



August 2015

[www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com](http://www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com)

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### **President's report - Home thoughts from Abroad:**

Setting off in our hire car after arrival, we found that the proportion of bad drivers is greater here in the UK than in NZ. The potholes are deeper and closer together, which helps to keep the speed down. Roads other than motorways are in just as bad a state as Far North roads. Motorways are massive, overpopulated and scary.

We recently visited some houses and castles that are allegedly 700-800 years old. Next week we are moving North to visit the other "God's country". They play the bagpipes and have beautiful views. We will be going to a Highland games in St Andrews - which I guess is their equivalent to Waipu, but probably not quite as warm.

*Stuart Leitch*

### **New members**

We are delighted to welcome two new members this month, Ulrike Novak and Howard Dixon. We hope that they enjoy everything U3A Bay of Islands has to offer.

## U3A Kerikeri General Meeting- August 2015

### Whaling in the Bay of Islands

An Illustrated talk by author and expert on whaling Lindsay Alexander



10.30 Monday 17 August  
St. John Ambulance Hall  
Kerikeri Road, Kerikeri

Non-members welcome

Please bring finger food  
For our shared lunch

Kitchen Duties:  
Singing For Fun Group

## Volunteers Required

Dale Bell – Co-ordinator of the Community Carers, St John, wonders if there are any U3A members who would be interested in volunteering at The Kerikeri Retirement Village one morning (or afternoon) a week. Currently the hours are 9.30am to 12.30pm. For further information please phone Dale Bell at St John Station – 09 407 8131

## Group News

Both History of Ireland groups have now finished. We would like to thank Lesley McNaughton who has put a great deal of time and effort into leading these popular groups.

### Art History 2

There is space for a few more applicants for Iris Steensma's new Art History group which will start in September. Iris will use the DVDs, *The Shock of the New* by Robert Hughes and sections of Simon Schama's *The Power of Art* supplemented by her own knowledge, to introduce members to the intriguing world of art.

### Natural History

We need interest from a few more members before we can start the Natural History group. This group will view and discuss programmes from the five miniseries in the excellent BBC Natural History Collection 2. Please see the last newsletter for details.

### Carry on Sketching

This group has been challenging and fun and the members have learned a great deal and appreciate all Mike's hard work and encouragement, but it has been decided that it has run its course. However, watch this space next month for an invitation to join an interesting new art, craft and design group which Mike Dee is planning.

## Two exciting new groups have been proposed.

### I Spy

Our "out and about groups" are deservedly very popular and have the advantage that numbers are not restricted. Starting in September or October (day to be decided) this group will visit local habitats to look for, identify, and learn more about the birds, wildlife, trees and plants around us. If you are enthusiastic about our environment come and share your passion and knowledge with the rest of the group. If you classify everything with feathers as ABB (Another Brown Bird) or can't tell a pohutakawa from a possum but would like to learn then this could be for you.

### Genetics

This is an outline plan for a proposed series of ten meetings on Genetics.

- 1) Genome, gene, chromosomes, basic rules of inheritance
- 2) Molecular biology DNA-RNA-proteins
- 3) Genetic diseases, cancer
- 4) Mutations, evolution
- 5) Genetic testing, forensics
- 6) Gene regulation, epigenetics
- 7) Cloning, GM crops and animals
- 8) Sexual differentiation and development
- 9) Gene therapy, reality and limitations
- 10) Designer babies, tailor-made medicines and whatever else is unanswered

## Group News - continued

We are very lucky to have Ulrike Novak as facilitator for this fascinating topic. Ulrike has an extensive academic and research background in genetics and has worked in this field in Europe and Australia. A keen interest and a desire to learn more is all that is required initially as Ulrike will ensure that everyone has a good foundation on which to base their understanding of this subject. The venue will be the home of Moira Warnock, 20 Waipapa Landing Place, Kerikeri 09 407 6389 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at 1.00pm..

**Please contact Margaret Rasmussen** as soon as possible if you are interested in any of these groups so we can get them under way. [ras1@clear.net.nz](mailto:ras1@clear.net.nz) or 09 402 8949

*Moira Warnock*

## Featured Groups

### C20th New Zealand History – a personal view

My personal view of New Zealand in the C20th has covered the New Zealand role at Chunuk Bair, a ridge on the Gallipoli Peninsula where almost all the men of the Wellington Regiment were killed. We have considered preparations for invasion in World War II, including the role of women and the Home Guard.

The anti-apartheid protest against the 1981 South African Rugby tour split the country.



The bombing of the Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour was shattering for this country whose people believed that our remoteness kept us safe from such acts.

Chris Booth created the memorial at Matauri Bay where the Rainbow Warrior was finally sunk.



Each topic was supported by background notes and a film or documentary. In future sessions we will look at documentaries about some well-known New Zealanders, perhaps not the most famous, but people who have made a difference no matter how small it may seem today.

I have these films and documentaries on VCR because at the time they were shown, I felt they were of particular interest for a general view of New Zealand and not all documentaries are reproduced at a later date. Now of course VCRs are almost a thing of the past! I'm glad some people still have functional ones and we can enjoy these old films.

*Pam Jenkins*

## Local History Opua

Local History Opua met on the 13<sup>th</sup> July around a nice warm fire with coffee, tea and cakes to hand and watched the first DVD of *The New Zealand Wars*, presented by James Belich. This was appropriate as the group had recently visited St. Michael's Church and the site of the Battle of Ohaeawai with the retired Bishop Te Haara who gave us an good understanding of the Battle of Ohaeawai and the history of St Michael's Church (*shown below*).



The DVD we watched covered a number of battles such as Te AhuAhu, Ohaeawai and Ruapekapeka and it was obvious that if what we were seeing was fact, then the historians' writings of our history with Maori were highly sanitised versions of what actually happened. I for one had never heard of the sex trade with Maori as a means of obtaining muskets nor have I read about it in any of the major reference books I have.

Of interest was the claim by James Belich that Maori invented trench warfare. But according to Google (Wikipedia) the French used trench warfare in the 1700's and trenches were also used in the American Civil War. Who knows what is actually true?

Our group will, when weather is better, visit Ruapekapeka, as a follow up from the Battle of Ohaeawai.



John Williams : Ohaeawai, N.Z. 1 July 1845

*Don Jansen*

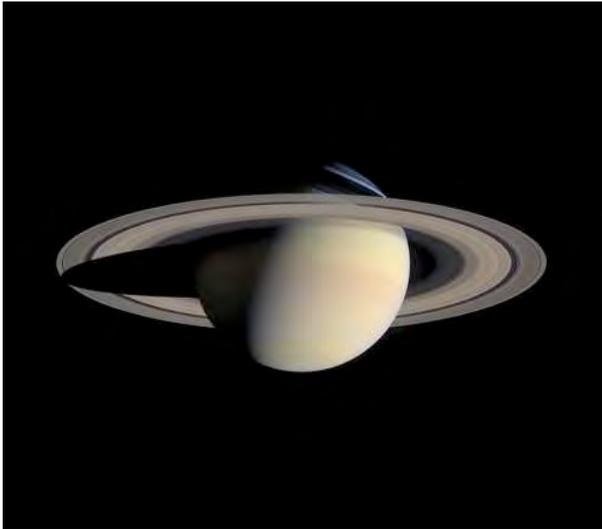
## Geology and Cosmology

By a happy coincidence on the day that the world was all agog over pictures of Pluto and some of its moons, sent to earth from the New Horizons spacecraft, the Cosmology Group was looking at data sent back by 'Cassini', the fourth space probe to visit Saturn.

The probe was named after Giovanni Domenico Cassini an Italian mathematician, astronomer and engineer who worked in Bologna until he was recruited to help set up the Paris Observatory where he spent the rest of his working life as astronomer/astrologer to Louis XIV, 'The Sun King'.

During this time, Cassini's method of determining longitude was used to measure the size of France accurately for the first time. The country turned out to be considerably smaller than expected, and the king quipped that Cassini had taken more of his kingdom from him than he had won in all his wars.

The Cassini spacecraft was launched in 2004. Earlier probes had flown past Saturn. This one entered orbit after a journey of four years, and continues to report home.



We learned that Saturn's rings are composed primarily of clumps of ice which collide with one another, breaking up and reforming causing the rings to sparkle in sunlight. Measuring about 100,000 kms across the rings are less than 1km thick. Black bands in the rings are spaces made by orbiting moonlets.

Saturn has many moons amongst which is the small, icy Enceladus. Cassini discovered an icy plume shooting from this moon and subsequent observations have revealed the spray contains complex organic chemicals. Tidal heating is keeping Enceladus warm, and hotspots associated with the fountains have been pinpointed. With heat, organic chemicals and, potentially liquid

water, Enceladus could be a place where primitive life forms might evolve.

In the next episode of *Wonders of the Solar System*, Prof Brian Cox flies to the edge of the earth's atmosphere to see the fragile layer of gas which surrounds our planet, 'the thin blue line'.

*Mary Johnson*

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