



Learning is forever

WARKWORTH

Bi-monthly Bulletin—July 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The New Normal

As New Zealanders we have come through 33 days of alert level 4, 16 days of level 3, 26 days of level 2, and are almost back to normal, except for border restrictions, at level 1.

What is the new normal? The Covid-19 pandemic could be a tipping point for policies affecting our planet.

As individuals, the first things we notice are the freedoms to meet in a crowd with resumption of family gatherings and other meetings, crowded cafes, busy shopping malls and rugby games attended by thousands. We can travel within New Zealand and support the tourism industry. Businesses can return to full swing without spacing restrictions.

For some the restrictions have resulted in a real crisis with loss of jobs, loss of income and extreme anxiety about the future. The New Zealand economy has incurred a massive debt and will take years to recover, affecting the next generations. The world economy has of course also suffered.

For others, continuing to work from home has great appeal. Does the business really need the expensive office space? Educational facilities may increase on-line learning opportunities with on-line teaching and exams. Electronic communication for meetings using Zoom, Skype and other means has meant learning new computer skills for many of us. Companies are rethinking the need to travel for a one day meeting. Family Zoom meetings with members in other countries will continue for many of us. The lock down has resulted in a small reduction in carbon emissions. Can we have a greener planet? We note the increased death rate from Covid-19 correlating with pollution. This is a time for action on some of our world's problems – the wealth gap, racial prejudice and inequality, the need for a

cleaner economy, climate change and the necessity of more international cooperation on health. Some of these changes require government intervention, some are up to us as individuals. I hope we can rise to the challenge. We have been forced to think of change in a wider context than how it affects me or us.

Best wishes to you all,
Mary Miller

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members
Margaret Wright
Ashley Price
Diane Mason
who have joined since 25th April 2020.

DUTY GROUP ROSTER 2020

August Ancient History, Jazz Listening
October Local History, Play Reading
The duty groups for the general meetings at the Totara Park venue should be there by 9.30am.

2020 GENERAL MEETING PLANNER

October 12 Dr Jonathan Lee: Afghanistan.
December 14 A Christmas surprise!

The meetings will be held in both halls at Totara Park.

INTEREST GROUPS

Hooray! At last we are able to meet face to face with the rest of our interest of interest groups. I'm sure that as well as discussing exciting and interesting topics, we will share many stories of our lockdown experiences.

**GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY 10TH AUGUST 2020**

Professor Ralph Cooney who is the retiring Professor of Chemistry at Auckland University and Senior Advisor to Biocide Toolbox, a research program developing new greener biocides useful in commercial and health contexts which contribute to New Zealand export growth.

He was scheduled to speak at our April meeting, but Covid-19 intervened. We are delighted that he is able and willing to present this most relevant and challenging topic.

Climate Change and COVID-19: A Glimpse of a Sustainable Future

The reduction of vehicle traffic during COVID-19 lockdown uncovered the underlying burden of toxic emissions (carbon particulates and nitrogen oxides) and climate warming gases (petroleum gases and CO₂) generated by fossil fuel combustion.

These emissions pervade our cities, change our climate and compromise our health.

Public Health UK report that air pollution causes c.30,000 deaths per year associated with heart disease, stroke, respiratory diseases, lung cancer and asthma.

In this talk, Professor Cooney will discuss current trends in greener transportation and energy sources that will eliminate most of the above health impacts of vehicle emissions and will substantially remediate climate change.

The talk will cover the growing international consensus on climate change, the measurement of climate change indicators, the sources of sea-level change, the advent of electric vehicles and planes. It will also review the shift away from coal and fossil fuels towards renewables and the adoption of zero carbon targets by big oil companies.

The rising importance of class action litigation will also be discussed. Also discussed will be the major remaining barriers to controlling climate change including industrial development in India and China.

During the meeting less months of Covid19 Lockdown, the [Music Appreciation Group](#) managed to have something each month. In **April**, John Williamson did an online presentation of his topic about musical ideas in compositions from other composers' works; In **May**, we had a musical quiz of 20 questions, submitted by the members of the group which involved individual research to find the answers.

And in **June**, the members were invited to research a musical topic beginning with their own name's initial letter. They then wrote up a short summary of what they had researched, including YouTube references to music of the composer.

In these ways we stayed in touch with each other, found out about new and interesting composers and compositions, and were able to listen to wonderful music extending our own musical horizons.

Alison Coates

This may be of interest to some of our members.

I am part of a research team at the University of Auckland. I'm writing to you regarding an important new research project funded by the Auckland Medical Research Foundation.

We are inviting people over 70 to write a letter to share their experience of lockdown and other aspects of Covid-19. All letters (with the letter-writer's permission) will become part of a permanent archive at the Auckland Museum. This will be an important historical record as well as a resource for informing future responses to pandemics by the government and media.

People over 70 were identified as most vulnerable to the virus, but were characterised by the media as passive and in need of protection. We heard nothing about how people in this age group felt about the pandemic and lockdown. We feel it is vitally important these voices are heard to inform future pandemic responses.

Since U3A has many members over 70 we believe you will understand why this project is so important. The more letters we are able to collect, the more weight the project will have in terms of informing government responses

to future pandemics and the richer the historical archive will be.

If you would like one of the team to give you a ring to discuss the project further, please let me know. The project has received ethical approval from the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

To write us a letter now online, go to:
https://auckland.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bl4012ayXtru4g

Lisa Williams
Research Fellow, School of Nursing
University of Auckland
la.williams@auckland.ac.nz
021676798
<https://haveoursay.org>
<https://tearairresearchgroup.org>



Warkworth U3A

8 Wilson Road

Warkworth

New Zealand

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