

May 2026

Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand

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<b>Next Meeting:</b>	<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 10am</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	St Chads Church, 38 St Johns Road, Remuera
<b>Principal Speaker:</b>	Dr Bruce Arrol, "From Everest to Empowerment." The Hillary Trust.
<b>Mini Speaker:</b>	Gill Macklin from Use it or lose it. Her talk is titled "Two women in a tug."
<b>Next Month's Speaker:</b>	Olaf Diegel, "3d Printing."
<b>Meeting Tasks:</b>	Greeters: Music Appreciation Morning Tea: NZ History

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Our speaker for our May meeting is Professor Bruce Arroll from the University of Auckland. He did his medical elective in Nepal in 1977-78 and visited the Khunde Hospital while based at Phaplu Hospital. He went up to Thyangboche Monastery, but winter and a large snowfall prevented him from getting to



base camp. This will hopefully be remedied in November 2026 when he accompanies Peter Hillary (the current Chairperson of the Himalayan Trust) on a trek to Base Camp at the foot of Mt Everest. He is currently working half-time at Auckland University and 2 days per week as a GP at the Calder Clinic in the Auckland City Mission. He is on the Himalayan Trust, director of the finance committee, and a member of the health committee.

The Himalayan Trust began in 1960 after Sir Edmund Hillary asked his Sherpa friends how he could repay their support. Their answer—"Build us a school"—led to the founding of the Trust and the construction of Khumjung School in 1961. This simple promise grew into a lifelong partnership between New Zealanders and the people of the Everest region.

Through the 1960s to the 1980s, the Trust built schools, bridges, water systems, and Kunde Hospital, which served the region for decades. Hillary also helped establish the Lukla airstrip, transforming access to the Khumbu, and supported the rebuilding of Thyangboche Monastery after a devastating fire. These practical projects shaped the Trust's reputation for working directly with local communities. The airport is now a gateway to tourists and climbers who bring much-needed funds to the area.

From the 1990s, the focus shifted from construction to strengthening local systems—training teachers and health workers, improving sanitation, and expanding scholarships. Sir Ed remained closely involved until his death in 2008. In the 21st century, the Trust has supported school upgrades, maternal health, cultural preservation, and environmental resilience. After the 2015 earthquakes, it played a major role in rebuilding schools and clinics. Today, the Himalayan Trust is an international network supporting education, health, livelihoods, and Sherpa heritage—a living legacy of Sir Ed's belief in helping where help is needed in the Solu-Kumbu region.

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"Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen." Mark Twain

## President's Message



### Greetings to all u3a members

"Old age is a gift" says grandpa, played by Danny DeVito, in *Jumanji the next level*. I like *Jumanji* movies because they are wildly imaginative fantasies. Nerds turn into rippling-muscled heroes and shy girls become glamour pusses. And people with a prejudice against the opposite sex get their sex changed. "You never really understand a person until you consider things from (their) point of view..... until you climb inside (their) skin and walk around in it" (Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*). The change in roles no doubt explains why the *Jumanji* movies are popular with teenagers but for me they appeal because they are based on the traditional journey tale in which people must work together and support each other in extraordinary circumstances or they will be condemned to being stuck in a children's board game, forever.

It is tempting to compare our present situation with *Jumanji*. Things are happening now that should be politically inconceivable if not downright stupid. Diplomacy is not understood and the international rule of law is jettisoned. The world is a crazy place. The courage to "speak truth to power" appears to be singularly lacking in most heads of state. All this, while the problems of paramount importance to our world, climate change and the paradigm shift due to AI are ignored.

Old age is a gift because by now we have some understanding of the Harper Lee quote. We have learnt over a lifetime; there is more than one way of dealing with a problem. More than one way of skinning a cat, as my father would say. Just possibly the person you don't agree with has a better solution.

Old age is a gift because you have time for yourself. Time to think about life. Time to recall the good times and the successes. Time to spend with your family members. "Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their parents" (Proverbs 17:6). Time to try something new, which u3a is so good at providing. And there is still time to contribute to society. Remember "The pen is mightier than the sword".

As Rob Campbell (Chancellor of Auckland University) said at a recent u3a meeting "It's time to speak up!"

Laurence Melton

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### **u3a Auckland Network Event Celebrating u3a in Action 2026**

Salvation Army Church, 18 Allright Place, Mt Wellington,  
Saturday 25 July 2026 - 9:30am (for 10:00am) to 2:30pm

Speakers:

Morning: [Dame Wendy Pye](#) - "Teaching the World to Read."

Afternoon: [Shamubeel Eaqub](#) - "A Society Worth Having."

Also included are four presentations by u3a Members and lunch - \$50.00

**To register go to: <https://www.u3a.nz/event>**

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### **u3a REMUERA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS**

u3a Remuera welcomes Avril Beecher, Colleen Mellisop, Alison Norrie, and Louise Wilton as new members this month. We hope you will explore one or more of the study groups and find your experience fulfilling as well as an opportunity to meet new friends.

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## Group Reports

### Music Appreciation

This group is thriving we have for the last five years met on the fourth Thursday of each month (we do not stop) at St. Vincents from 10 to 12. This is about to change. Due to renovations being carried out, parking will be limited or no parking. We have accepted the offer from Remuera Gardens to use their facility, same Thursday, same time, therefore April 23rd will be the last one to be held at St. Vincents.



We have had a great variety this year. Some amazing documentaries. They open our eyes and ears; each one establishes how great music can be for us. We had an opera, *The Pearl Fishes*, and heard that stirring duet “In the depth from the temple.” Another, which featured Gustavo Dudamel (see laeft), how he built an orchestra of young people giving them purpose in life.

I look forward to continuing this wonderful journey that kept us absorbed.

Gillian West, Convenor. [ggwest42@gmail.com](mailto:ggwest42@gmail.com)

### Science Around Us (SARUS)

Our group of 25 meets on the fourth Monday of each month at Grace Joel Retirement Village, with an average attendance of 17–18. Members come from a wide range of backgrounds: while some have scientific background, many do not. All talks are pitched at a level that non-scientists can follow.

Each meeting begins with a 30–40 minute presentation. Speakers use a variety of styles, and discussion is lively, with questions often woven into the talk. After a coffee break, we move to short talks of 2–10 minutes, usually sparked by something that has recently caught a member’s interest. These reliably generate energetic conversation.

Recent main topics have included *From Myth to Measurement: How Science Reveals a More Hopeful Human Story*; Extinction; and Microplastics. Short talks have ranged from GLP-1 and weight reduction to asteroid deflection, polar bear diets, drone delivery of snake anti-venom, and children’s street-play initiatives in Addis Ababa.

An outing to a place of interest is enjoyed each year. Our visits have included Tiritiri Matangi island; the Maritime Museum including a harbour cruise on the historic tug, William C Daldy; Mangere Wastewater plant, the Ardmore water Treatment Plant, Chelsea Sugar Factory to name a few. All are followed by a celebratory lunch.

Joint convenors:

Dennis Rose: [merryndennis@gmail.com](mailto:merryndennis@gmail.com) and John Malcomson: [johngmalc@gmail.com](mailto:johngmalc@gmail.com)

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## BREAKING NEWS

Members of **Classic Movies** and **Music Appreciation** please note from May onwards the venue for your meetings has changed to Remuera Gardens Village, 57 Richard Farrell Avenue, Remuera. St Vincent’s Village is no longer available for our meetings as it is undergoing building renovations.

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**HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT** – introducing a friend to u3a Remuera? Our organisation needs new members to continue thriving. Study groups allow non-members to attend a maximum of two meetings before requiring them to join the society.

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## Invitation from Centre for Co-Created Aging Research

You are invited to this exciting event featuring new technology created by senior students and staff at the University of Auckland and industry partners. It will feature a range of cutting-edge technologies tailored for older adult support. Expect to see chatbots and conversational AI that provide companionship and health support; demonstrations of social human-robot interactions; AR/VR platforms for physical and cognitive rehabilitation; and sensor-based systems for fall detection, prevention, and monitoring of daily activities.

Together, these tools highlight how intelligent, user-friendly technologies can transform ageing into a more empowered and connected experience. This is a transdisciplinary event featuring staff and students from computer science, engineering, bioengineering, medical and health sciences, and the Centre for Co-Created Ageing Research.

**Free entry. Bookings essential. Book tickets at our [Humanitix page](#)**

Thursday 21 May, at Newmarket Atrium

University of Auckland Newmarket Campus, 262 Khyber Pass Rd.

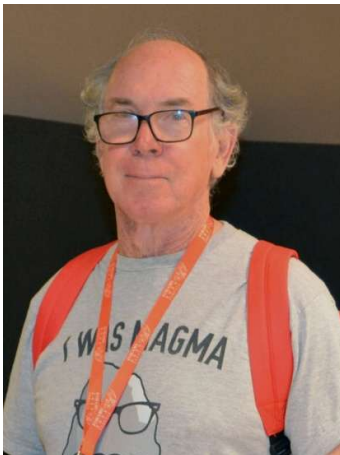


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## Looking Back

We were privileged to hear **Dr Bruce Hayward** speak about Auckland's volcanic field with particular emphasis on those around Remuera. The 53 identified extinct volcanoes are within a 20km radius of One Tree Hill and were formed around 200,000 years ago before human occupation. An exception is Rangitoto which last erupted around 600 years ago. The city is built over them and the basalt extracted

from them provided construction material to the builders of the early city. Thus, volcanoes are part of the character of the city.



Auckland's volcanoes are monogenetic, which is a small-volume volcano that erupts only once, often lasting weeks to years, and is generally created by a single batch of magma. Instead of building a large, single mountain like a stratovolcano, they form clusters or fields of small cones, maars, and lava flows. There is a network of seismometers around Auckland which provide an early warning system.

He went on to describe the 3 types of volcanic eruption;

**explosive** where magma meets cold water and explodes, there are 21 explosive craters around Auckland;

an **effusive** eruption where lava flows from the base of the volcano; and **phreatic** eruptions caused by escaping gas/steam from

underground or surface water being instantaneously heated by volcanic activity creating rapid evaporation of the water into steam. This type of eruption (most common) creates a scoria cone of which there are 33 around Auckland, 12 of which have been completely quarried.

Bruce referred to the early maps which identified the various volcanoes and satellite eruptions around Auckland in the 1860's. Heaphy in 1860 and Hochstetter in 1864 both provide valuable information from the early years of the city. He concluded by identifying some of the prominent geological features around Remuera: Orakei basin, a crater lake formed around 120/130,000 years ago; Mt Hobson, last erupted around 35,000 years ago and was extensively quarried in the 1870's by early settlers; Mt Wellington last erupted around 20,000 years ago is the 2<sup>nd</sup> youngest of Auckland's volcanoes.

Our second speaker last month, was Mary Gray from Arts, Artists, Architecture and Antiques (4A's) who introduced us to Sir Ian Athfield KNZM, a Wellington based architect, 1940 to 2015.



Sir Ian designed distinctive and innovative houses that challenged suburban norms, as well as celebrated commercial, public and institutional projects. He was influenced by the spaces between buildings favouring sculptural and rectilinear shapes. He founded his own practice in 1968 which included his wife, an interior designer, and later one of his sons in 1986. In 1965 he started work on his first major project, Athfield House, for his family and a studio which evolved over a decade and has become a Wellington icon. He specialised in building on slopes making use of skylights, towers, steep roof structures and emphasised privacy through window placements. Some of his well-known buildings include the Wellington Public library, Jade Stadium and the Waitakere Council building. Sir Ian won many awards both international and 13 NZIA Supreme Awards for his outstanding architectural projects. In 2004 he won the NZ Institute of Architects highest honour, the Gold Medal.

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### Did you know?

**536 AD** is frequently cited by historians, including Harvard's Michael McCormick, as the worst year to be alive. A massive volcanic eruption caused a, thick "volcanic fog" to shroud Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Asia, plunging them into darkness and causing temperatures to drop, leading to widespread famine, crop failures, and years of misery.

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### Notice Board

<b>Future Speakers</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> June 2026	Olaf Diegel, "3d Printing."	
	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Kate Russell, "Modern slavery and human trafficking here and abroad."	
<b>Meeting Tasks for June</b>	Greeters	Classic Movies	
	Morning Tea	Foodies	
	Newsletter Reports	AAAA and Genealogy	
	Mini Talk	NZ History	
<b>Key Contacts</b>	President	Laurence Melton	<a href="mailto:l.melton@auckland.ac.nz">l.melton@auckland.ac.nz</a>
	Vice President	Karen Yates	<a href="mailto:karenay@xtra.co.nz">karenay@xtra.co.nz</a>
	Director of Studies	Wallis Walker	<a href="mailto:wallis.walker@xtra.co.nz">wallis.walker@xtra.co.nz</a>
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**Study Groups** <https://remuerau3a.org.nz/study-groups/>



u3a Remuera meets at St Chads Church, Meadowbank on 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 10am. u3a provides a place for those in the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of their life journey, to come together in their local community, a chance to socialise, a chance to participate in interest groups, to learn something new and keep the mind active.