that.

I would also like to thank all the members of the AV team who ensure that we have PowerPoint presentations, video and audio available at all our monthly meetings.

**Margaret Marsh** has produced an excellent Handbook for 2020. The digital version with updates will be made available periodically on the website.

**The Newsletter** has maintained its usual high standards under the leadership of **Jan Holden** together with **Paul Chapman**, **Kit Divehall**, **Jon Stone** and **Cliff Freer**.

**Kit Divehall** also has the role of Publicity Officer.

The Group Coordinators, **Christine Denne, Raewyn Gallagher; Anne Briggs,** and **Marianne Lammers,** have done a great job meeting with new members, providing assistance to the conveners and generally supporting the 100 plus groups.

My sincere thanks to the Executive: **Immediate Past President - John Powell, Vice President - Anne Withy, Treasurer - Elizabeth Reeves** and **Secretary - Lati Moodie** who have all helped me negotiate my first year as President.

I would also like to thank those in Committee Support roles and everyone who has volunteered their time and energy to U3A Tauranga. We couldn't function without you.

### **External relationships**

We have a close relationship with the 60+ Continuing Education programme and have continued to promote them on the website.

### **General Meetings**

It was requested by members that we relocate our Tauranga General Meetings to a venue with easier parking. Research for a suitable venue was undertaken by Peter Simmons, John Powell and me. The Tauranga Yacht Club meets most of the criteria that we need for our General Meetings which is why we are here today.

Leaving Wesley Church after 20 years was not an easy decision neither was relinquishing our support of Maungatapu Kindy. Unfortunately compromises had to be made.

In response to our members living in the Mount and Papamoa areas we instigated the meetings at Arataki and Papamoa. These were very successful in 2019, with the result that five General Meetings at Arataki and Papamoa have been organised by the Beachside Sub-Committee for this year.

The General Meetings in Tauranga, Arataki and Papamoa were all well attended, and we have had speakers covering a diverse range of subjects. I would like to thank **Bruce Furze** our Speaker Organiser for Tauranga meetings and **Warwick Thorburn** for the Beachside meetings, for finding us these entertaining and informative speakers.

Thank you also to all our mini speakers who volunteered to speak at the various General Meetings. You continue to surprise us with your wealth of knowledge, adventurous spirit and sense of humour.

Thank you to **Rob Heath** who organised our mini-speakers for Tauranga and **Cliff Freer,** our photographer, whose photographs record these and other events for us.

I would like to thank all of the people involved in the organisation and administration of the General Meetings for their hard work and commitment. With a special thanks to **Anne Briggs** who has led and continues to lead the Beachside Sub-Committee.

## **Meet and Greet**

I would like to thank the **Group Coordinators** and **Jenny Pryor** for organising the Meet and Greet groups for the General Meetings. It is always good to see the groups being involved in the General Meetings and welcoming people.

## **Groups**

We started the year with 96 groups and ended with 103 groups. Several Conveners have stepped down and I would like to thank them for the time and effort they have given to their groups and also thank the new Conveners for taking on these roles.

## **The Website**

We are grateful to **Jim Pryor**, our Webmaster and **John Hollenberg** who both maintain the web site and keep it current. The website is a valuable resource to inform the general public and U3A members about U3A Tauranga in general and group information.

## **Almoner**

I would like to thank **Angela Dold**, our Almoner, for acting on our behalf by sending cards and messages to those members who are unwell or to the families of members who have died.

## **25 years of U3A in Tauranga**

Last year a sub-committee was formed to begin planning a celebration of 25 years of U3A in Tauranga. The members of the sub-committee are:

**Anne Withy, Jan Holden, Elizabeth Reeves, Kit Divehall, Raewyn Gallagher**

I would like to thank them for the time, commitment and energy that they are giving to this important milestone for U3A Tauranga. We have sought external funding for the 25 years Anniversary event but to date have been unsuccessful.

## **Plans for the future**

Looking to the future of U3A Tauranga we need to:

- Continue to review our administration and procedures to meet the changing needs of our membership
- Continue to develop Infoodle and have an organised plan to train more of our key members
- We need to encourage our members to volunteer for various roles, to reduce the burden on the few
- We need to publicise our organisation to the larger community so that more people can benefit from U3A.

U3A Tauranga has come a long way in 25 years, and I hope we can continue being a dynamic and vigorous force in the community.

*Jean Garmonsway, President*



# General Meetings - Information

Mt Maunganui and Papamoa General Meetings	Tauranga General Meetings
Tues 7 April - Mt Maunganui 10 am – 12 noon Tues 2 June – Papamoa 11 am– 1 pm Tues 4 August - Mt Maunganui 10 am – 12 noon Tues 6 October – Papamoa 11 am – 1 pm	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month ( <b>except December and January</b> ). Tauranga Yacht & Power Boat Club, Sulphur Point, Tauranga. 10.00 am – 12.00 noon
<b>Venues:</b> <b>Papamoa</b> – Papamoa Sports & Recreation Centre, 80 Alice Way. <b>Mount</b> – Arataki Community Centre, Zambuk Way, Mt Maunganui	
<b>All General Meetings (all venues) Entry Fee \$5.00</b>	

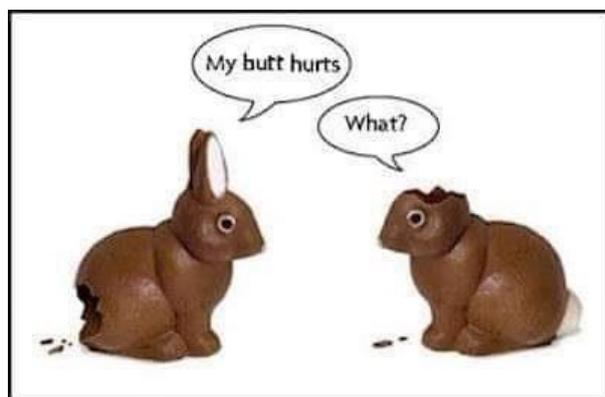
## Have you received your 2020 Handbook?

If not, your subscription may be owing, or you may have changed your postal address. If you have changed any of your contact details please advise the Membership

Administrator: Sheila Freer, phone 576 5243

[Membership@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz](mailto:Membership@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz)

## Happy Easter Everyone



1995

U3A Tauranga  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

2020

A celebration will be held on

Fri 22 May 2020

9.45 am to 3.00 pm

at

Club Mount Maunganui

45 Kawaka Street, Mt Maunganui

\$45.00 pp

Morning Tea, Entertainment, Lunch

Guest Speaker - Mike Allsop (Adventurer)

Tickets on sale at General Meetings and via  
Internet banking (see below)



## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ticket Sales by Internet Banking

### Instructions

Deposit \$45 per ticket into the U3A anniversary bank account. Please ensure you put **both your first and last name** as payer and **quote your membership number** as the Reference and the number of tickets in the Code box.

**NOTE: The suffix of the bank account number below is different to the account for subscription payments!** (Your membership number can be found on your subscription invoice or on the back of your handbook).

U3A Tauranga (BNZ) 02-0466-0014834-83



# February General Meetings

The first General Meeting of 2020 was held at the Papamoa Recreation Centre on 4 February.



**Raewyn Gallagher** was one of two who gave mini presentations. Raewyn gave an interesting and amusing story called *“My Previous Life in Hospitality”*. Her working career began in a restaurant as a kitchen hand. In those days the industry was quite casual - now there are certain standards to be adhered to. After a stint in Auckland she became a trainer for staff at the Sheraton Hotel, emphasising giving good service. She visited Japan for a month’s training and met the Japanese Prime Minister - he was much smaller than her! In 1985 Raewyn visited Britain for another service training where she learned about budgeting and also

worked with 21 staff of different nationalities, ensuring that all were able to keep their national customs. She helped run the Wardorf Hotel’s major events where royalty visited. Then followed a spell in Tenerife visiting new hotels and where she could be in the sea in the mornings and later up the mountains! Here she was asked to leave at 6.00 am one morning as a local wanted her job! She then went to Sydney where she was offered a job in China but this fell through due to the Tiananmen Square troubles, so she flew to one on Hamilton Island, and with four others, had to make it a working operation- she acted as a trouble shooter. There was no air conditioning and staff hydrated themselves by drinking alcohol! She returned to New Zealand when her father became unwell and spent 331 days visiting hotels in Queenstown, Christchurch and Rotorua. It was hard work but rewarding. She then set up her own Hotel company but as not many were being built at that time, she set up Homes for Sale helping clients with Trade Me advertisements, but after an accident she decided to retire.

**Pat Chainey** gave a very revealing and informative talk on *“The Pacific Garbage Patch”*. There are 5 major gyres - North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Indian, North Pacific and South Pacific which rotate with the ocean currents. A gyre is a large spiral mass of ocean which draws water towards its centre where garbage, plastics and other debris, are collected and cannot be easily seen from the air. The debris breaks down, does not disintegrate and as the pieces of plastic become smaller, attracts birds and all sea life. An example of this is 28 kilos of plastic were found in a dead sperm whale. In 2012 a 22-year-old Dutchman, Boyan Slat, became very concerned and suggested a “U” shaped boom be made to capture the debris and after three attempts - twice the boom broke, but in 2018 the first Ocean Clean Up began and is continuing today.





Our main speaker was **Marty Hoffart** who has lived in Tauranga for 27 years and is very involved in a Container Deposit system. He is a Director of five major companies associated with recycling, one of which is the Resource Recovery Industry and ranks rubbish in our oceans as our number one problem - higher than housing. He is also Director of Waste Watchers which looks after all Tauranga's sites for music or major events and has helped to develop a Waste Management Programme at

Toi Ohomai Institute where he tutors. Paper for Trees was started 20 years ago when schools used incinerators, now they are encouraged to recycle paper. He is also involved in Keep Tauranga Beautiful which helps groups plant trees and beach clean ups and is also involved in the NZ Products Stewardship Council which takes responsibility for the end life of tyres, light bulbs etc.

The emphasis of his talk was on the beverage container return scheme. He believes if there was a financial incentive for the return of glass containers (which we had years ago) this would transfer the cost of a recycling system from local authorities to producers and consumers, thus increase employment, reduce litter and lower CO2 emissions. Germany is the top country in the world as it has a good recycling programme - it offers high refunds for the return of glass containers. Canada is another good country that offers 10c for the return of a litre or less bottle and 25c for over a litre.

Over 2 million beverage containers are sold annually and at least 45,000 tonnes are discarded - this fills 700 Boeing 747s - a frightening thought. China used to take 50% of our recycling but now it is not interested. Tauranga has the highest collection of waste in NZ as it is run privately. Marty would like to see the Government take recycling over with 3 major sites in NZ for collection, one in the South Island, Wellington and Auckland. Australia has brought in this system and now our Government is interested. Below are links regarding the beverage container return scheme:

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/work-underway-beverage-container-return-scheme>

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/116070622/government-announces-beverage-container-return-scheme>

The following is a link to the article Marty Hoffart wrote on waste-to-energy incineration: <https://localgovernmentmag.co.nz/waste-to-energy-incineration/>

**T**he 25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of U3A Tauranga was held on 21 February at the new meeting venue, Tauranga Yacht and Power Boat Club at Sulphur Point. President Jean Garmonsway presided over the meeting (see p3 for the President's Annual Report).

After the formalities of the AGM, members enjoyed the wonderful views of Tauranga Harbour as they socialised over morning tea. Some members even saw dolphins leaping out of the water. How cool is that!



The guest speaker was **Cameron Hill**, Community Impact Manager, Good Neighbours. Cam, as he prefers to be called replaced the advertised speaker, John Paine, who has now left the organisation. His talk was entertaining, informative and inspiring. Good Neighbours espouse their main goals as, “*We want to build strong communities in which everyone can participate*” and “Giving a hand up rather than a hand up”.

Cam explained that he started the organisation when he observed the need in his community. The community projects that they run are: Community Gardens, School Gardens, Food Rescue and a Firewood Service. The aim of both garden projects is for the community to grow and share their own food and for children to learn how to cook that food.

One third of the world’s food supply is wasted. That is enough to feed 3 billion people. This fact inspired the Food Rescue Project. Organisations and individuals donate some fresh food to the project, especially fruit and vegetables and other food that has reached its “best before” date but is still edible if not saleable. Eight to 10 tonnes of food a week is distributed to over 60 recipient charities. This has a value of \$3.5 million a year).

A kitchen has now been added to the project, which has two main benefits: 1) adds value to the food; and 2) provides a mentoring and training centre to aid volunteers into employment. The Good Neighbour company is now looking to how they can provide food to those living in emergency housing.

Approximately 300 – 400 volunteers provide over 2,000 hours in the community doing all sorts of chores, such as picking fruit, mowing lawns, grading firewood, rubbish removal etc.

## AGM Meet and Greet Team

### Sea and Oceans Group





## Facts and Figures to Date

Financial members as at 14 Feb 2020	662
Life members	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>672</b>
Unpaid subscriptions	285
Number of Groups:	100



## Member's Profile



**Carol Simpson** is one of two new Group Coordinators elected for 2020. When you talk to Carol you can be forgiven for thinking she is from South Africa as she has a distinctive South African accent. However, Carol, an only child, was born in Blackpool in the UK in 1943. She emigrated to South Africa with her parents when she was only 5 years of age.

When she left school, she worked as a textile designer for a large fabric company and travelled overseas to UK and Europe. This was in the days of going by steamship and having 2 weeks of fun before the adventures started.

Carol and her husband, James have been married for 57 years and they have 3 children, 6 adult grandchildren and now a great grandson. Their eldest daughter, Debbie, is a physiotherapist and lives nearby at Lake Tarawera. Jamie is the second born who is an optometrist in Canberra and the youngest, Ann-Carol is a geologist in Cape Town. While they are a scattered family, they manage to get together every couple of years and keep in touch via WhatsApp etc.

In 2000 they moved to Australia from South Africa where they had a business in Newcastle selling fireplaces and almost 6 years ago, they came to live in Tauranga and love living here. James has just retired and taken over the lawns, while Carol keeps busy with U3A, the Tauranga Art Society, playing mahjong, gardening and walking.

*A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a fly swatter. "What are you doing?" she asked. "Hunting flies", he replied. "Oh, killed any?" She asked. "Yep, 3 males and 2 females" came the answer. "How can you tell them apart?" The intrigued wife asked. "Three were on the beer can and 2 were on the phone."*



# 2020 Committee Support

U3A Tauranga is run by a fantastic and dedicated band of volunteers. In the January issue of the newsletter photos of the 2020 Executive Committee were featured and published below are the photos of those who fulfil a “Committee Support” role. The organisation is indeed indebted to the time and effort that these people are prepared to give behind the scenes, along with the amazing Conveners of our approximately 100 groups



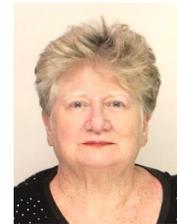
Angela Dold  
**Almoner**



Peter Simmons  
**Equipment  
Manager**



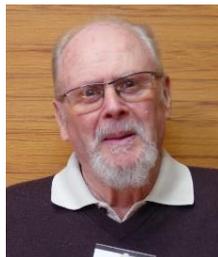
Margaret Marsh  
**Handbook  
Administrator**



Raewyn Gallagher  
Co-opted on to  
Exec



Rob Heath  
**Mini Speaker  
Organiser**



Cliff Freer  
**Photographer**



Jenny Pryor  
**Meet & Greet  
Organiser**



**Beachside Sub-Committee (L-R):** Max Lynds, Warwick Thorburn, Anne Briggs, John Powell, Jean Garmonsway, Maggie Bowcock, Alistair Blennerhassett, Pamela Lewis, Graeme Wilson.



# Group Coordinators' Report

A very warm welcome to our two new Group Coordinators, Margaret Marsh (Groups A-C) – left in photo and Carol Simpson (Groups D-H) – right in photo.



## Suggested New Groups:

- **Tivoli Film Group** needs about 2 more members to form a new group
- **Jazz Group** – a member has volunteered to convene a re-start group in their home in Papamoa. Expressions of interest will be sought.
- **Mini Hikes 3** – a notice will go out soon to all those indicating interest so that a start-up meeting can be organised.
- **Samsung Tablet and Samsung Smart Phone**
- **Table Tennis** – in Papamoa area.

Contact the relevant Group Coordinator if you are interested in any of these proposed groups (contact details are on the last page of this newsletter).

**New Group: International Affairs** started in February and the group is already full. Indications of interest for the wait list should go to the I-P Coordinator.

## Groups seeking New Members:

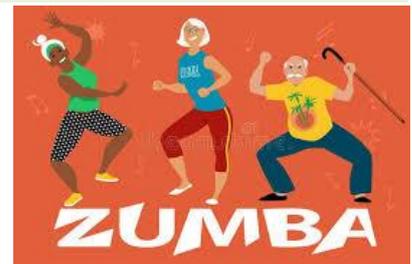
- **Ancient History 2**
- **Art Practical**
- **Ballet Appreciation – 1-2 vacancies**
- **Computer Support B**
- **Current Events A**
- **History B**
- **IPad 1**
- **My Music – Anything Goes**
- **Opera Appreciation: now at Wesley Church with improved sound system**
- **Photo Enhancing 1**
- **Psychology**
- **Rialto Film Group 2**
- **Writing & Words**

## Other Group Information:

- Jan Bradley has resigned as convener of **Solo Adventurers**. She has sent an email to her group asking if someone will put their hand up to convene this group.
- Helen Stone (Phone 570 2010) has agreed to act as convener of **Weekend Walkers** but the group needs to have a co-convener as Helen spends her winters in the UK. They have decided to roster the membership to arrange walks and she will keep the Group Coordinator informed as to how this works out. Two members have been referred to her from the waiting list and from a website enquiry.
- Jenny Mathews, the co-convener of **Rummikub 2** is looking after this group while Rivka Hobden is overseas for an indefinite period.
- **Jazz Group** – possible re-start. Discussions are under way with a member who is willing to convene the group then interested members will be sought.

## ZUMBA

To date insufficient enquiries have been received for setting up a Zumba group. However, for anyone interested, there are classes for senior citizens being held at the Elizabeth Street Community Centre on Fridays from 10.45-11.30 a.m. at \$6.00 per class. If you would like more information, please phone Carla on 0210 237 9297.



## TABLE TENNIS

- Do you live at the Mount or Papamoa?
- Do you want to improve your agility and balance?
- Do you want to enhance your hand/eye coordination skills and improve your anticipatory skills?
- Do you want to speed up your reaction time while also improving your concentration skills in turn enhancing your driving skills?



It is proposed that two-hour sessions be held during the day with a refreshment break. At the moment we are just taking expressions of interest before further investigations are made regarding venue and possible assistance with equipment.

If this sounds like you, then please contact Christine Denne (Phone 543 9483) before 10 March or Raewyn Gallagher (Phone 562 8375) from 10 March to 1 May.



# Group News

## Nature Study and Horticulture & Gardening Groups



In November last year the Nature Study and Horticulture and Gardening groups visited the Waterlily Gardens near Waihi. The Gardens are attractively laid out including some very large trees.

The lilies for sale in the square ponds were



just coming into flower. A new young couple have not long taken over the Gardens and still have some work to do to the big ponds. We were invited to have our lunch by the small pond by the events venue and we were fascinated by the little green frogs basking on the lily pads. Convener of both groups: Mary Sanson, Phone 571 2509.

## History of New Zealand – last 1000 years

### Educational Trip to Thames



*Members of the group relaxing in the shade at a Thames cafe*

### Thames School of Mines Tour

Our group was met at the door by our excellent School of Mines guide, John Isdale. He explained that the site was previously a urupa, or Maori burial ground, for the local Ngati Maru tribe. The land was later gifted in 1868 to the Wesleyan Church, but strong competition from the many churches in Thames forced its closure, so the site and building were sold to house the new School of Mines.

Because of the difficulties in extracting gold from quartz rock, Thames was considered an obvious place for a school, to teach the science.



*John Isdale in the Laboratory*

It is a large complex, containing a separate museum, a well-stocked teaching laboratory (which is in the original Sunday school building), the classroom, an assay and preparation room and even the original boardroom.

With cyanide posing an ever-present danger, due to its use in dissolving the gold from the crushed quartz dust, a liquid antidote was always on hand to treat the scholars, if they became ill.

### **The Treasury: The former Carnegie Library**

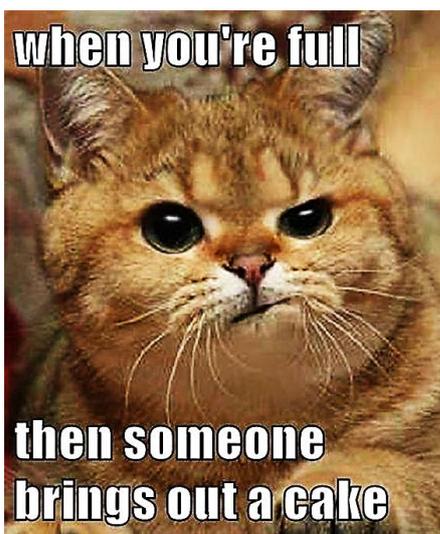
In May of 1903 the Thames Borough Council responded to American steel magnate Andrew Carnegie's offer, to build a free library. The town already had a free library, one of the earliest in New Zealand, that had opened in 1869. It had previously been a Mechanics' Institute, but after ten years it was in financial difficulties and the old wooden building was in need of repair. The present building was constructed of solid brick with the walls half a metre thick and has a fireplace in every room. It opened in 1905 and cost £2,000.



Today, known as The Treasury, it has been faithfully restored, and holds a Category II Historic Places Trust rating. The building is used to record family and oral histories, has an extensive Reading Room containing old newspapers, mining information, school and cemetery records, a genealogy Fiche and CDs, as well as records and exhibits from the Boer War and World

War I.

Rhonda Merrie, the Treasury's first full time Manager and Archivist, presented a comprehensive Power Point lecture for the Tauranga visitors.



# Tauranga 60+ Continuing Education Group

Venue: Otumoetai Baptist Church, 241 Otumoetai Road

## Programme of Speakers

All lectures commence at **10.00 am**. A charge of **\$4.00** is made to cover expenses. All U3A members welcome. Note speakers may change – check our website: [www.taurangacontinuingeducation.weebly.com](http://www.taurangacontinuingeducation.weebly.com). Convener: David Gordon, phone 544 4179.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Speaker:</b>	<b>Topic:</b>
March 17	<b>Professor Barry Barton</b> University of Waikato	Climate Change and the Law
April 21	<b>Anne Marie Bennan</b> Faculty of Law University of Waikato	TBA
May 19	<b>Rosetta Allan</b> Writer in Residence University of Waikato	Koreans who settled in Russia in the early 1900s
June 16	<b>Pim de Monchy</b> Coastal Manager, BOP Regional Council	Changes to water policy in the BOP
July 21	<b>Merrhis Majurey</b> Section Head, Sleep Dept BOP HD	What you don't know about sleep
August 18	<b>David Love</b> Regional Councillor and Classic Flyers Board Chairman	TBA
September 22	<b>Tracey Mezger</b> DOC	Protecting Kauri trees in the Kaimais
October 20	<b>Professor Mike Duke</b> University of Waikato	Robotics in agriculture
November 17	<b>Professor Al Gillespie</b> University of Waikato	Challenges and prospects for nuclear security

# It's a Funny Old World



## How Kiwi jokers hit back at John Cleese's slur

By Paul Chapman

**F**unnyman John Cleese had already said a few unkind words about New Zealand after a tour in 1977, when he wrote: “I remember asking for an omelette, and then stopping the waitress – everything goes wrong in New Zealand – and saying very clearly, ‘With three eggs’.

“Then I got a three-egg omelette with three fried eggs on top. You know how some things are more obscene than you’d anticipate. Well, a fried egg on an omelette when you cut it is absolutely unwatchable.”

But it was the day he slagged off Palmerston North that the former *Monty Python* star really bought into a fight. After touring the country in 2005 with his show *My Life, Time and Current Medical Problems*, Cleese declared Palmy to be “the suicide capital of New Zealand”.

“We stayed in a little motel,” he said. “The weather was grotty, the theatre was a nasty shape and the audience was very strange to play to,” adding that he had a “thoroughly bloody miserable time” there.

Palmy might not have a reputation as the most glamorous of cities, but Cleese was surely going a bit far when he went on to conclude: “If you wish to kill yourself but lack the courage to, I think a visit to Palmerston North will do the trick.”

Heather Tanguay, the city's then-mayor, hit back, saying: "Obviously he still has trouble with his medical problems and may need some more medication."

But it was comedian John Clarke (aka Fred Dagg), himself a son of Palmerston North, who came up with the most fitting riposte. Clarke suggested renaming the local Awapuni Landfill – the municipal rubbish dump – as the John Cleese Memorial Tip, with the catchy tagline: "All manner of crap happily recycled."

Eighteen months later, the city council in consultation with Clarke went one step further, officially renaming the rubbish dump 'Mount Cleese'.

Cleese had sworn never to return to his nemesis city, and he was as good as his word when he and fellow Python Eric Idle brought their show *John Cleese & Eric Idle: Together Again At Last ... For the Very First Time* to Auckland and Wellington in 2016.

Idle, however, found a trip to Palmy irresistible and just had to climb the 'mountain' named in honour of his septuagenarian friend. He tweeted a picture of himself standing beside the Mount Cleese sign, having scaled its lofty height of 45.2 metres above sea level, and proudly proclaimed: "I summited without oxygen."

**Quiz answers:**

1. *Fat Tuesday*; 2. *An electromagnet*; 3. *Jacques Cousteau*; 4. *The rest is silence*; 5. *Venice*; 6. *Silver*; 7. *a) 1972*; 8. *The Prime Minister of Ireland*; 9. *The average IQ of both countries*; 10. *Neither, the yolk is yellow.*



## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ticket Sales

**Limited Numbers**

**Purchase yours on-line or at the next  
General Meeting.**

# 2020 Executive Committee

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## Next Newsletter – May 2020

Deadline for contributions is Friday 24 April 2020

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