

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025



'Tis the time of Easter Eggs, the more the better. Cut back next week.



The first full moon after the March equinox. Who worked that out, I don't know.



In Ireland, the sun dances on Easter Sunday morning...or so we are told.



"Easter" has the same word origin meanings as "oestrogen"...and it used to be a festival of Fertility in pre-Christian Rome.



Not to belie the massive Christian impact from Good Friday to Resurrection Sunday. Spiritually, one of the two major unifying, faith-upholding times of the year.





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COMMUNITY FORUM

Date and Time: Wed, April 16th . Doors open at 9:30 am

Venue: Bridge Club Rms, Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd, Lynmore

Welcome to our autumn get-together.

Enjoy tea, coffee and munchies (no charge!)

Want to know more? Call 027 310 8348

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Guest Speakers: **Susan Ackroyd**
 Writer, History, Travel



Who were the 3 blind mice?

Was Humpty Dumpty real?

*Did Dr Foster get more than his trousers wet and who was
Marjory Daw?*



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Many of us in U3A were raised hearing and reciting nursery rhymes and we've read them to children from sometimes beautifully illustrated books, but do we know their origins and meanings?

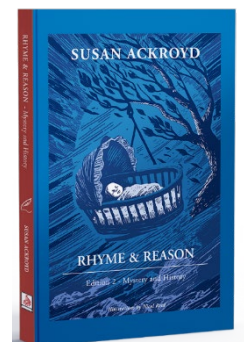
Susan Ackroyd, our April speaker, will tell us of her intensive research into the history of 20 nursery rhymes from the 13th to the 18th centuries and their relationships to political and social issues in England over time. The rhymes may sound innocent, but some are quite dark.



Susan sounds to be a very interesting person. With an educational background she started as a high school English/History teacher before leaving to travel and then to work with adult migrants and refugees. Then while studying to become a lawyer she worked in vocational education, co-designing a tool to ensure quality training resources. After completing her law degree, she worked for 6 years in the field of elder law and then in her final 3 years before retirement she travelled Australia investigating problems in the workplace.



In 2024 she published her book "Rhyme and Reason" which would have been available for sale except they were sold out at Wellington U3A: these can be ordered.





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Susan lives with her husband in the Blue Mountains in NSW but regularly visits families in the UK where they spend time on their narrow boat. She loves history, political satire, knitting and entertaining. We look forward to being entertained by her stories.

Liz Love: Information taken from susanackroyd.com website and from a book review on oberonmatters.com

YOUR COMMITTEE

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JULIA STEELE	021 155 6776



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Each newsletter, we profile a committee member.

JILL NICHOLAS



Bifurcated isn't a word bandied about much these days. However its definition - "of being divided into two parts" - makes it the perfect fit for U3A committee member Jill Nicholas.

Now there's a scary thought - two of her. Surely not?

'Fraid so. The dinkum reality is the Jill Nicholas most recognise is but one half of her persona.

Her birth name was Gillian Neill. So why the semi-pseudonym? It's always stuck in her craw that so many struggle getting their tongues around Gillian, opting to use the soft G in preference to its hard - and correct - counterpart. The result's Gillyan, hence the switch to pronunciation friendly Jill.

The change from Neill to Nicholas came via marriage. Jill's was in the days when it was still the 'done thing' for women to take their husband's surname.

Would she make the same switch in this supposedly more unshackled era? Hell, no.

She's a fully paid up, card carrying member of the 1970s women's lib revolution who freed the sisterhood from kitchen sink domesticity and into the workforce with its promises of equal opportunities and man-sized pay packets.

Yeah, right to that - but that's a subject for debate in another forum.

So back to unearthing Jill/Gillian's titillating past as the editor decrees we must.

She's resolute that there's very little of prurient public interest.



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Put her under pressure and she accepts that maybe one or two could be agog to learn that if her mother had had her way the world could have been free of baby Gillian mere days after her birth.

Her 1941 arrival coincided with Japan's push into the Pacific.

As legend has it two new mums supposedly swapping knitting patterns on Matamata maternity hospital's veranda were in fact surreptitiously plotting how best to dispose of their newborns before the "yellow perils" made Aotearoa landfall.

Why they didn't proceed with their murderous intent is unrecorded. Possibly someone convinced them an infanticide conviction wouldn't be a good look on their previously pristine rap sheets.

As things transpired, both those babies went on to reach octogenarian status.

One was destined to make it onto the rich list. One wasn't. No prizes for guessing her identity.



Rotorua thanks Jill Nicholas for more than 60 years' service to journalism and the community. Daily Post, 16 December 2020

But she did grow up to make it onto another list - that record of the most reviled occupations, regularly topped by journalism.

It's the occupation to which Jill's devoted her working life. For the past 55 years her beat's been plied in Rotorua, first as an oh-so-scandalous Truth reporter followed by a far more staid stint at Radio Geyserland. From there it was on to the Daily Post as chief reporter then deputy editor. For the uninitiated that's the newsroom patsy who does all the dirty work editors consider beneath their more elevated status.



So that's it, folks a once-over-lightly expose of the life and times of the U3A committee member who, until now, has resolutely refused to expose herself to public scrutiny for one irrefutable reason.

It's that other people's stories are of far more interest and archival value than hers. Take Jill's word for it - that's her field of expertise.



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OUT AND ABOUT IN TARANAKI

Out from Stratford to Lake Rotokare near Eltham (googleable: Lake Rotokare Walk). The lake and environs are a pest-free sanctuary with a pest-proof fence around the lake including a thriving natural forest full of native birds. Met with a dedicated team (not DOC) checking on the resident Kiwis (viability, weight etc). They had specially trained dogs, radio transmitters and ropes for some of the steeper areas.

There were two tracks, the first, an easy 4 km around the lake. Second, there was the Ridge Walk. Medium to high level of fitness required, 1220 steps, 3-5 hours. I took the challenge. We started with a 235 m climb straight up on wood-supported steps...a lungs pounder, then the track and steps beside the ppf working along to track one perimetering Rotokare.

North Island robins pecked at goodies scratched up by my boots and I heard saddlebacks in the vicinity.

Lunch and back to Stratford.

John Turner

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD GROUP

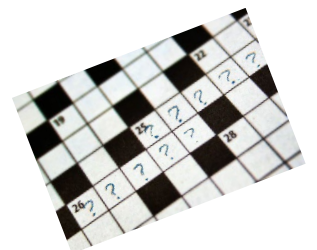
Enjoy puzzles? This could be for you.

A cryptic crossword is something you can do at any time anywhere. Solving a clue is a game of finding out, and each clue is a separate game or puzzle, so solving the whole crossword is solving a lot of small puzzles.

We will provide a platform by which beginners and others can learn how to improve their ability to solve cryptic crosswords in a fun and non – competitive way.

If this sounds like a fun challenge email:

Cate on catefrey1@gmail.com or Paul on p.gellatly@xtra.co.nz for more details.





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U3A PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP EXHIBITION

Have you seen the group's exhibition in the Parksyde Café? The works on display cover an interesting and wide range of subjects. We have some very talented members including two from our Committee – Jim Hartwig and Judy Somerville.



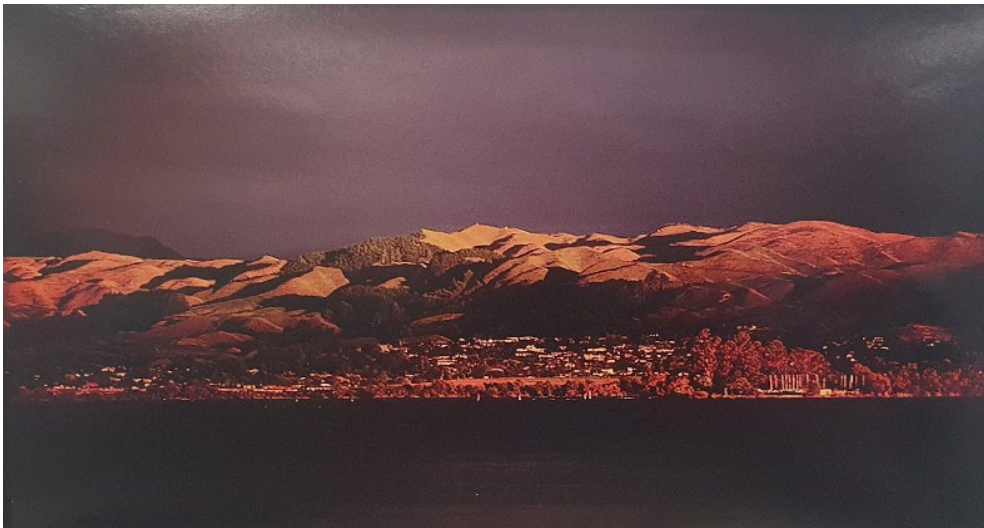
Judy Somerville



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Jim Hartwig



For further
information contact
the group's convenor,
Dell Gee
0210502550.

If you would like to
join the group, they
meet at the C T Club
every 2nd Tuesday at
1.30pm. On the 4th
Tuesday there is a
group outing.



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ROTORUA U3A INTEREST GROUPS: Highlighting indicates that the group currently has vacancies (April 2025) For more information, visit our website: www.u3arotorua.com

Topic	Time	Contact
Art History	2 nd Mondays, 1.30pm	Anne Hunt 3487680 anneanddonhunt@gmail.com
Book - General	3 rd Mondays, 2.00pm	Jill Nicholas 027 4243091 jill.nicholas@gmail.com
Book Reviews	4 th Mondays, 2.00pm	Jeanette Ogg 348 8501 mandj.ogg@gmail.com
Cities	1 st Wednesdays 1.00pm	Cate Frey 220853913 catefrey1@gmail.com
Current Events (1)	1 st Thursdays, 10.00am	Nan Miller 3455817
Current Events (2)	1 st Wednesdays, 10.00am	Annie Wells 027 459 5157
Films	1 st Mondays, 12.30pm	Judy Somerville 357 2292
History	2 nd & 4 th Fridays, 10.00am	Bob Christensen 020 4069 0982
Philosophy	4 th Thursdays, 1.30pm	Peter Wood 345 5099 stpeterwood@gmail.com
Photography	2 nd Tuesdays, pm utings on 4 th Tuesdays	Dell Gee 021 050 2440 or 345 6557
Poetry	2 nd Thursdays, 2.00pm	Margaret Lett 343 9223 margaretlett@gmail.com
Ratbags	Check with Peter Wood	Peter Wood 345 5099
Science and Engineering	2 nd & 4 th Mondays, 9.30am	Mel Bowen 345 3221 mel.bowen@xtra.co.nz
Singing – The “Grey Warblers”	Twice monthly – time and venue notified by e-mail	Hilary Calman Hilary.calman@gmail.com
Visits	1 st Fridays, 1.30pm – can vary	Judy Somerville 357 2292
Wednesday Art	Every Wednesday, 1.15-3.00 pm	Mel Bowen 345 3221 mel.bowen@xtra.co.nz
Writing for Families (1)	1 st Fridays, 9.30am	Anne Stewart 345 9369 bastewart@xtra.co.nz
Writing for Families (2)	3 rd Mondays 10 am	Gordon White 273458634 poppagordie@gmail.com

