



JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2023

Happy New Year!



Holiday books:
[Recommended reading, Page 18](#)



[NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Page 7](#)

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QUIZ CORNER

1. Which author is credited with inventing the name Wendy?
2. What was the wife of a Tsar called?
3. What was the name of the tower block where Del Boy and Rodney lived in the TV series *Only Fools and Horses*?
4. In which month did Samuel Pepys begin his famous diary?
5. "When I find myself in times of trouble Mother Mary comes to me" is a line from which Beatles' song?
6. How many hearts does an octopus have: a) One; b) Two; or c) Three?
7. Who wrote the Noddy books?
8. Who was the first woman to lead a New Zealand political party?
9. Who was the first non-Englishman to play the part of James Bond?
10. Who is pictured here?



■ [Answers on Page 23](#)

SMILE AWHILE



Three Wise Women ...

Would have asked directions
Arrived on time
Helped deliver the baby
Brought practical gifts
Cleaned the stable
Made a casserole
And there would be peace on earth!

The top two secrets of being successful in business:

1. Never reveal all you know.
- 2.





From strength to strength

DEAR Members,
Another year has flown by, and I do hope you have had a very happy Christmas with people you love. I have spent a lovely time celebrating Christmas with my North Island family and am preparing to travel south to catch up with family in the South Island. In this Newsletter I want to comment on 2022 in general and to bring a couple of notices to your attention.

U3A Tauranga has remained strong and vibrant over the past year while working through changes required with the establishment of Beachside as an independent U3A, and as we welcomed many members from the Katikati area. I want to congratulate the people in Katikati who saw the need in their area for U3A groups to be set up, and very quickly established 10 groups and organised monthly General Meetings. At the first open meeting held, those present opted to be part of U3A Tauranga, and a subcommittee was formed to make decisions around the practical details of meetings and groups, and to ensure “local flavour” is maintained. There is now a strong membership base in the wider Katikati/Omokoroa area.

I want to thank all the people who have helped to keep our organisation running smoothly in 2022 – the Executive, Executive Support Teams, and all Conveners. You are the central core of U3A. Special appreciation must be expressed to Conveners who retired during the year or are retiring now. Several of these special people have been very generous in giving their time and talents for many years. Thank you all. You might be interested to know that there are approximately 135 people in designated roles, helping us operate as an efficient and effective organisation.

We held our annual EGM in November, [which is reported elsewhere in this Newsletter](#), but I want to welcome new members to their positions and hope that, like me, you find whatever energy you give to U3A is richly rewarded by the goodness of members.

By the time you read this you will have received notice that **subscriptions for 2023** are due and must be paid before 31 March for you to continue attending your groups. Clear instructions about how to pay are given in the letter.

We have made a change to our **receipting procedure for 2023**. In the past, receipts for subscriptions have been handwritten on the back cover of your Handbook. This year you will receive an email acknowledging your payment has been received and stating your receipt number. Conveners will not need to ask you for this information in 2023.

Finally, thank you for the privilege of being your President for the past two years and I wish you all a happy New Year.

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Kind regards,

Anne Withy

President U3A Tauranga

The digital Handbook is available now for reading online or to download on to your computer at www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz
It will be updated with new information three times a year.



Elections, lunch and entertainment

After the serious election business, everyone enjoyed a delicious morning tea. Entertainment was provided by Jean Akers, Glenne Findon and Val Hector of **Writers Inc**, reading Christmas stories; the **Video Creation** group, who showed some of their recent filming ventures; **Singing for Joy**, who led a merry singsong with a selection of old favourites; and an unusual kind of quiz. [Executive details, Page 7](#)

Pictures by Colin Basire and Glenne Findon



The **Global Issues** group ably fulfilled the Meet and Greet role.



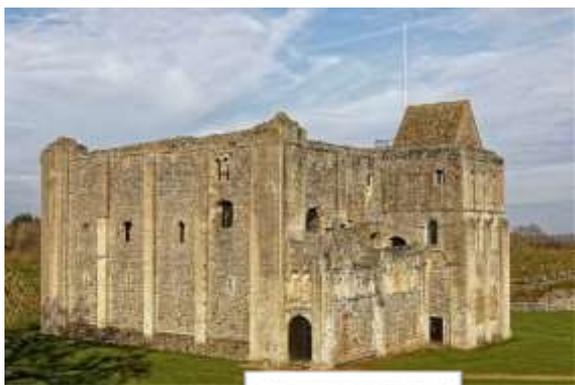
Quizzers use their heads

Newsletter Editor Paul Chapman compered an "Is it true?" quiz. Everyone was asked to put their hands on their head if they thought a statement was true. Some tough rounds ended up finding just one winner. Well done, quizzers!

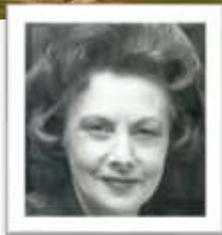
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The Castle Rising Castle Rising

AMONG the many interesting articles in this issue, we take a look at two of U3A Tauranga's most popular groups: **History A** and **History B**. Let me tell you a story. At a recent meeting of History A, the speaker who was giving a talk happened to mention a castle at a place called Castle Rising, in the English county of Norfolk. I



Castle Rising
Castle (above)
and Barbara
Castle (right)



have been to Castle Rising and I can report that there is indeed a castle there and it is known as – wait for it – Castle Rising Castle. But the speaker's reference serendipitously brought a wry smile to my face. I recalled how, many years ago, I related the name of the castle to John, an old friend of mine, as we supped a quiet pint in an oak-beamed English pub. "Was there ever a revolt there?" he queried. "I don't know," I said. "Why do you ask?" "Well," John

replied, "I was just thinking that, if there was, it would be known as the Castle Rising Castle Rising." Taking up his cue, I speculated that if Barbara Castle, a prominent British MP at the time, was descended from the rebels, she could be described as the Castle Rising Castle Rising Castle. After a

thoughtful moment, John came back with: "If one had seen this person getting up in the morning, one could say one had seen the Castle Rising Castle Rising Castle rising." To which, I responded: "And if she happened to have slept the night in a castle, one could say that building in question was the ...". But enough! That way madness lies. I got up from my seat and headed for the bar to get another round in.

As so often, of course, one memory leads to another. I recalled another occasion when John and I were sampling another brewer's finest wares in another English pub (I don't wish to give the wrong impression here – we *were* both single fellahs in our twenties). I happened to spot a chap at the bar dressed in T-shirt and shorts, who had a bandage wound around his left knee. "I wonder what that bloke's done," I mused. "Do you think he's an extra taking a break from shooting a film version of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*?" John's reply was confident. "No," he said. "He is an eccentric scientist who has just developed a secret formula for invisibility. He tried a drop on his knee, and much to his surprise it worked. Hence the bandage." Sadly, my mate John left us for that great hostelry in the sky far too many years ago, taken long before his time. I have no doubt that even now he is entertaining his heavenly companions with witty conversation over their mugs of ambrosia. Isn't it wonderful, though, how a passing mention in a U3A talk can prompt such happy memories?

Paul Chapman

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NOTICE OF U3A TAURANGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Notice is hereby formally given that the Annual General Meeting of U3A Tauranga Inc is to be held on **Friday, 17 February 2023** at the Tauranga Yacht and Power Boat Club venue, Sulphur Point, Tauranga, 10am.

The AGM will be followed by morning tea and a guest speaker.

All members cordially invited.

Christine Norton
Secretary

PLEASE REMEMBER: MASKS MUST BE WORN AT GENERAL MEETINGS

U3A TAURANGA EXECUTIVE 2023

At the Election General Meeting held on 18 November 2022, and in accordance with the rules of the U3A Tauranga Inc Constitution dated 18 February 2022, the following people were elected to serve on the Executive in 2023.

President: Raewyn Gallagher; **Vice President:** Gail Moore; **Secretary:** Christine Norton
Group Coordinators: Margaret Marsh, Dianne Beveridge; **Membership Administrator:** Chris Hector; **Data Manager:** Jim Pryor; **Newsletter Editor:** Paul Chapman; **Publicity Officer:** Max Lynds; **Speaker Organiser:** Mary Stewart. A **Treasurer** will need to be found and co-opted on to the Executive. Two additional **Coordinators** will be co-opted on to the Executive. They are: Jan Holden and Margaret Down.

Executive Support Positions

Almoner: Patricia Chainey; **Digital Handbook Manager:** Margaret Marsh; **Equipment Manager:** Peter Simmons; **IT Support Roles:** Jim Pryor, John Hollenberg; **AV Managers:** Phil Hansen, Peter Simmons, Bruce Smith, Bill Jones; **Meet and Greet Organiser:** Jenny Pryor; **Short Talk Organiser:** TBA; **Photographers:** Glenne Findon, Colin Basire; **Speaker Organiser Team:** Phil Sinclair, **Assistants:** Graeme Wilson, Tom Robson. **Webmaster:** Jim Pryor; **Membership Administration Assistant:** Pam Simons.

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There's no business like clothes business

LOOK out for a dazzling on-screen display of costumes and sets when **Alf Weston** (*pictured right*) gives a presentation to the **U3A Tauranga Annual General Meeting** on Friday, 17 February. Alf is a retired theatrical costumier, having a background in costume design for television and theatre. With a heady mixture of humorous anecdotes and behind-the-scenes showbiz insights, Alf's talk promises to hold wide appeal.



How my dream came true ...

Article in *The Guardian*, 7 April 2016: The headline read: “Shakespeare’s First Folio discovered at stately home on Scottish island”. It went on to say: “Rare book containing 36 plays published in 1623 had been in a library at Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute for more than 100 years”.

By **JEAN GARMONSWAY**

THE article caught my attention because I am a lover of the works of Shakespeare. I have been a member of the U3A Tauranga **Shakespeare** group since its inception. Also, I know the Isle of Bute very well, having spent many happy family holidays on the island. So I decided that the next time I was in the UK I would take a trip down memory lane to the Isle of Bute and see if I could visit Mount Stuart to see the *First Folio* for myself!

The *First Folio* was published seven years after the death of Shakespeare. John Heminges and Henry Condell, who were friends and colleagues of Shakespeare were the editors. It brought together almost all of Shakespeare’s plays and without it there would be no copies of more than half of them, including *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. I contacted the Librarian and the Archivist at Mount Stuart. I explained that I was coming to the UK on holiday from New Zealand, my association with the island and my love of Shakespeare’s work.



Jean Garmonsway and Elizabeth with the *First Folio* and other rare books in the Red Library at Mount Stuart.

I also mentioned U3A Tauranga’s vibrant Shakespeare group and that it would be a “once in a lifetime” opportunity for me to come and see the *First Folio* if that was possible. I received confirmation from them that it was indeed possible to organise a private viewing and to let them know when I would be in the UK. I can’t tell you how excited I was at receiving this news. Emails flowed backwards and forwards – and a date was organised.

I duly arrived at Mount Stuart on the appointed day and met the Librarian, Elizabeth, who was waiting for me. She very kindly gave me a tour of the house, which is stunning.

(If you are interested in historic buildings and the family connections, I recommend that you Google this one). The Crichton Stuart family tradition of collecting books can be traced back to the 2nd Earl of Bute, who brought books for his new library at the first Mount Stuart House from the Mansion House, Rothesay in 1719.

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... on the other side of the globe

Over 27,000 volumes line the shelves of the historic libraries at Mount Stuart, from precious early printed books and 18th-Century Gaelic pamphlets to hand-coloured atlases and unique embroidered bookbindings.

I was taken to the Red Library. Elizabeth unlocked the door, we went through to the Library and she relocked the door. This is understandable when you think of the worth of the priceless books in this library. There were several books laid out on cushions and Elizabeth really surprised me by saying that she had other books to show me as well as the *First Folio*. The first book she showed me was *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer. This particular copy was printed by John Kyngston in 1561. The first book was printed in 1477 by William Caxton at his workshop in Westminster Abbey and only 12 copies are known to exist. I really wasn't expecting this!

The next books for me to see were the plays of Ben Jonson (1572-1637), a contemporary of Shakespeare. They knew each other personally and were friends as well as rivals. Jonson collected his plays and other writings into a book he titled *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson*. It was printed in London in 1616.

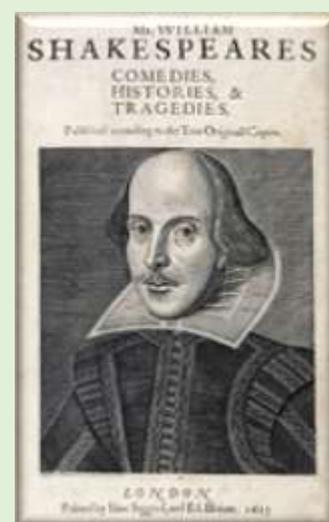
Then we came to the main event! Shakespeare's *First Folio*, which actually consists of three books. The *First Folio* was intended to preserve the plays and correct "bad quartos" – often pirated editions thought to be based on flawed constructions from memories. Heminges and Condell curated the texts by cross-referencing prompt books, author's fair copy and working drafts to ensure it was as accurate as possible. They categorised the plays into "comedies, tragedies and histories," which continues to shape modern readings of the plays today. On first sight, the book covers look recent. In fact, they were re-covered in goatskin in 1932 but the original fly pages are still there.

I was allowed to turn the pages and photograph the books. I have to confess that I was awestruck to be actually touching and reading an original *First Folio* of the works of Shakespeare. It's a moment I'll never forget! Elizabeth still had further surprises for me. Mount Stuart also has the second, third and fourth Folios of Shakespeare's work, which she had put out on display for me.

The *First Folio* sold enough copies for a *Second Folio* to be published in 1632. In 1663 came the *Third Folio* and in 1685 the *Fourth Folio*. I had no idea that I was going to see so much of Shakespeare's work. I feel very privileged that I had the opportunity to do this and I can't thank Librarian Elizabeth enough for the time she spent with me, her enthusiasm and the knowledge that she shared. It definitely was a once in a lifetime moment for me.

Jean Garmonsway is Convener of the Shakespeare group

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The *First Folio* of Shakespeare's works was published in 1623, six years after he died. Of around 750 copies that were printed, some 235 are known to survive.

History A and B are two of our most popular groups. On this page and the next, their Conveners to tell us what they have covered and what's on the menu for 2023



Shining light into dark corners

THE mid and late Medieval history of Britain has been keeping **History A** members captivated. We started with an erudite presentation on the Anglo-Saxon saga *Beowulf* and finished with Edward III (1312-77). In between we have heard that one woman, Emma of Normandy, was queen to no fewer than three kings of England; that all three sons of William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, became kings of England; and that these four “Norman” kings were succeeded by the Plantagenet family. Our studies have taken us through the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries.

Our talks have not just been about England, for we have had presentations on the Welsh princes and their battles with the English, Norman expeditions to Ireland, and the ever present threat of the Scots, north of the English border. Interesting questions arose, and some surprising information about well-known historical characters emerged.

Was Richard “The Lionheart” a homosexual, for instance? Was “Bad” King John really as bad as he was painted or did he just upset the wrong people? Was Thomas à Becket really saintly after all? People dug deep, did their research and shone revealing light into some dark corners.

We learned about castles, the Crusades, monasteries and monastic orders, the expulsion of the Jews, climactic changes in the 14th Century, the Black Death, the Peasants’ Revolt, farming methods, how society was ordered, how banking was conducted, how London became the capital of England and much, much more.

Now we are looking forward to venturing into the 15th Century, the Stuart kings of Scotland, ongoing struggles across the Irish Sea, the Plantagenet family feuding, which led to the Wars of the Roses, the Hundred Years’ War with France finally ending, and the way feudal society slowly disappeared. History is not all about big events, kings, lords and ladies, but also about the common people, the expansion of towns and the rise of the merchant class, the yeomen farmers, and the everyday life of men, women and children who lived 600 years ago. We meet on the first and third Wednesday morning, 9.45am, at Bethlehem Shores theatre, and there are vacancies for new members. **John Hill**



When war engulfed the world

2022 WAS a year of challenges for **History B**. Covid, of course, ruled the roost, with mask wearing a given at every meeting. It was also the first year of a new venue when we moved operations to Bethlehem Shores theatre. This has proved to be a very comfortable space with big-screen projection and audio equipment to enhance the human voice. A few teething problems to start with but these were soon resolved, and we quickly settled into a routine. It also meant no particular restriction on numbers. The theatre seats 50 people so, with a roll of 31 (and an average attendance of 20), that leaves plenty of space for visitors.

Each meeting comprises two speakers, interspersed with a 15 to 20-minute coffee break. Question and answer sessions afterwards can last up to 10 minutes each time. This year we have continued with a study of 19th-Century Europe and covered such diverse topics as European imperialism, scientific and industrial discoveries, prominent personalities such as Hindenburg, Maria Montessori and Wagner, and antisemitism in 19th-Century Austria.

For the past few years, we have been fortunate in welcoming Chalium Poppy (*pictured right*) as a guest speaker and last year was no exception. Chalium's relaxed manner, depth of knowledge and obvious enthusiasm helped us appreciate the contribution of the key Romantic composers of the 19th Century. He illustrated his talk by playing a selection of music by Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Chopin. The event was not as well attended as we would have liked but those who were there were certainly well informed and entertained.



This year we will flip over to the 20th Century and begin by looking at contributing factors to the outbreak of World War I, followed by an in-depth study of "the war to end all wars" itself. There are already 13 members lined up with talks, just waiting for a date to share their personal research, enthusiasm and expertise! Later in the year we will continue with World War II, which begins to encroach on our own personal lives and reminiscences. Doubtless this topic will roll over into 2024. Anyone wishing to join us will be most welcome. We meet on the second and fourth Wednesday morning, 9.45am, at Bethlehem Shores theatre. Please feel free to contact me for more details on [027 5657 725](tel:0275657725). We look forward to meeting you there!

Carol Chetwynd

The year we embraced Wagner

THE **Opera Appreciation** group was first convened in 2009. In the 13 years of its existence, we have only done three of Wagner's 13 completed operas. Some people are under the impression that all we do is endlessly recycle the old favourites: *Carmen*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Aida*, *La Traviata*. This is not correct. We have done operas by Bellini, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Donizetti, Giordano, Monteverdi and Glinka. The Wagner operas are very long for our sessions and considered a bit "heavy" by many members – or Grand Opera. Here I can't resist quoting a line from the *Muppets*, the two old fellows in the royal box.



Richard Wagner

Old geezer 1: Ah, there's nothing like Grand Opera!

Old geezer 2: Yes, and this is nothing like it!

Our first Wagner opera was *The Flying Dutchman*, one of his early operas, composed in 1843. This was received well enough to encourage us to do more. The second, done last year, was *Tannhauser*, another early opera, composed in 1845. It



The Copenhagen Opera House

is famous for the *Pilgrim's Chorus* and the *Venusberg* music. Our chosen DVD was a performance by the Royal Danish National Opera in the magnificent new Copenhagen Opera House (*pictured*). The soloists were Danish, not so well-known on the international circuit. The DVD showed many shots of the beautiful setting of the opera house, an island in the Copenhagen harbour.

My wife and I visited it by boat. It was built in 2005 at the huge cost of US\$370 million, a gift to the nation by Maersk, the containers of which are seen in Tauranga and Mount Maunganui. Again, this was well-received by our very open-minded group members, stirring music and a colourful production.

Our third Wagner opera, also done last year, was *Lohengrin*, composed in 1849. Everyone will know one of the melodies, *Hier kommt die Braut*, when the tenor hero Lohengrin marries Elsa – the tune of *Here Comes the Bride*. Our chosen DVD was a 2009 performance in Munich by the Bavarian State Opera, conducted by Kent Nagano and featuring local boy Jonas Kaufmann in the lead role of Lohengrin. He is 53 now and considered the successor of Pavarotti today.

He is 40 in this production, a very handsome believable young romantic hero whose performance was greatly enjoyed by our members.

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... And the swan that got away

Continued from page 12

Kent Nagano is an American-Japanese conductor who has made his career in Germany, which emphasises the very international character of opera. My copy of *Great Operatic Disasters* contains an amusing account of a fiasco in a performance of *Lohengrin* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. At one point in the story, Lohengrin climbs on a giant swan for a journey down the Rhine. Just as the tenor was about to clamber on to the swan, an over-enthusiastic stagehand pulled it away. The tenor reportedly called out to the wings: “What time is the next swan?” **Rob Heath**



Lohengrin and the swan. This painting is in Neuschwanstein Castle, Bavaria.

QUESTION: What do Katie and Rob in California have in common with Paul and Marian in Georgia, Paul in Alabama, Marianne and Steve in New Hampshire, and another Steve, who lives in Auckland and votes in Massachusetts?

Answer: They all took part in our **International Affairs** group’s “Trans-Pacific Conversation” on the day following the US Midterm Elections in November. “We’ve had a great time over the last few years connecting via Zoom with a long list of experts, based both in New Zealand and overseas,” says Convener Ian Morrison. “But we thought we’d try something different for the Midterms, inviting friends and family of some of our members to join us from the United States to share their thoughts on the elections’ outcome. It was a bit of a challenge organising a discussion across so many different time zones. But it was well worth the effort as our American guests all proved to be charming, well-informed and intelligent, which is exactly what you’d expect of our members’ friends and relations. It was a great pleasure spending a couple of hours in their company and getting a grassroots view of such a significant event,” Ian adds. He is hoping to reconvene the group’s Trans-Pacific Conversation on a recurrent basis between now and the 2024 Presidential Election. International Affairs will be back in February with its regular blend of informed, online discussions of global issues. Contact Ian on [\(07\) 575 6650](tel:075756650).





We can see you hiding in there!

MINI Hikes 2 are a group of hikers, trampers and keen walkers who don't want to take part in long, arduous tramps, but are happy to spend up to an hour or so travelling to various areas in the Bay and surrounds for a one to two hours' interesting hike, avoiding roads and footpaths. There are up to 20 of us on the walks, finishing up at a café somewhere for lunch and/or coffee. Our hike on 27 October was to the Kaituna Wetlands, 14km from Te Puke. This lowland swamp has cabbage trees, flaxes, raupo, kahikatea and swamp maire. There are ducks, fernbirds, spotless crakes as well as numerous shags, pukeko, ducks and pied stilts. The photo above is of a hide from where you can see over a large lake with various birds on it. Strangely, the best view is in front of the hide as the weeds and shrub block out a lot of the view.

There are various tracks that can be taken but we walked around the perimeter, including a couple of kilometres beside the Kaituna river, 6km in total. It took us about one and a half hours, then we headed to the wonderful Daily Café in Te Puke for a chat, laughs and refreshments before heading home.

The three mini hikes groups all follow a similar pattern so, if this sounds like your thing, look in the Handbook and see if there is a group that may have a vacancy that suits you. **Steve Hayles**

Mini Hikes 1 will be meeting on the following dates in February:

1 February: Phil will be leading the hike from Waihi.

15 February: Lorraine will be leading the hike to the kauri trees and beyond up near Katikati, a great walk in summer.

*Note that we will be trying a new start time of 10am at the venue.

Steve Subritzky

Just a thought: Why is the man who invests all your money called a broker?



Blooming lovely

TWELVE members of **Garden Ramblers 1** paid a visit to the Mayward Homestead Gardens at Whakamaramara in November, where they enjoyed a guided tour from Judy Mahar, the owner. Convener Merlena Starkey says highlights were the beautiful rhododendrons and azaleas, the peaceful bushwalk through mature natives, the pond and old waterwheel, and the formal wedding garden. The trip ended with a call at Nourish for coffee and a chat. The group has some vacancies for new members.





Art for art's sake

Art Practical have had a busy year and here we present some of the work they have produced. Convener Barbara Inkster (07) 544 8939 says new members are welcome. The group meet on the second and fourth Fridays of the month.





Bon appétit: French Conversation 1 enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch at Somerset Cottage restaurant in Bethlehem on Thursday, 1 December.



All's Well That Ends Well: The Shakespeare group wrapped up their year with a barbecue at the Bethlehem home of one of the members. Nourished brains were then put to the test with some fiendishly hard questions from the *Trivial Pursuit Shakespeare* edition. (Convener Jean Garmonsway is missing from the line-up as she was on holiday.)

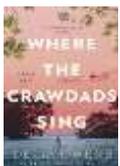


The History Guys: Members of History A and History B combined to share a Christmas lunch spread at the Bethlehem Shores retirement village on 14 December, followed by a quiz. Winners of the quiz were Richard Thompson, Ann Sligo and Chris Hector.

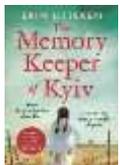


WE ASKED our book lovers' groups to come up with suggestions for books they thought U3A members would enjoy reading over the summer holidays. These are the replies we received. Thank you to everyone who took part.

***Café Book Lovers 1** spent the last meeting of 2022 enthusiastically discussing their recommendations. Convener Pat Goldstiver says: Our group has been going for 12 years now and it always brings about interesting and stimulating discussion. Personally, I have read books that I might never have seen or picked up in a bookshop. As there was no consensus on just one "Book of the Year", these are the group's top three, along with their comments.



Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens. A book we might have submitted in 2021 but, with the releasing of the film in 2022, we have voted it our Number 1. It provoked a lot of discussion about the lives of people living in the South of the US and one little girl who has to fend for herself in a hostile environment.



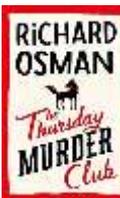
The Memory Keeper of Kyiv by Erin Litteken. This is my personal favourite, writes Pat – and "the most powerful and important historical novel of 2022". Written from remembered stories from grandparents and acquaintances, the author writes about the last time Russia invaded Ukraine and took all their food for themselves bringing about the Holodomor – a man-made famine of the 1930s. And now it's happening all over again. Unbelievably, the author wrote this book before the current invasion started, but it gives a very painful insight to the conditions that Ukrainians are living in now. It is not all about sadness and famine – there's some good stuff too.



A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles. Beautifully written, this is the story of an aristocratic man of means and fame, falling out with the Russian regime of 1922. He is made to live under house arrest in the elegant Hotel Metropol – in an attic. But with the assistance of a glamorous actress, a cantankerous chef and a child, he comes to terms with his life and purpose. Initially hard to get into but very worth the read.

Book Lovers 2** came up with ***Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman.

Convener Diana O'Brien writes: The story is set in an upmarket retirement village and



revolves around a group of residents who solve a murder. Christine, who recommends it, says: Having heard the author on the TV show *Would I Lie to You?* I enjoyed his sense of humour so was delighted to be given the book for Christmas just after I had moved into a retirement village. To quote Marion Keyes on the back cover: "Smart, compassionate, warm, moving and so VERY funny. I smiled a million times."

Christine says: I did too. Ruth also enjoyed this book and points out it is the first in a series of three, best read in order. A relaxing, amusing read.



*Barbara Joyce, Convener of **Café Book Lovers 2**, says: Our group had some great debate on this but in the end decided to give you a list of everyone's favourite reads of 2022! In no particular order they are: ***Horse*** by Geraldine Brooks; ***When Things Are Alive They Hum*** by Heather Bent; ***Reputation*** by Sarah Vaughan; ***The Axeman's Carnival*** by Catherine Chidgey; and ***A Month of Sundays*** by Liz Byrski.

All are great reads. Happy holiday reading, everyone!

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CONVENERS' MEETING



THE end of year **Conveners' Meeting** was held on Friday, 28 October, at Wesley Church. The meeting was judged to be enjoyable and worthwhile by the 35 Conveners attending. Lively discussion groups reviewed successful outcomes and challenges experienced by their groups in 2022. Recommendations were invited from Conveners as to what additional support they would like from the Coordinators in 2023. The Coordinators enjoyed the opportunity for interaction and meeting many of our Conveners.

Pictures by Glenne Findon [Return to Page 2 index](#)



IN SPITE of the challenges of 2022, the groups have had their successes. Conveners have worked hard to keep groups together during Covid, winter illness and recently, travel undertaken by members once the borders were open. Several groups have continued successfully to use Zoom for meetings. Groups change over time and, although some groups have gone into recess, there has been the injection of new groups with great enthusiasm and energy from the Katikati/Omokoroa area. The Conveners' meeting held at the end of October provided a forum for great communication and interchange of ideas for working and learning together. Conveners who were able to attend contributed their ideas in a workshop setting in groups. A summary of all the ideas, observations, and recommendations for 2023 was compiled and circulated to all Conveners.

Additional group: In response to demand following the success of Te Reo, a second group will be formed for 2023

There have been no proposed new groups

Groups closed or in recess: Rummikub 1, as no available Convener – Rummikub 2 will become Rummikub; Dining Group 4, after 10-plus years; Current Events E; Mini Hikes 3 agreed to go into recess as no new convener could be found

Groups full: French 1; Jazz and Blues Appreciation; Oceanside Music Group and Te Reo 1

Groups with waiting lists: Jazz and Blues Appreciation; Oceanside Music Group; Philosophy and Philosophers

Groups with vacancies:

- **Groups A-C:** Acoustic Music; Apple Mac Support 2; Art History 2; Book Lovers 2; Café Book Lovers 1 and 2; Camera Club; Computer Support B
- **Groups D-H:** Dining Group 1; Dining Group 5; Garden Ramblers 2; History A
- **Groups I-P:** Lone Rangers 1; Memoir Writing; My Music; Photography
- **Groups R-Z:** Te Reo 2 for 2023, ring Coordinator; Scrabble 1; Travel

New Conveners from 2023: Garden Ramblers 2: Anne James (07) 544 1507; Hikers 1: Carla van den Hout, 027 2789 672; Photography: Pam Henderson, (07) 543 3133 or 021 238 6263; Travel: Christine Subritzky, 021 255 6415, replacing Nancye Lucas; French Conversation Group (Katikati) is currently self-organising due to ill health of current convener; World Affairs (Katikati): Francis Young is replacing Peter Jenkins

Name changes: The Technology group has become Android Phone and Tablet Support and will reconvene in March; iPad/iPhone groups 1 & 2 have merged and are now called iPad/iPhone. The venue will be at Bloom Café, Pacific Coast Village, Papamoa. Co-conveners: Julia Weirsmuller and Jo Ingram.

Groups seeking new Conveners: Rialto 1: Kathy Landsman has stepped down; Mini Hikes 1: A Co-convener is being sought to support Steve Subritzky and to convene during his absences. Steve is happy to receive emails to which he promises a reply during his absences; My Music: Judy Elms stepping down, hopes a new Convener will be found and the group can grow; Lone Rangers 1: Sheena Spittles is stepping down; Genealogy: Jennifer Smith is stepping down.

Every effort is made to keep information up to date on the website. The new Handbook (also in digital form this year) is available to help members.

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Steve's search for his ancestors

By PAM MAZOYER

THE designated speaker was unable to give her talk at the November **Katikati General Meeting**, but **Steve Subritzky** stepped in with a talk about his travels, *A Taste of Eastern Europe*. Steve's trek began in Latvia just after the country joined the European Union, and took in Subate, the village where he sought connections with his family history. The birth records of Steve's ancestors are located there and around 12 of his ancestors are buried under the church.

The hotel asked for a cash payment in advance, then tried to make him pay again by credit card when he left! Steve's pictures of a Jewish cemetery, drab and unkempt dwellings, the "worst toilet in the world" and ancient water wells spoke more than words about the lifestyle of ordinary people.

In neighbouring Poland, he found various heavily built hideouts, supposedly used by Hitler during World War II. There was a bombed cathedral whose treasures had been removed just prior to the Nazi invasion so that it could be later restored. He also saw Polish crown jewels that may at some stage have been pinched by a Subritzky (!), salt mines

with elaborate carvings made of salt – and a salt cathedral 30 metres underground – and a hypermarket where frozen fish was sold by the piece and the checkouts were too many to count. In Slovenia, camping by Lake Bled in 2005, he discovered minefields by the side of the road, not far from a small white sign at the end of the major motorway through the country.

Peter Nixon gave us a short talk on the geology of the Tauranga area. He explained that the volcanic and tectonic activity of the area is relatively recent in geological time and includes serious pyroclastic flows. The uplift of the Kaimais was followed by the retreat of the sea beyond the Mount during an ice age, when there was deep valley formation by rivers. Weathering produced sandbanks such as Matariki Island that would enclose Tauranga Harbour.



Steve's picture of the underground cathedral in a Polish salt mine.

THE speaker at the **Katikati General Meeting** on 8 February will be Tauranga lawyer and mother **Denise Arnold** (*pictured*), head of the Cambodia Charitable Trust. The trust was formed after Denise felt compelled to do something to combat the horrors of child sex trafficking in Cambodia. For further information go to [DENISE ARNOLD – Cambodia Charitable Trust \(cctnz.org.nz\)](https://www.cctnz.org.nz) [Return to Page 2 index](#)



To enquire about U3A in Katikati, contact Pam Mazoyer at pamkapiti@gmail.com



IT'S A FUNNY OLD WORLD!

Is anybody out there?

THE Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) has been monitoring radio and electromagnetic signals from space since the 1980s, hoping to detect regular patterns that would provide indisputable proof of life elsewhere in the Universe. For a time in 1995, scientists thought they had made a major breakthrough. Using the 64-metre radio telescope at the Parkes Observatory in Australia (*pictured*), they began picking up a distinctive signal at the 2.3 to 2.4 gigahertz wavelength around the same time every evening. Curiously, the signals always coincided with dinner time. Then truth dawned on the excited astronomers. The “signals” were actually interference coming from the microwave oven in the staff kitchen.

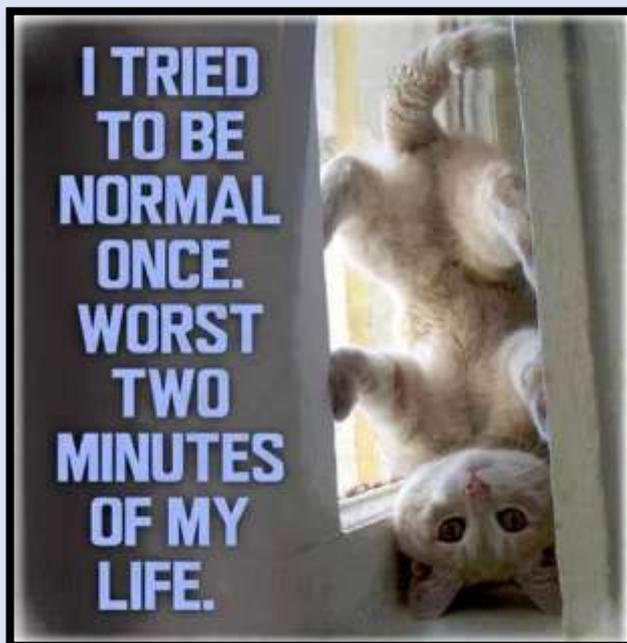


SMILE AWHILE

A Joke from Scotland:

Q. What's the difference between Bing Crosby and Walt Disney?

A. Bing sings and Walt d'snae!



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. J M Barrie (in *Peter Pan*);
2. A Tsarina;
3. Nelson Mandela House;
4. January;
5. *Let It Be*;
6. c) Three;
7. Enid Blyton;
8. Jenny Shipley;
9. Sean Connery;
10. Charles Darwin

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Just a thought: Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the tube?

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**The Executive wish all members and their families
a happy and healthy New Year** [Return to Page 2 index](#)

Just a thought: Why does mineral water that has “trickled through the mountains for centuries” go out of date next year?

THE NEXT ISSUE

March-April 2023

Deadline for contributions is 22 February 2023

We welcome your articles and pictures, please email to newsletter@u3atauranga.kiwi.nz
Our website is updated regularly – remember to check www.u3atauranga.kiwi.nz