

May 2026



### **The astonishing Month of Mae!**

**May Day:** A celebration of Spring (but not here!), and a public holiday celebrating Workers' Rights in many countries: New Zealand's equivalent is Labour Day, when we mark the advent of the 40-hour work week. May 1<sup>st</sup> was first market in the USA, where, in 1886, a General Strike for an eight-hour day met at Chicago's Haymarket. Violence erupted, culminating with a dynamite bomb exploding at a police line, killing seven officers and four civilians. Over subsequent years demonstrations were held around the world to commemorate the tragedy.

## **Vege Good Quizzical!**

- 1: What non-berry berry, a member of the Rose family, is popular on pavlovas?
- 2: To keep cool, what did legendary baseballer Babe Ruth often wear under his cap?
- 3: How heavy was the largest cabbage recorded?
- 4: For how long (to the nearest 1,000 years) has the humble pea been cultivated?
- 5: What vegetable was originally used to make to make Jack o' Lanterns? (Hint: not a pumpkin!)
- 6: What was the first vegetable yo a successfully commercially canned?
- 7: What was the first vegetable to be successfully grown and harvested in space?
- 8: What is the highest yield recorded for a single potato plant?
- 9: Carrots naturally occur in three colours. What are they?
- 10: Swedes, a hybrid of a cabbage and a turnip, were (oddly) first cultivated in Sweden. What other name are they known by?

## **Newsletter Team**

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# Your U3A Needs You!

As ours is an entirely voluntary society, we rely on willing members to step forward to take on executive roles. If you can help with anything please contact either our President, Bev Edlin, at [president@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:president@U3ATauranga.org.nz) or Kay Ebden, Secretary, at [secretary@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:secretary@U3ATauranga.org.nz)

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### **SCAM ALERT! SCAM ALERT!**

If you receive an Email from our President or ANY U3A Committee Member that asks you to purchase any item for U3A or to email them back immediately –

**IT'S A SCAM!  
DO NOT COMPLY!**

Al Mathews, your Newsletter Editor, is always looking for new content he can put into this publication. If your group has done anything interesting over the past month (and that means all groups...) please write the story in a hundred words or so, add a couple of pictures (if possible), and send it to [newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz)

Put U3A (Group Name) in the subject line, and I'll find the space to let your fellow U3A members know what they're missing out on.



**“Still Life: Balsam Apple with Vegetables” James Peale**

## **Vege Good Quiz Answers!**

- 1: The strawberry, which is a compound fruit, not a berry.
- 2: A cabbage leaf. It didn't catch on as a fashion accessory.
- 3: 62 kilograms. That's about 7,000 KFC coleslaw servings.
- 4: 10,000 years.
- 5: Turnip. (They had to start somewhere.)
- 6: Carrot. The orange variety was hybridised in the Netherlands.
- 7: Potato. Spuds in space!
- 8: 168 kilograms. That's 38,000,000 McDonald's small fries servings.
- 9: Purple, yellow, and white. Not orange. See (6) above.
- 10: Rutabaga. Because... Cabtur and Turcan sounded silly?



**Giuseppe Arcimboldo “The Seasons”**

# The Important Days of May

It may seem as though **New Year's Day** happened only last Tuesday week, but a full third of the year has already gone by. It seems we no longer have time to consider making history... but our venerable ancestors got to and made some anyway. Here's a taster:

**May 4th, 1494:** On his second expedition to the New World, **Christopher Columbus** became the first European to discover Jamaica.

**May 5th, 1821:** The Emperor **Napoleon Bonaparte**, living in genteel poverty and exile on the Island of St. Helena, breathed his last. His conquering ways were emulated 140-odd years later by a German dictator who started WW2.



**May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945:** **Adolf Hitler's** mad dreams die in the rubble of Berlin, and Germany surrenders.

**May 11, 1888:** **Israel Isadore Balin**, later re-named as **Irving Berlin**, was born in Russia. The music he wrote is foundational to the Great American Songbook.



**May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026:** **International Nurse's Day.** The day we acknowledge the life-saving work of all Nurses: ward nurses, dental, public, and geriatric nurses; volunteer, foreign aid nurses, all nurses. Today's the day to thank them for their work. Pictured is **Florence Nightingale**, rightfully credited with professionalising nursing. She saved hundreds of lives at the Crimean battlefields, and established

standards that have saved hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of lives since.

**May 15, 1567:** **Ann Boleyn** is executed, saving Henry VIII from having to divorce her.

**May, 1865:** **The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution is signed**, making slavery illegal. This is welcomed by manufacturers of white bedsheets, who made fortunes making uniforms for the bigots, thugs, and murderers of the nascent KKK.

Keep in touch with what's going on with your U3A

# May's Speakers

## Tauranga

10am - 12, May 15<sup>th</sup>, Tauranga Yacht Club

**Short Talk: Will be given by Tereasa Peterson and Ella Rose**, Registered Legal Executives, Estate Team, Holland Beckett Law Firm.

**May's main speaker will be Sue MacDougall**, 'How Love, Courage and Art Shaped my life in Greece.' 'In this heartfelt talk, I share the journey that led me to Greece, where love opened unexpected doors, courage helped me embrace change, and art became my language of expression. Through personal stories and creative discovery, I reveal how following these three guiding forces transformed not only my life, but also the way I create, connect, and inspire others through my art retreats.'

## Katikati

10am – 12, May 13<sup>th</sup>, Katikati Community Hub

**Short Talk: Diana Donker, Grow On Katikati.** Grow On Katikati is a community project focussed on connecting and empowering locals to grow their own food resilience, one backyard at a time.

### **Main Speaker: Liz O'Riordan, U3A Tauranga**

Liz O'Riordan will take us to plague-devastated England, 1665 / 65. The plague killed as much as 25% of London's population, with a much lower death rate in the countryside. Liz will help us understand how people coped.



**Do you have some advice or hard-earned practical knowledge to pass on?**

**Write it up today and send it to**

**[newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz)**

**You might just change someone's life for the better.**

# TAURANGA'S APRIL MEETING

## Project Managing Auckland's Future

**U3A's Ian Howell, The City Rail Link.** Ian Howell is the Web Manager for U3A Tauranga. Before retiring and moving back to Tauranga, Ian worked as Auckland Transport's CRL Project Director. The City Rail Link is the largest infrastructure project in New Zealand's history, so what really happened behind the orange cones and massive cranes?

Basically? A lot of hard, intricately detailed and planned work by an enormous number of seriously dedicated and smart people. Project

Management on a job this big can be compared to be responsible for organising a team of a thousand people as they put together a ten-billion-piece jigsaw puzzle. And that would only be Monday.

The City Rail Link will transform our largest city, providing quick, efficient, and affordable transport around the Central, Eastern, and Southern suburbs, business, and industrial areas. To enable this, 3.5 kilometres of tunnelling had to be bored through the rock and sub-strata that supports Auckland CBD, along with a kilometre



of cut and cover tunnelling. The tunnel-boring machine – named after Dame Whina Cooper - was capable of creating 30 metres of tunnel in just one day (under optimal conditions, was itself 130 metres long, and weighed in at 900 tonnes). Three new underground stations were built. But that was just the beginning. As with any large construction project, each solution raised many more questions, which Ian and his team had to find rational, actionable, economic, and socially-responsible solutions for. Plans and designs were made, revised, and revisited.



# Getting Ready for Day One of CRL



Can this be built safely? (Answer? Yes! Ian and his team ran a safe and positive project. Potential hazards were seen and nullified.) Can it be built on budget, on time, and with a minimum of disruption to businesses and traffic? Surprisingly, Ian Howell has come through this challenge relaxed and with a reasonably full head of hair, an easy grin, and his sanity intact. His talk was an inspiration, and a reflection of the astonishing things U3A members have achieved in their lifetimes.



**Do you know anyone who's made an impact in their working lives?**  
 Do you know anyone who has stepped outside of the ordinary, and has experienced life in a different and remarkable way?  
**Then contact Mary Stewart, 027 334 9211**  
[speakers@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:speakers@U3ATauranga.org.nz) :

Mary organises our speakers and is constantly looking for and chatting to people whose stories can encourage and illuminate.

# Katikati's April Speaker

## Going To War With the New Zealand Mounted Brigade, Palestine, Gaza, Jordan, and Syria 1916 – 1918

The audience at U3A Katikati's meeting on April 8 were left wondering "How come we hadn't heard this story before now?" as **Christopher J Wilson-Archer**, history enthusiast, author, and former teacher concluded his astonishing talk about the New Zealand Mounted Brigade's World War One battlefield exploits in Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, Gaza, Jordan, and Syria. "We commemorate the defeat at Gallipoli every ANZAC Day, while forgetting – or ignoring - the many military victories the New Zealand and Australian Mounted Brigades inflicted on King Edward VII's enemies."



At the onset of war in 1914 New Zealand pledged to supply one Infantry Brigade and one Mounted Brigade to the war effort. The Mounted Brigade consisted of 120 officers, 2,224 other ranks, and an astonishing 2,884 horses (only four of which were fortunate enough to be returned to New Zealand's green paddocks).

In the Levant's harsh environment, each horse carried its rider, enough food and water for itself and rider for two days, and the rider's equipment: rifle, ammunition, pack of clothing, personal effects, and so on. A healthy horse needs up to 15 gallons of water a day to survive, and even more in hot conditions. A human needs up to 2 gallons. That's 34 gallons (nearly 130 kilograms) of water alone that the horse carried in total. Accordingly, almost all the Brigades' servicemen were necessarily smaller than regular infantrymen.



The campaigning started in Egypt and took the Brigade through Palestine, Gaza, Libya, and Syria, achieving success after success against the well-armed and equipped men from both Türkiye and Germany.

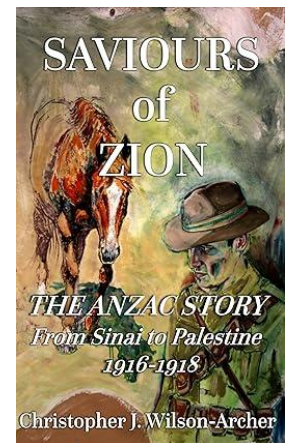
As many as 640 Kiwi boys lost their lives in these campaigns, with an additional 1,200 suffering wounds. Their graves are now to be found in official Commonwealth Graves across Gaza and Jerusalem. The Gaza gravesites have been severely damaged by warfare in 2006, 2009, and 2025-26.



A beautiful Silver Fern Memorial was unveiled on April 30, 2023, at the Moshav Gan Sorek, commemorating a battle in which 53 Kiwi boys died and the overall contribution of New Zealand soldiers to the liberation of the area from Ottoman rule in World War I.

Christopher Archer helped raise funds for the Memorial, and represented us all at the unveiling.

**Christopher Archer's book, "Saviours of Zion", is available as an e-book from Amazon.**



**Someone Thought I Should Solve This Crossword Puzzle.  
But It's A Mystery To Me...**



# Group News

## **The following Tauranga Groups are looking for New Members:**

Opera Appreciation: contact Kathleen Fraser, 022 187 8588

Art Practical: contact Zinta Krumins, 022 673 9571

Tauranga Luxe Cinema Group: contact Margaret Down, 027 252 0936

Festival and Foreign Films: contact Margaret Marsh, 07 281 2408

Five Hundred Cars: contact Lesley Monteiro, 07 576 5458

Hikers 1 and 2: contact Carla van den Hout, 027 278 9672 or Brian Jones, 021 267 1432 respectively.

Garden Ramblers 2: contact Anne James, 07 544 1507

Photography: contact Pam Henderson, 021 238 6263.

**You'll find full details about these groups on our website,**

[U3ATauranga.org.nz](http://U3ATauranga.org.nz)

All Katikati groups are currently fully subscribed.

## World Affairs, Katikati

### **Katikati's enthusiastic World Affairs group met on April 9.**

As usual, there were many topics on the table for our 10 members to discuss, but we limited our discussions to the following:

Iran of course is to the front at the moment and is a moving target...we discussed ongoing implications for the global economies, looking closely at the energy supply problems. Who will prevail?

Our next topic was European "Unity" or lack thereof - another topic which waxes and wanes with time.

Not to be forgotten, lurking in the news background at the moment we discussed...Ukraine, Epstein, and the ex-Prince Andrew.

US politics always prevails so we addressed the possibility of Trump engineering a 3rd term and concluded that it was unlikely.

Also the outlook for the upcoming midterms and at this stage we think that the Senate could be 50/50 and the House likely to be overtaken by the Democrats.

# Shakespeare Group A, Tauranga U3A, 2026

**“I count myself in nothing else so happy  
As in a soul rememb’ring my good friends” (Richard II)**



The U3A Shakespeare group started in 2016. Since then, the group has worked its way through the most popular of Shakespeare's plays. We meet twice a month and have started to look at the plays that are less well known, as we attempt to go through all of his plays and sonnets.

We are not highbrow in any way. We simply get together to appreciate the language and characters and stories of Shakespeare.

We are very fortunate in that a member of our group, Paul Chapman, has had a long-standing love of studying Shakespeare. In fact, he has written a book, entitled “Secret Will” on Shakespeare. This 400-plus page book brings out people and events that existed in Shakespeare's time that he suggests were used in the plays of Shakespeare.

Another member of our group, Margaret Osbourn, has a very large library of videos on Shakespeare as well as Ballet and Opera, which she generously gives us access to. This provides us with a wonderful source of Shakespeare material.

Less well-known plays we have recently enjoyed studying have been Cymbeline and Pericles. Most of us have been hardly aware of these two plays. In fact, Pericles, was extremely popular when presented in Shakespeare's time.

Now we are about to start studying Troilus and Cressida.

[u3atauranga.org.nz/shakespeare-group-a/](http://u3atauranga.org.nz/shakespeare-group-a/)



## **SCAM ALERT! SCAM ALERT!**

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## Book Review

### Jacinda: The Untold Stories.

David Cohen with Rebecca Keillor

UNAUTHORISED BIOGRAPHY  
**JACINDA**  
THE **UNTOLD** STORIES



100+  
interviews

DAVID **COHEN**  
WITH REBECCA **KEILLOR**

**BUYER BE AWARE:** This book is not, in any way, shape, or form, a hagiography.

Journalist, reporter, and columnist **David Cohen**, assisted by journalist Rebecca Keillor, interviewed at least 100 different individuals\* in putting this multi-faceted discussion of one of New Zealand's most controversial Prime Ministers of the modern era.

The narrative is neatly put together, following a strict chronological timeline. From her Mormon upbringing in Murapara and Morrinsville, through to her early activism, education and travel in the USA and UK, and reluctant entry into the political sphere and eventual leadership of New Zealand through one of the most turbulent periods of the modern era, and her later ongoing academic career in Boston and Oxford, Ardern's life, motivations, decisions, and actions are dissected in plain language.

The tone is distinctly even-handed: from a chapter expressing one interviewee's frustration with the media's gushing (and nauseating) over-use of the word "adorable" in relation to everything Ardern related in the early years of her career to the her mis-steps, mistakes, triumphs, and crippling challenges of her premiership.

Cohen takes great pain in dissecting and interpreting not only Ardern, but also the many people who influenced her – from a brilliantly performative secondary school Social Studies teacher to Helen Clark, Michael Cullen, Tony Blair, Grant Robinson, et al - with an elegantly dispassionate and clear writing style.

Around \$30 - \$35 online and at local bookstores. I first noticed it at Red Square Books in Tauranga. Also available from your local library.

\*Note: Ardern herself declined an invitation to be interviewed for the book, not wanting to put any personal slant on the book's tone and contents. *Al Mathews*

Stay up to date with your U3A: visit  
[u3atauranga.org.nz](http://u3atauranga.org.nz) regularly

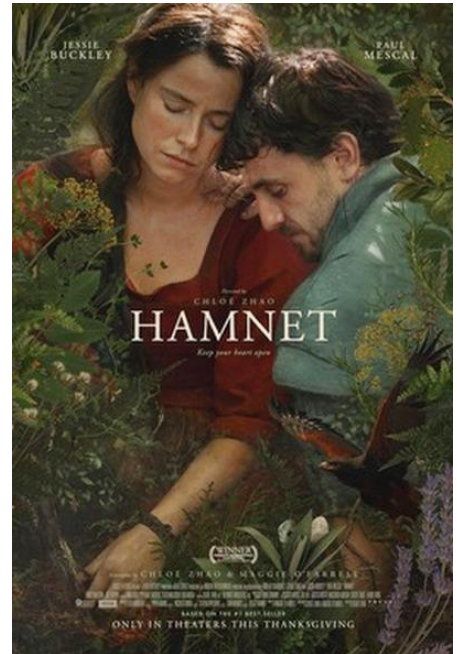
# MOVIE REVIEW

## HAMNET

Directed by Chloé Zhao

**Maggie O’Farrell’s book**, Hamnet, released in 2020, is a fictional account of William Shakespeare’s meeting and marriage to Agnes (not Anne) Hathaway, herbalist, the birth of the children and the death, at age 11, of their only son, Hamnet. The opening credits point out that Agnes and Anne were the same name in Elizabethan England.

Chloé Zhao’s award-winning film, which she co-wrote with Maggie O’Farrell, was released in 2025, and spectacularly mirrors the book’s intent. Winning Golden Globes for Best Movie – Drama, and Best Actress in a Motion Picture, with an Oscar for Best Actress for Jessie Buckley, the movie tracks Agnes’ meeting and subsequent relationship with a young man, working as a tutor to pay his father’s debts.



That young man, played to perfection by Paul Mescal, develops through this tough romantic drama to become William Shakespeare – although this story is not his: it’s Agnes’. The drama and minutiae of Elizabethan semi-rural life, the child-bearing and raising difficulties, the acceptance and difficulties of being in a relationship with a hard-working – and usually absent – dreamer and writer.

Beautifully photographed by Łukas Żal, Hamnet glisten with the visceral vitality of the virginal woodlands in which Agnes searches for herbs and spiritual inspiration, while the often messy and muddy village interior and exterior shots are vibrant with life and fecundity.

The movie climaxes with the debut of “Hamlet”, Shakespeare’s last play. This sequence is emotionally raw, and Buckley draws every drop of agony from a demanding scene.

Hamnet, achingly beautiful, is coming to Netflix soon. I’ll be giving it a double thumbs up rating.

*Al Mathews*

## Your Executive Committee Members: Just Who Are They?

**The Executive Committee's made up of ordinary U3A members:** which means they're pretty extraordinary. Over the next few issues we'll be introducing you to them – in their own words. Here's Margaret Marsh.

### **Tall Poppy? Who me?**

by Margaret Marsh, A-C Group Coordinator.

#### **What is a Tall Poppy?**

*“A person of high merit, talent, or success who stands out from the crowd. The term is central to “tall poppy syndrome,” a cultural phenomenon — most prevalent in Australia and New Zealand — where such individuals are criticised, resented, or “chopped down” to bring them back to a lower, more uniform level.”*



**I was born at an early age** in Charing Cross Hospital, just off the Strand, in London. It was founded in 1818 as the West London Infirmary and is a renowned London teaching hospital.

We lived on Brixton Hill, and I grew up playing on bomb sites. Us kids had rationed orange juice and cod liver oil! My primary school looked like a prison – and we had a Windmill in our road – it's still there and is a landmark, as is the pub of the same name next door.

Sunday School was just across the road, and I loved learning about Biblical people from faraway places. Later I eventually became a teacher there and won the National Bible Study

Competition – I was Top Girl!

At school, the 11+ was a selective entrance exam for UK pupils aged 10-11 for admission to grammar school. I failed the test: I came 28<sup>th</sup> in a class of 30 pupils.

The following year I became a born-again Christian, and in June at the end of the school year, I was First in class! Not bad for the failure of the year before! Now did I pull my boot straps up - or did I have Divine help?

At church, I had joined the young peoples' singing group, *The Gospel Rhythm Group*. We had a marvellous music director, visited many churches, youth groups and prisons, singing the Good News. We were also invited to sing at the Royal Albert Hall one Easter Monday, where every year our church held Easter services.

Leaving school at 16, I started work as a shorthand typist at Marshall & Snelgrove, an Oxford Street department store. I was soon promoted to Secretary to the Chief Accountant, and I remember the news one afternoon of the shooting of President John Kennedy.

Peter and I married in 1968. We started married life in a residential caravan, 2 beds, bathroom, kitchen and lounge – shown here.

After the birth of our daughter we moved into a brand-new council flat eleven floors up in the sky! Then we bought our own home near Peterborough. We moved to New Zealand at the end of 1972. My son was born in 1973.

Well, that is all for now. If you are interested, I have written two other life stories entitled “50 Years Here” ... and “Entrepreneur? Who me?”, but they are for another day, newsletter or monthly meeting.



**MARGARET WILL BE OUR SHORT SPEAKER FOR OUR 19 JUNE MEETING, TELLING US ABOUT THE OPERA APPRECIATION GROUP.**

Do you know anyone who's made an impact in their working lives? Do you know anyone who has stepped outside of the ordinary, and has experienced life in a different and remarkable way?

Then contact Mary Stewart, 027 334 9211

[speakers@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:speakers@U3ATauranga.org.nz) :

Mary organises our speakers and is constantly looking for and chatting to people whose stories can encourage and illuminate.

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## Poem Of The Month

### On A Urinary Tract (with apologies to Mike Batt)

I cannot subtract  
From the importance of my  
Urinary Tract.

A thin pipeline  
'twixt bladder and porcelain pot  
The Urinary Tract  
Was oft forgot.

When young, one's vibrant Urinary Tract  
Ran like a river!  
A roaring rapid, a veritable cataract  
Enough to make you shiver.

I could drink five pints of Lion Brown  
And my Urinary Tract would remain sealed;  
My kidneys stood up, they didn't lie down  
My bladder was made of steel, annealed.

But now at seventy-three  
Approx every quarter-hour  
My desperate need to pee  
Results in a tremulous shower

It is now a miserable joke  
A tale that should not be spoke.  
Where once the keyboard of my life  
Would rattle with joyous glee  
Now, I can't even hit Control P.

I want it back!  
My Urinary Tract!  
Tough and rugged and virile:  
A proud gush, A noisy flush!

But no.  
Seven dribbles through the day  
Eight more dribbles at night  
My Urinary Tract rings my once-proud bell:  
It is now a merely a tubular hell.

Do you have a story (or poem) to share?

Write it up and send it to the Editor at [newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz)

Include photos, if you have them –  
otherwise, I'll see what I can dig up for you.

# From Photography 1



Sun Arise

Rob

Seen Better Days

Pam H



Imperfectly Perfect

Pam P



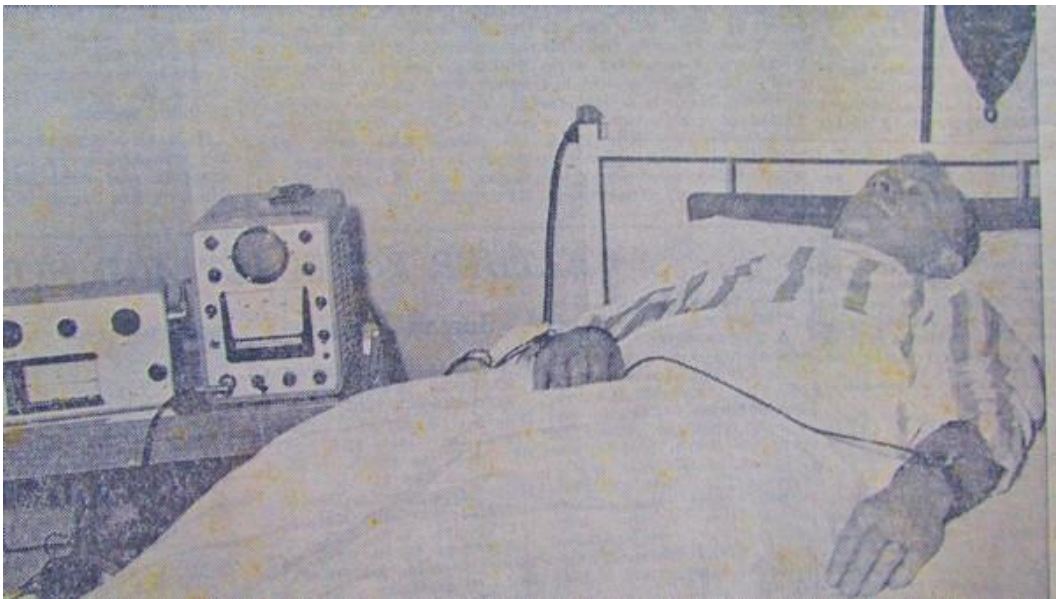
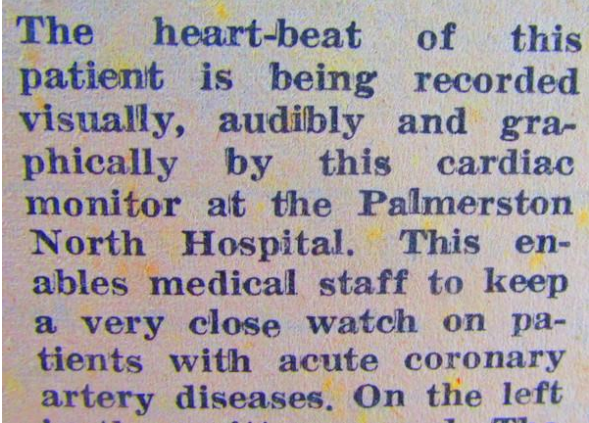
# From The Shed

My neighbour's shed is a treasure trove of old stuff, including newspapers from when we were young. Here's a few bits and pieces from the 60s and 70s.

Hamilton's "The Times", July 21, 1969: headlining the historic Apollo 11 landing – and, because photographs were unavailable, the 'paper used a line drawing. Note also the celebratory use of colour. They used red, which may have been a little more appropriate if NASA had been Russian.



Moving South, and going a bit further back in time to Palmerston North and the mid-1960s – this celebration of the delivery and installation of some high-tech heart monitoring kit. This was truly groundbreaking tech and undoubtedly helped save many lives: a real cause for celebration. It's worth noting that the ECG was invented in 1903, filled a room, and weighed in at more than 300 kilograms.



## IMPORTANT NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

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### THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT U3A

**U3A Tauranga** offers a wide range of interest groups, some of which are based in Katikati. Members are welcome to apply to join any of our groups, full details of which are regularly updated in the online Handbook. For more information, just click on the link on our website [www.U3Atauranga.org.nz](http://www.U3Atauranga.org.nz)

If you wish to become a member of **U3A Tauranga**, you can complete the online application at [Application Form | U3A Tauranga](#).

## Newsletter

**Next issue: June 2026.** Deadline for material is June 1, 2026.  
We welcome your articles at [newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@U3ATauranga.org.nz)