

## Learning for Life

Volume 14, Issue 4, June, 2021

**Our next Members' Meeting** will be on June 23rd from 10 am till 12 noon at Elim Church, 625 Main Road, Stoke, Nelson. The speaker is Dr Duncan Steel, a space scientist/astronomer based in Nelson.

## How satellites affect our lives

The commercialisation of space has led to the number of satellites orbiting above our heads increasing markedly over the past few years, with tens of thousands of objects now being tracked. Although there are some thousands of functional satellites, there are many more defunct items and lumps of debris. Several companies are now launching constellations of over 10,000 individual satellites intended to give fast internet to the whole globe. Other companies collect imagery of virtually all land areas on a daily basis. In this talk I will show what sorts of satellites are sent into different types of orbit, giving us TV pictures live from other continents, images for the weather forecast on the evening news, GPS navigation through your cellphone or car, and imagery helping us to patrol the land and sea to assist with agriculture and ecology, mapping how the ground moves in earthquakes and volcanoes, and looking for illegal activity across the huge area of ocean around New Zealand.

## Topics covered in this Newsletter:

- Speaker report from the AGM
- President's report
- Rules governing access to Study Groups
- Prospect for a "New View" study group
- Garden group report
- Birds of the Nelson Region group report
- Email "phishing" scam

## Speaker report from our recent meeting:

At the AGM, about 100 members were treated to an entertaining and informative insight into the world of politics as seen through the eyes of long-time former press gallery journalist, Richard Griffin. And entertaining it certainly was, with tales of Norman Kirk wandering the "corridors of power" in his pyjamas, raucous Christmas parties round copious barrels of beer and a somewhat inebriated Rob Muldoon having a petulant meltdown rather than handing over the reins to an infinitely patient David Lange. Interestingly, Richard was quick to assure us all that the current crop of representatives are nowhere near as ill-behaved as their predecessors, despite the recent cantankerous manoeuvrings of the likes of Trevor Mallard and Winston Peters. Governments, it seems, are run by half-a-dozen efficient and committed members --- all else is dross, and the present government is apparently no exception. Nonetheless, Richard was eager to praise the performance of the government, particularly the PM, in the way it has handled the Covid crisis and earlier emergencies, and he acknowledged that we had indeed been fortunate in having outstanding leadership in these difficult times. After a thoroughly engaging hour or so, Richard received a well-deserved ovation from a very appreciative audience.



## Subscriptions

Thank you to all who have paid their subscriptions. Wendy is contacting those who have not yet paid.

## President's Report



It has been one month since our AGM. The committee was delighted to see such a large turn-out with 90 plus attending. Thank you to those of you who did make the effort. Although we would like to think it was the lure of an AGM, in reality it probably was the lure of our guest speaker Richard Griffin. Feedback on the day and since has been most positive about Richard and our new venue at Elim Church.

At a recent committee meeting it was decided to accept an offer from Waimea Soroptimists to provide the catering at future public meetings. Not only is this a fund-raiser for the Soroptimists but also it releases committee members to mingle during morning tea. The committee is conscious that the foyer of the church can be rather crowded during morning tea so arrangements have been made to have a "break out" room available for us especially as colder weather precludes gathering to chat outside the main entrance. If any of you have comments to make about the venue or guest speakers please get in touch with me. Until we meet next on Wednesday 23 June.

Warm regards  
David Turner  
President U3A Nelson.

## Access to Study Groups

There have been a few occasions recently where several people have tried to get into the same study group only to be turned down because there weren't enough places to accommodate everyone. So I thought I should spell out clearly what the "rules" are for allocating places.

Basically, we work on a first come, first served basis and normally that works fine, so that the first to show interest gets the place and others go on the Group Waiting List.

However, we also have a policy of trying to get as many different people into groups as we can, and so any member who doesn't belong to any study group yet, automatically gets preference when a group they are interested in becomes available. As a result, people already in several groups will only gain a place in another group if no "new" member wants a place.

I suppose I should also add that this preference system only applies with members who are not yet in any group at all -- we don't count the number of groups other applicants are in and choose the lowest number. I hope that's clear to everyone.

Steven Shaw (Study Group Co-ordinator)

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## Prospect for a "New View" study group?

(This article has been submitted by one of our new members.)

Since 2006 I have been a loyal subscriber to "New View" magazine, which covers a wide range of interesting subjects including Art, Science and Religion, Education, Biodynamic-Agriculture, Current Affairs, Book and Film Reviews, Poetry, etc. For more information see their website at <https://www.newview.org.uk/>. Perhaps there could be other prospective "New View" readers among the U3A membership and maybe the prospect of forming a "New View" study group? If anyone is interested, I'm happy to show him or her samples of the magazine. These can be viewed at my home at 19 Idesia Grove, Richmond. My contact phone is: 021 08413139.

*Tong Wong*

## From the Garden Group...

In April, a party of twenty “Hands in the Garden” members had the opportunity to wander around what must rank as one of the most beautiful gardens in Tasman.

They were made welcome by Peter and Rae Coubrough at Frog’s End olive grove and garden situated on the Waimea Estuary near Mapua.

Peter was responsible for the creation of the Miyazu Japanese Gardens during his time as Nelson City Council Head of Parks and Landscaping (1982-2017). His own garden is testament to his artistic talent and skill with timber. Rae says they have complimentary skills, describing herself as “the gardener, and Peter as the handyman”. Together, over the past 20-plus years they have turned 16-hectares of sticky Moutere clay around their Hacienda-style home into a park-like garden and olive grove. There are several ponds, countless specimen trees, hidden sculptures and a well-established olive grove that has produced award winning oils. Nowadays they no longer produce olive oil commercially and have sold-off some of the land but what remains is absolutely stunning.

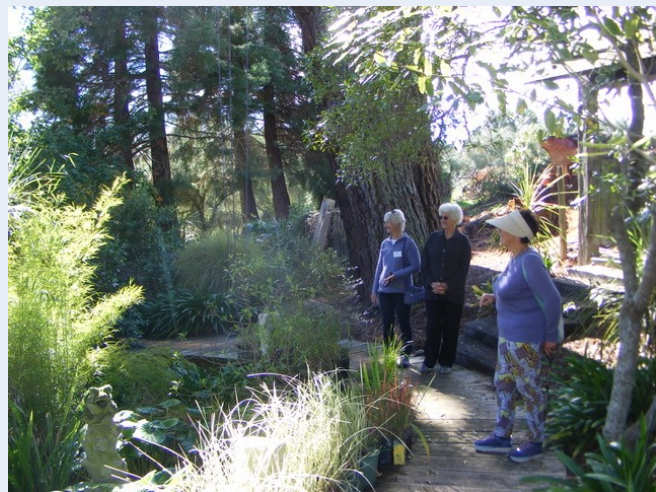
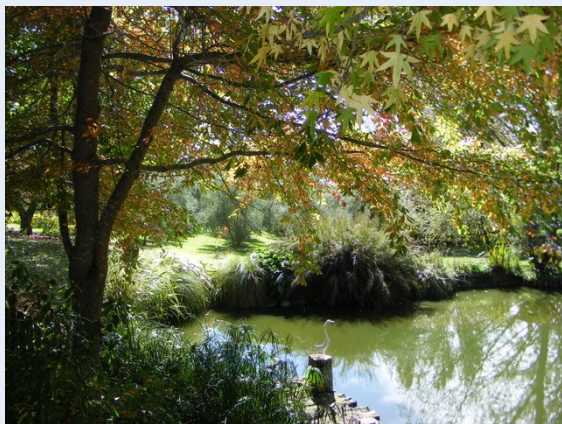
U3A members were often open-mouthed in awe as they sauntered around the grounds admiring “Peter’s Projects”.

There were pigeon lofts for the dozens of homing pigeons, a boardwalk around the ponds, pergolas, summer houses, a wood-fired pizza oven and an Australian-style windmill.

“Hands in the Garden” members enjoy wandering around inspirational gardens no matter how big or small and we felt very privileged that Peter and Rae allowed U3A access to their private garden.

*Judy Pittman*

*Co-Convenor Hands in the Garden*



*Photos from the garden, and at left, the group assembled for a photo.*

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“People say nothing is impossible—but I do nothing every day”! - *AA Milne*

Someone was looking over my recent painting.

"Are you worried by those blobs of paint and the brush marks?"

"No"

"Oh well. I suppose it makes it look like a real painting." - *from U3A member James Chappell*

How do you keep warm in a cold room? Go to the corner because it's always 90 degrees!

## Birds of the Nelson Region

Having just joined this new group, I was keen to have my first outing. Following a wet weekend when Canterbury suffered disastrous floods, Monday here in Nelson started cloudy but with a promise of clearing weather later, Grace made the decision to go ahead on another visit to Rough Island. I duly arrived at the appointed meeting place just over the Rabbit Island bridge but found I was the only one there. Luckily I had Grace's mobile number and a text revealed they were stuck in the huge traffic jam



caused by an earlier traffic accident. Not an auspicious start to the morning! My time wasn't wasted as I quietly observed things around me and was able to get good photos of a *Kingfisher* feeding on the mudflats and later a *Pied Stilt* that arrived on the scene. Then I had a coffee, still waiting. Grace and the other two members finally made it, about an hour and a quarter late!



Kay Cederman and I set off across the bridge first, to watch for the elusive and endangered *Banded Rail*, and Kay spotted one feeding almost immediately. This was great to observe through binoculars and for me to photograph. Of course by the time Grace and Ann joined us it had disappeared into the rushes, however they weren't disappointed as it reappeared again later. What a thrill for us all. By this time I decided to call it a day, well satisfied, and head for home, while the others drove to the other end of the island



Not a clear photo, but this was the *Banded Rail* looking anxiously around for danger.

where they did see a flock of *Royal Spoonbills* in the distance but nothing much else of note, so they too returned. Seeing a *Banded Rail* had made our day. What will the next outing bring?

Trevor Lewis

### Email "phishing" scams

While ago I received an email telling me my car registration was due for renewal on a certain date, how much it would cost and that to renew online I could click on a link. It appeared legitimate with the NZTA logo at the top, also I did think my rego was due for renewal soon. However the email address showing at the top looked dodgy making me suspicious, so I bypassed the link and opened the NZTA website direct from my browser and sure enough, this was the message at the top of their page:

**SCAM ALERT:** [Vehicle licence \(rego\) renewal phishing emails](#)



I could have easily been caught out by this. I wonder how many other unfortunates are? If you receive any sort of spam email, forward it to [complaint@spam.govt.nz](mailto:complaint@spam.govt.nz) and they will investigate it. And remember - never open an attachment or follow a link in an email from an unknown or untrusted sender! There are bad people out there.

As it turned out it when I checked, my current registration still had several months to run!

Trevor Lewis

### From the Editor

Thank you to those who submitted articles. **Deadline for the August newsletter is Monday 9th August.**

Trevor Lewis