

August 2026

Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand

---

**Next Meeting:**

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2026 at 10am**

**Venue:**

St Chads Church, 38 St Johns Road, Remuera

**Principal Speaker:**

Dr Maree Todd, "Ageing Well: Genes, environment, lifestyle and luck."

**Mini Speaker:**

Diane Blomfield, "Hanly House, Preserving a Creative Legacy".



Join arts and heritage specialist Diane Blomfield as she explores the extraordinary legacy of Pat and Gil Hanly. Diane brings decades of experience in the arts and culture sector including roles as Executive Director McCahon House and Public Programme Manager at Corban Estate Arts Centre, Auckland Museum and Te Papa. Her love of heritage extends to wooden boats. She was the MC at the Auckland Wooden Boat Festival and is a guardian of a kauri planked Lidgard 34ft yacht.

[See page 4 below for details of a u3a Remuera visit to Hanley House.](#)

**Next Month's Speaker:**

Rob Harley, "Life's most amazing people."

**Meeting Tasks:**

Greeters: Famous and Infamous and Poetry  
Morning Tea: Science Around Us

---



Dr Maree Todd has worked as a consultant Geriatrician at Auckland Hospital throughout its multiple name changes, and Waitemata DHB since 1991. She retired from this role at the end of 2023 but continues to work one day a week for Bupa in the Clinical Service Improvement team.

She is currently the President of the New Zealand Division of the Australia New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine (ANZSGM), has been co-opted on to the Federal Council of ANZSGM and Chairs the HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing. Her interests are in residential aged care, ethics, delirium and dementia.

The topic, "Ageing well: Genes, environment, lifestyle and luck", covers some of the determinants of ageing well and the preventable risk factors for dementia. She takes a life span approach and will discuss some of the myths, fads and fashions.

---

"Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength." — Betty Friedan

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." — C.S. Lewis

"You know you're getting old when the candles cost more than the cake." — Bob Hope

## President's Message

### Greetings to all u3a members

Crikey—how the world has changed since we were young. Where have all the Fly Cemeteries and slabs of golden yellow Madeira Cake gone? Queen Anne Chocolates in the distinctive white box is still going after 101 years but their incredibly rich Ice Cream has disappeared along with their shops full of scrumptious sweeties. I am not surprised Eskimo Pies have disappeared; they were impossible to eat without getting in an awful mess and the name didn't help. Thank goodness Chocolate Eclairs are still freely available. You can't eat one (or three) without feeling a glowing contentment. All the troubles of the world melt away in sensory overload. I still daydream about ice cream sundaes. My favourite was the Rangitoto Special with three scoops of ice cream in a row, each dripping a different coloured fruit syrup. English immigrants swore the Knickerbocker Glory was the best of all.



For me the School Fair was the high point of the academic year. There were coconut shies and hoopla. I would spend far too many pennies before I finally knocked a coconut off its stand. And there was always the problem later of how to get at the white meat; a tremendous struggle involving a hammer, a hacksaw, and even the axe. The chief attraction was the Sweet Stall loaded with homemade chocolate fudge, caramels, toffee and coconut ice. The problem was all the good stuff went soon after the fair opened. The kids were as voracious as a pack of starving vultures. After quarter of an hour the stall would be stripped bare. This was a problem because there was one thing I liked more than lollies and that was comics.

The Book Stall usually had few bonzer comics; kids just didn't donate their favourites. So, you just had to be there first. Flick through the dog-eared magazines lickety-split, ignoring the tired old books. If you were lucky, you might find a copy of Dick Tracy or Superman and best of all Buck Rogers: The Fighting Sheriff of the Ranges. A Saturday Evening Post or Life magazine happened upon, was worth buying as long it didn't slow the plan to get to the sweet stall as fast as possible.

Next was the Cake Stall. The prize-winning sponge and gems were still on display but had already been sold. Ignoring the kid's boring attempts at scones and pikelets, I hoped to find some choice Custard Squares or Louise Cakes. I know mum liked a Chocolate Log. If the place had been pillaged, I'd settle for a Jam Roll or Treacle Tarts.

As for the other stalls, Fruit and Vegetables, and Groceries, were of no interest to me. The Chocolate Wheel was another matter. One kept well clear of the White Elephant Stall, which had junk nobody wanted, such as a mangle, a meat grinder for making rissoles, some rusty shovels and a ruptured eiderdown. If you got too close, you would likely be given one of the treasures.

The lollies that made it home had to be guarded from demanding siblings. It was best if they disappeared fast, which would result in an angry squawk "The greedy bugger has scoffed the lot!"

Laurence Melton

---

### u3a REMUERA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

u3a Remuera welcomes Ray Hedgland, Peter Merry and Lesley Rouse as new members. 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.

---

On average, around 69 of the 147 u3a Remuera members attend our Monday meetings together with an average of 5 visitors. **BRING A FRIEND** and help to grow this organisation, founded in 1989 as the first u3a group in New Zealand and still going strong.

## Group Reports

### Monday History Group

The Monday History group meets at 10am on the first Monday of the month – March to November, at St Lukes Community Centre, 130 Remuera Road. Parking on site is available.

The members of the group self-select and present history topics of their choice and interest. Amongst other topics this year, we have heard about coal and the industrial revolution, Admiral George Anson who circumnavigated the world and reformed the Royal Navy, The Scottish colony of Darien in Panama, the building of the Panama Canal and World War One poets. There is always something of interest to learn about and discuss. Newcomers are welcome.

Morning tea is available - a time of lively discussion.

Barbara Smith, Convenor: [bs.smith@hotmail.co.nz](mailto:bs.smith@hotmail.co.nz)

### Poetry Group

Well, the year keeps rolling on, and the poetry group continues with the sharing of poems, the interesting discussions, and the sharing of our views both similar and different about what makes good poetry. We meet as usual at the home of one of our members on the third Tuesday of the month at 1pm.

We bring poetry from all over the world, from across the ages, to share and to respond to. Today, I am going to share one of my own poems with you again.

#### **Standing Alone.**

I hear your sadness,  
your sense of being alone in the world.  
Your belief no one has time,  
or care, for you.  
You believe you stand alone.  
Standing alone can be

like a sapling,  
at the mercy of wind  
and storm.  
Easily broken and downtrodden.  
Standing alone might also be  
like a totara:  
tall, grounded,  
strong branches  
reaching out into the world.  
It may be like  
a Pohutukawa,  
tenaciously clinging,  
roots spreading for stability.  
A seasonal announcement of  
summer warmth.  
Standing alone can be  
proud and strong!

Lesley Gamlen©

Lesley Gamlen, Convenor: [lgam5661@gmail.com](mailto:lgam5661@gmail.com)



The Foodies Group enjoying another of their meetings

## VISIT TO HANLY HOUSE

For more than 30 years, the Mount Eden home of iconic New Zealand artists Pat Hanly and Gil Hanly was a vibrant centre of creativity, art and community. Now, with the property under threat from future development, an ambitious campaign aims to preserve Hanly House as a museum, artist residency and public garden. Join arts and heritage specialist Diane Blomfield as she explores the extraordinary legacy of Pat and Gil Hanly, the importance of artist houses in Aotearoa, and the vision to transform this much-loved home into a living cultural landmark for future generations.



Following Diane Blomfield's talk on Hanly House, Remuera u3a has scheduled a visit to

**Hanly House at 7 Walters Rd, Mt Eden**

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August at 10.30am**

**Cost \$20 per person** –Please make payment to U3A Remuera Inc - 12 3030 0469700 00, include your *name in the Reference box and the word HANLY in the Code box* when you pay.

**The last day for payment is Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August.**

Some members may choose to gather for lunch around 12 noon at a Dominion Rd Café – details to follow. Lunch will be for each person's own cost.

---

### At our previous meeting.....

Kate Russell from the Hagar Trust informed us of modern-day slavery. She began with the statement that today, 50 million people around the world live in slavery. The majority are women and children and 60% of enslaved people live in the Asia-Pacific region. It is known that Vietnamese men are being trafficked to work as slaves in other countries.



Slavery includes women forced into marriage and held by coercion. With no "safety net" such as a welfare system, in many countries women are kept in domestic servitude and to bear children after which they are often dismissed, possibly detained, treated as criminals and sexually abused.

Kate illustrated this situation with Aly's story. As a child, Aly was dumped in a rubbish bin, placed in state care where she was raped and pregnant at 14. She kept the child who had spina bifida. However, with the aid of the Hagar Trust, Aly became a



survivor and her story shows what becomes possible when survivors are met with patience, dignity and care that does not give up. Aly found support through Hagar and slowly began rebuilding trust, skills and confidence. Today, she mentors other women, advises policymakers and leads prevention work in at-risk communities, using her own lived experience to help protect others.

The Hagar Trust, which is a Christian organisation, works in countries such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Myanmar, the Solomon Islands, Thailand. The Trust encounters strong opposition from governments although they try to work with them to create safe places particularly for emergency situations like earthquakes.

Care is provided both in a residential setting as well as community-based care utilising the people from those countries. In addition, vocational skills are taught and education provided to help survivors to find employment. Since commencing in 1994, thousands have been helped to rebuild their life.

In New Zealand, MBIE estimates 10,000 people live in slavery within certain industries like fishing, orchards, dairy and sex work. Often it is migrants who abuse other migrants or binds them through debt. Methamphetamine has become a major problem among the South Pacific Islands.

In the mini talk, Wallis Walker entertained us with an inciteful talk on the history of the Manukau harbour. This is New Zealand's 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest harbour and was once the busiest. Its water surface is 394 square kilometres in size, mostly shallow with deeper channels. It was used extensively by Māori as a transportation waterway as well as providing a good source for food such as fishing, seagrass and providing habitat for birds. There are significant sandbars across the mouth of the harbour making it quite hazardous.

During the mid-1830's, Captain Thomas Wing provided the first detailed survey of the harbour and who later in 1837 served as harbourmaster and pilot for 30 years. He was the great grandfather of Sir Peter Blake.



The sinking of the Orpheus in 1863 with the loss of 189 lives during calm seas (regardless of the painting of its sinking?) and weather, owing to inadequate charts, is New Zealand's greatest maritime disaster. Owing to the sandbanks and the growth of the Waitemata harbour in Auckland, the Manukau harbour became a backwater.

With the reclamation of land to build the airport and railways together with dumping of wastewater and effluent, the harbour has experienced increased silting and changes to the shape of the shoreline. Future plans for the area

include treated water being pumped into the harbour from several water treatment plants. Auckland Council is being pressured to improve management of this harbour and restore some of its original appeal. For instance, Puketutu Island once had 8 volcanic cones, but now only one remains, as the scoria was used to build the airport.

The dumping of waste water into the harbour remains a contentious issue.

---

### U3A AUCKLAND NETWORK MEETING

310 delegates from the 28 Auckland u3a organisations met at the Salvation Army church in Mt Wellington on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July. The two principal speakers, Dame Wendy Pye who spoke about Teaching the World to Read and economist Shamubeel Eaqub who spoke about A Society Worth Having. Both were very informative and inspiring talks about some of the good things happening in New Zealand.

Four mini talks were presented by various members of u3a groups including Michael Littlewood from Remuera. Michael spoke about his book, William and Tiraha his great, great, grandparents. This was an abridged version of the talk he presented to our October 2025 meeting. Other mini talks were about Street Art, Chopines in ancient Venice, and aphantasia, all fascinating topics. The speakers were all eloquent and enlightening. A wonderful day for the 16 of us from Remuera.



Some of the u3a Remuera delegates.

### Notice Board

|                           |                                                                                               |                                                                      |                                                                        |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Future Speakers           | 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2026                                                               | Rob Harley, “Life’s most amazing people.”                            |                                                                        |
|                           | 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2026                                                                 | Susanne Burton Thompson, “A Life Full of Surprises.”                 |                                                                        |
|                           | 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2026                                                                 | Shamubeel Eaqub, “Rebuilding New Zealand: From Fraying to Fairness,” |                                                                        |
| Meeting Tasks - September | Greeters                                                                                      | AAAA                                                                 |                                                                        |
|                           | Morning Tea                                                                                   | Classic Movies                                                       |                                                                        |
|                           | Newsletter Reports                                                                            | Classic Movies and Current Affairs                                   |                                                                        |
|                           | Mini Talk                                                                                     | Music Appreciation                                                   |                                                                        |
| Key Contacts              | 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> |
|                           | Almoner                                                                                       | Alison Ross                                                          | <a href="mailto:ea.ross@xtra.co.nz">ea.ross@xtra.co.nz</a>             |
|                           | Membership Sec.                                                                               | Lynn Bartram                                                         | <a href="mailto:lynnbartram3@gmail.com">lynnbartram3@gmail.com</a>     |
|                           | Treasurer                                                                                     | Lakshman Abeynaike                                                   | <a href="mailto:Lakshman.a@xtra.co.nz">Lakshman.a@xtra.co.nz</a>       |
| Email Address             | <a href="mailto:u3aRemuera@gmail.com">u3aRemuera@gmail.com</a>                                |                                                                      |                                                                        |
| Website                   | <a href="https://remuerau3a.org.nz/">https://remuerau3a.org.nz/</a>                           |                                                                      |                                                                        |
| Study Groups              | <a href="https://remuerau3a.org.nz/study-groups/">https://remuerau3a.org.nz/study-groups/</a> |                                                                      |                                                                        |



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.