



# West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

**August 2023**

**Next meeting: 10:00 am Friday 11 August, Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Rd, New Lynn**

## COMMITTEE

President	Bill Mutch	<a href="mailto:president@rebuswestauckland.nz">president@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	817 4721
Vice-President	Noel Rose	<a href="mailto:noelrose1976@gmail.com">noelrose1976@gmail.com</a>	828 1305
Immediate Past President	Bill Fairs	<a href="mailto:bill.fairs@gmail.com">bill.fairs@gmail.com</a>	627 8297
Secretary	Vince Middeldorp	<a href="mailto:secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz">secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	828 5250
Treasurer	Charles Nicholls	<a href="mailto:treasurer@rebuswestauckland.nz">treasurer@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	6293816
Welfare Officer	Vacant		
Outings	Ian Smith	<a href="mailto:ismith435@gmail.com">ismith435@gmail.com</a>	027 4549343
Newsletter	Vince Middeldorp	<a href="mailto:editor@rebuswestauckland.nz">editor@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	828 5250
Speakers	Noel Rose	<a href="mailto:noelrose1976@gmail.com">noelrose1976@gmail.com</a>	828 1305
Hospitality	Trevor Pollard		817 8822
	Alan Babich	<a href="mailto:ajbabich@xtra.co.nz">ajbabich@xtra.co.nz</a>	833 6169
Membership	Vacant		
Attendance	Stephen David	<a href="mailto:sj david55@gmail.com">sj david55@gmail.com</a>	021641717
Webmaster	Vince Middeldorp	<a href="mailto:vince@rebuswestauckland.nz">vince@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	828 5250
Photographer	John Mihaljevic	<a href="mailto:john@rebuswestauckland.nz">john@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	098361504



*Mensto De Roos (left) enjoying summer in the northern hemisphere*

**PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE**  
**President's Report August 2023**  
**Bill Mutch**



*Bill Mutch at the July meeting*

Welcome to the middle of our winter.

Many clubs, including ours, have had a mid-winter lunch. I could not attend, but I have had good reports about the food for just \$25 per head. I also had a report from another group who went to New Lynn RSA and it was below average. Our going to Swanson was a good choice.

I have had some requests to return to Ryders for a roast and a movie. Perhaps we could check this out.

Our last guest speaker was outstanding, and he certainly knows how to keep people interested. I am not sure who we have next.

It was nice to see others help Trevor in the kitchen after he was running late. The road to Trevor's house is blocked by a large slip, so he has to make a big detour when he leaves home. This situation has gone on for 4 months.

A couple of members have asked me when I will do my presentation on Auckland's street kids. I have not forgotten; just waiting for when we are short of guest speakers. Recently I had lunch with one of my past street kids who was a terrible boy in 1982 and is now a really lovely person. He said he was so grateful I never gave up on him and that I convinced my panel to give him a chance.

Just a bit more about funerals. I got a neighbour to check on a friend who was a loner and stayed in the Waikato. It resulted in the police gaining entry only to find him in the bath, deceased.

The daughter who lived a long way away ended up dealing with a non-New Zealand-owned funeral home. Well, what a rip-off with high charges and poor service. So once again be sure everything is extra clear for funeral homes to call in the event of a bereavement.

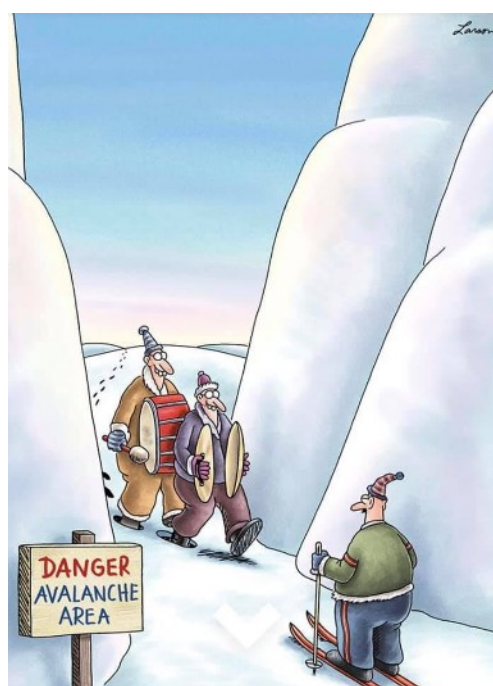
No major welfare reports, except Trevor and Fay have had a fair share of health hurdles but are coping okay.

We have two boys (17) staying for 12 weeks from Saudi Arabia and two girls (16) from Japan. One boy said I've got a big bed!!!

I have also been busy at North Shore Hospital. For the past eight years, I have taken part in the final doctor's exams. It is something I give priority to.

So, as they say, moss never grows on a busy street.

Cheers Bill



## MEETING REPORT

July 2023

Whisper AI transcription (edited)



Charles Nicholls explaining the current financial situation at the July meeting

Good morning everyone, welcome to this beautiful winter's day.

Now have we got any visitors today please? We've got one visitor here.

Have we got any apologies, I've got Stephen David down here. Mensto, he's in Holland.

Are there any matters arising from the June meeting. No. I'll give that a big tick.

Correspondence. Rebus Chronicles. They are looking for someone with good Rebus experience who would be prepared to come onto the board for a few months. Also George Tredegia has taken over as chairman of Rebus NZ.

Okay what about the Treasurer's Report, Charles?

*Just before I give the Treasurer's Report I'd like to repeat a comment I made a few weeks ago about hearing aids. One of our members has lost a hearing aid this morning and I lost mine during Covid. Please make sure you have nominated your two hearing aids with your insurance company because then you are covered. If your hearing aids are not mentioned as part of your contents policy, the insurance company may not pay out. As these things could cost anything from six to ten thousand dollars, make sure you do that.*

*To the Treasurer's report. We're still in the black but we are reflecting a generation that's moving on. I'm not sure that this is the sort of club that a lot of younger over sixty year olds are going to join.*

*I'm opposed to putting up any fees. We want to make this a club that people could afford to come to. Just remember it costs about ninety dollars a month to run the club.*

Where's Ian (Smith)? He's not here.

*Ian has organised a gold card trip to the Devonport Museum on Wednesday on the 26th of July. We catch the train leaving Henderson at 9:10 am. We always get in the last carriage of the train and sit down the back. We will reach Britomart at 10 o'clock. We've got about half an hour before the ferry sails, so we will have time to get a coffee at Starbucks in Britomart.*

*When we get off the ferry at Devonport, there's a 2 minute walk to the bus stop and an 807 bus that will get us to the museum at 10.49 am.*



*The suggestion is that we go to Devon on the Wharf for lunch. They have a menu that caters for all tastes.*

Next on the agenda is the welfare report. Has anyone got something about someone being sick or ill other than Stephen David who is not well.

I'd like at this particular stage to mention that a couple of you have phoned me about my comments on funerals in the July newsletter. What I suggest you do is keep that newsletter pinned up on the cupboard and just say to someone that if they need to get a funeral director, the number's up in the cupboard.

General business any general business? Nothing.

Noel who have we got speaking next month?

*Elin Noyer is going to talk about falls. This could be a very interesting topic for us.*

The date for the next meeting is 11th August. It is two days after my birthday and three days after Trevor's birthday.

See how many of these you can answer:

- Which of Christopher Columbus' famous ships caught fire on Christmas Day in 1492? *Who said Santa Maria? Very well done.*
- Which assassinated American president had a dog that was also killed? *You're right. Abraham Lincoln.*
- What country used to execute anyone caught drinking coffee? *Who said China? Absolutely wrong. Anyone say Russia? You are also wrong. It was Turkey.*
- Which rock star thought he was being stalked by a giant pink rabbit? *David Bowie. I think he was smoking too much weed.*
- This is a good one. In what country were the first belts made? Which country made the first belts and invented the belt? *The answer came from over there. China.*
- And who was the only First Lady to carry a loaded revolver? *Eleanor Roosevelt.*

## **COFFEE MORNING**

### **SIERRA CAFE LINCOLN ROAD**

*Vince Middeldorp*



*Members at the coffee morning on 4<sup>th</sup> August at Sierra Cafe*

Sierra Cafe is a popular cafe on Lincoln Road with a mostly regular clientele. It is smaller than Esquires at the Boundary, and therefore, Ian Smith allocated different days for the two Rebus Clubs. Waitakere Combined Rebus Club to meet at Sierra Cafe on Wednesday and West Auckland Men's Rebus Club to meet on Friday.

Ian Smith said that because of the cold and wet winter weather on Wednesday, only one member from the Waitakere Combined Rebus Club went to the coffee morning. On Friday the weather was markedly better. Twelve members from West Auckland Men's Rebus turned up for their coffee morning.

The staff working in the cafe were pleased to see a new group of customers and said that if we came again to let them know so that tables could be pushed together and reserved for us. Given what happened on the Wednesday, that might not have been a very good suggestion.

Something I didn't notice, until Linda Narayan mentioned it, was the good acoustics in the Sierra Cafe. It was just as easy to talk to someone across the table as it was to talk to someone sitting next to you.

At the coffee morning, I found out why Bill Mutch and I have not been able to contact Trevor Pollard on his landline. Trevor's phone service is no longer on copper cable and is now being provided via wireless, i.e. from a mobile phone tower. Because of this change, Trevor has ended up with a new phone number. It is something he did not want, and despite reporting it to his telephone service provider, has not been put right.



*Noel Rose (standing) talks to Trevor Pollard at the coffee morning*

## **SUMMER HOLIDAY FOR MENSTO AND ELLA**

### **IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE**

***Vince Middeldorp***

Last year, when COVID-19 was still a prevalent and much-feared illness, Mensto De Roos and his wife Ella went on a summer vacation to their native country of Holland.

Mensto wrote us an email saying, "We have had very good hot weather in Europe. The water table is low and farmers are not allowed to use sprinklers. Because of the war in Ukraine, there are problems with the Russian gas supply and some bakeries are facing a tenfold increase in their power and gas prices."

This year, Mensto and Ella returned to Holland for another summer vacation. They will not be back until the end of September. Once again, the temperatures are hot and Mensto is out in his shorts and tee shirts.

Mensto has been visiting a friend in Drenthe, which is a province in the northeastern part of the Netherlands and is close to the German state of Lower Saxony. Ten years ago, this friend restored an ex-army Magirus Deutz truck back to new condition.



The weight of the truck is 16 tonnes and the fuel consumption is 1 litre per km. Having been manufactured in the early sixties, it has air brakes and power steering. Mensto said it can stop in a hurry and is a breeze to steer. The wiring needed some work and Mensto was able to remedy the problem.

The friend took his Magirus Deutz truck to a parade of old-time vehicles. There were about 80 farm tractors in the parade and lots of cars. Mensto described it as a fun day.

The tractors were mostly Ferguson, Lanz Bulldog and Deutz. The slow travelling speed of the parade, and a temperature of 38°C, resulted in American V8 cars experiencing overheating problems.

Mensto said it was amazing to see the vehicles that came out of sheds in the country, but it would be the same in New Zealand with all of our petrol-heads.



*Old time vehicles in Drenthe which is a sparsely populated rural area in the Netherlands*

### **GOLD CARD TRIP**

### **DEVONPORT MUSEUM**

**Vince Middeldorp**

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July trips organiser Ian Smith sent an email saying, “*The weather forecast is not nice for Wednesday. I think the trip to Devonport Museum should be cancelled. Please send out cancellation notices to both Waitakere and West Auckland members.*”

The situation on the weather maps didn’t look too bad and Tuesday was a fairly mild day. There must however have been something in the way the situation was developing that suggested the isobar lines were going to move much closer together. The weather office issued a red weather alert for strong winds from 1:00 am on Wednesday through to 11:00 am on Wednesday.

During the early hours of Wednesday morning there was a terrible gale with howling winds and squally rain showers. The strong winds cleared up quicker than the forecasters had predicted and at breakfast time they were all but gone. The weather during the rest of the day was cold with short heavy showers. It was not a day to be outdoors.

Ian Smith had made the right call to cancel the trip to the museum.

At the Sierra Cafe coffee morning on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> August, Ian said we will go ahead with the trip later in the year when the weather improves. At this stage Ian does not have a date in mind for when that might be.

## **GUEST SPEAKER**

### **MURRAY PARKER**

*Whisper AI transcription (edited)*



*Murray Parker speaking about his trip to Antarctica*

Beginning in the mid-1960s and up to about 2003, the New Zealand government sponsored three young people to travel to Antarctica to work for the summer.

In 1972, at the age of 18, I secured the nomination to go to Antarctica as a representative of Boys Brigade. There were two other representatives: one from St John Ambulance and the other from Boy Scouts.

Most people that manage to get to Antarctica fly both ways, but we travelled down on the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker USCGC Glacier, the flagship of the U.S. icebreaker fleet at the time.

I was given the honour of casting us off, so was the last one aboard and we headed out into Wellington Harbour.

An icebreaker is about twice the weight of any other ship of its size because of the massive thickness of the hull.

The hull is a sandwich of steel and concrete and the icebreaker doesn't so much cut ice as crush it.

The Glacier was the most powerful ship in the US Coast Guard icebreaker fleet. It had ten engines and was at the time, the biggest diesel electric power plant in the world.

Because icebreakers have no stabiliser and no keel, once out of Wellington Harbour, the ship rolled wickedly, and I was seasick for the first two days.

We were not passengers and were required to work our passage. I was on the four to eight watch. Another part of my duties included steering the ship. It is actually quite difficult. You are constantly correcting yourself to stay on the same course.

As we headed south, the weather deteriorated and we ended up in a force ten gale.

We were taking rolls 45 degrees on either side of the vertical and beyond. The clanger on the ship's bell would hit if the roll was 45 degrees.

As the night wore on, it clanged more and more, and then the clanging became continuous. I was utterly terrified. I didn't think we'd survive the night. We spent about 18 hours just staying head on into the waves.



If we had capsized, we would have gone straight down. We made no headway at all. The engines were used to keep head on into the seas.

As we went further south, a problem with ships going to the Antarctic exhibited itself. It's so cold the swell coming over the side immediately freezes to the metalwork. This ice can become quite heavy and in the very early days, ships capsized because of the weight of ice on them. You have got to get out there and hack it all off.

As we went further south, there was a pool running for when we would see the first iceberg. On its maiden voyage in 1956, this ship found the biggest known iceberg on record. It was 650 miles long by 450 miles across.

One of our tasks was to resupply the Cape Hallett Station, which was a joint US New Zealand base at Cape Adare.

Four men had wintered over at Cape Hallett Station. The ship's two helicopters were loaded with supplies, fired up and lifted off. They went together for mutual support because it was the extreme range for the choppers and returned five hours later.

There was now 24-hour daylight. The sun does not set at all; it just goes around in the sky. Of course, in winter, it is the reverse and is dark the whole time.

The helicopters were also used to spot leads up ahead, so the ship could get into a lead, which is a natural crack in the ice.

Just before Ross Island we reached a point where we were breaking ice by hammering at it, and we were making 400 metres a day.

We rendezvoused with another icebreaker which had come down from South America. It was the USCGC Northwind, and we rafted up together for Christmas Day services. There are not a lot of places in the world where you can stop and walk across to another ship.



*USCGC Northwind and USCGC Glacier*

There were joint Christmas Day services, one Catholic, one Protestant on each of the ships, then a very nice Christmas dinner.

We prepared to get underway again, but the ship was frozen and even on full power couldn't move. The standard way of breaking out of that situation is to put explosives all around the ship and then detonate the explosives.

At the same time, things called heeling tanks are utilised. There are huge volumes of fuel on board and high-speed pumps transfer the fuel from one side of the ship to the other to set up a rocking motion and break out.



We got ourselves free and then reversed up. There is a big V-notch in the back of an icebreaker and there are massive winches. We winched the Northwind into the V-notch and then both ships on full power managed to get underway.

We were now approaching the Antarctic continent and were breaking ice. The bow rides up on top of the ice and crushes it with its weight. This process carries on 24 hours a day. Life consists of two-minute cycles of the ship revving up, full power, racing forward, vibrating like crazy, slamming into the ice, and everyone's flung forward into bulkheads and other things.

Imagine trying to sleep, trying to eat, trying to shower. You had two minutes to go to the toilet.

It was very difficult to sleep. Mattresses were put on the floor and you wedged yourself somewhere so you didn't get thrown around.

We had four people with broken arms from being thrown into bulkheads. That's just life on board an icebreaker.

The earth isn't perfectly round, it's a sphere, and it's flatter at the poles. Therefore, you can see a lot further to the horizon. We could see Mount Discovery 120 miles away.

A lot of people have been caught out trying to walk to something and found it's much further away than they thought it was.

The icebreaker is a relatively small ship, and the cargo ships that are following are much wider. So an icebreaker can't just make one channel; it's got to make it three times wider than itself to allow for the cargo ships.

We were the more powerful of the two icebreakers, and therefore we were doing the heavy work of breaking the new ice. The Northwind was maintaining the channel behind us because as soon as we broke it out, these slabs of ice would start freezing again.

I can't emphasize enough that life on board an icebreaker is not pleasant. It's extremely noisy. You are thrown about the whole time and there's no respite. Other than for flight operations, when the helicopters are coming or going, this goes on 24 hours a day.

We approached the northernmost point of Ross Island, named by James Clark Ross in 1840, who discovered it.

Two active volcanoes formed the island and resulted in Mount Terror and Mount Erebus. Both are higher than Mount Cook. Erebus is about 13,500 feet as opposed to 12,250 feet for Mount Cook. Erebus is an active volcano. It's constantly smoking and in winter there's a glow at the top of it from a lava field within the crater.



*McMurdo Station on the south tip of Ross Island*

I was amazed watching the orca, the intelligence of them.

There were seals all basking on the ice, which is what the orcas feed on. The seals thought they were quite safe, but the orca would launch themselves out of the water onto the ice, slither across the ice, grab a seal, wrestle it back to the edge and gone.

If the seal was too far in, the orca would go deep and then come up from underneath, smash the ice and grab the seal.

The Glacier arrived at McMurdo Station, which is the largest permanently manned station in Antarctica. About 250 people are there during the summer period and around 120 during winter.

McMurdo Station is in a bay called Winterquarters Bay so named by Scott in 1901 because this is where he wintered with his ship in the Discovery Expedition of 1901 to 1903.

The Glacier tied up at a wharf built out of ice. It was constructed by building formwork similar to that which would be used for concrete and then pumping seawater into it. The sea water freezes and you've got a shelf of ice that you can offload the ship onto.

New Zealand's Scott base and McMurdo Station are only about two kilometres apart.

Originally, the New Zealand base was to be on the continent at a place called Butter Point. Ed Hillary was charged with building this base, but they couldn't get to it because of ice conditions. They were desperate to set a base up before winter arrived, and chose the spot where Scott Base is now located.

There is a wooden cross at Scott Base that was erected in 1912 for the three men, Robert Scott, Henry Bowers and Edward Wilson, who were discovered after they died returning from the pole.

In 1972-73, the only areas that were heated were the sleeping quarters, which were heated to about 10 degrees Celsius and the mess. Everything else was completely unheated. You wear your cold weather clothing the whole time.

Scott Base comprises individual buildings that are linked together with covered walk ways. The reason for it being constructed like that is so that fire doesn't spread.

The only way to communicate with the outside world was radio and even radio was affected by atmospheric conditions, particularly sunspot activity. So we could go four or five days without being able to contact anyone in the outside world. Today we've got satellites to overcome those problems.

Ross Island is an island and the Ross Ice Shelf rests us up against it.

The Ross Ice Shelf is a massive glacier, and it's the size of France. It's moving at about three to four metres a year out towards the sea where it carves off into the nefarious icebergs.



*Cutting blocks of ice with a chain saw to get water for Scott Base*



Local inhabitants included Weddell seals and leopard seals.

Leopard seals have got big powerful teeth. You don't mess with a leopard seal.

Anywhere where there's water, you'll find Weddell seals on the ice beside them. The seas are one of the most rich biological areas in the world with a variety of sea life and krill. But there's only life for a matter of a kilometre or two inland from the coast. After that, there's absolutely nothing.

The water supply for the base came from cutting with chainsaws blocks of ice off from pressure ridges, which result from the Ross Ice Shelf resting us up against the land mass. The pressure ridges are formed from snow precipitation that has solidified over many many years.

So providing water required cutting blocks of ice, loading them in a sled, towing them behind a bulldozer back to the base and then putting them into great big ice melters.

Consequently, water was a very precious commodity and, for that reason, showers were severely limited. If you were lucky, you got one every two weeks. If you were scheduled to go home to New Zealand, you didn't get a shower at all and at the end, I think I went five weeks without a shower.

You can't really drink the water because it's green and warm, so you drink beer.

Fire is a huge danger in the Antarctic because the humidity never gets above 3%. So everything is dry and thus will burn very easily. And if a fire starts burning, it is extremely difficult to put out. There is also a lack of water for firefighting.

In 1968, there was a fire at the British Stonington Island base on the other side of the continent. Everybody got out safely, but out of the 26 men on the base, only eight were still alive when they got help after their base had burned down. The others all died of hypothermia.

Because of the danger of fire, there are constant fire drills and somebody has to be on duty all night to check for fire.

I'm sure today there's all sorts of electronically activated fire alarms at the base.

Because there was no night, it was very difficult trying to sleep. The sun being high in the sky all the time, really messes with your body clock.

A few years earlier, the New Zealanders had built a ski field. The more adventurous of us went out skiing when the weather allowed it. Most of the guys would go over to McMurdo, where there were bars and casinos.



*Murray with one of the Husky dogs at Scott Base*

The Americans are pretty wasteful. An engine had been brought down which was missing its oil cap, so they threw the engine out. The New Zealanders went over to McMurdo, loaded the engine on a sledge, and brought it back. Then the base engineer whipped up a new oil cap, and we set it up to run the rope tow.

Once you could ski from the top to the bottom of the slope without falling off, on payment of \$2, you became a member of the Scott Base Ski Club.

When I went down, there were still Husky dogs in Antarctica. They're now all gone. Snowmobiles, some geared down to haul heavy loads, have replaced the dogs.

They were basically used for ceremonial purposes. When members of parliament or the prime minister or governor general went down, they were always taken for a ride on the dog sled. The rest of the time, the dogs were just tied up, and it just seemed quite cruel. They were magnificent dogs, massively powerful and also very intelligent. They were so excited to see you, they'd run around you and wrap their chains around your ankle. And then they'd just use their weight to knock you over on your back and climb on top of you. But they were quite harmless.

Because I was a survey cadet in those days, I went out for the day to re-establish some of the survey beacons around Ross Island.

Some beacons consisted of four 44 gallon drums welded end on end and strained with guide wires. Later in the day, we moved out to the middle of the Ross Ice Shelf and shot bearings to these various survey points.

This was done every year and from the results, it was calculated that the movement of the Ross Ice Shelf was about 4 meters per year.



*Survey beacon made from 44 gallon drums*

Air crashes are one hazard of Antarctica. Aircraft flying down reach a point where there isn't sufficient fuel to return if they can't land.

I have a photograph of a Hercules that arrived over McMurdo Sound in white-out conditions. It circled for as long as it could until the fuel was low. The pilot attempted to land, and a wing tip struck the ground. The plane cartwheeled, killing everybody on board. We stopped by the wreck of that plane and chose it as our lunch stop.

There are not many places out on the ice shelf where you can get shelter from the wind, so we had lunch inside the wreckage of the plane.

Because I was doing survey work, I was asked to go to the dry valleys in Queen Victoria Land to do some survey work. We went in a helicopter because it would take days to get there by any other means.

The dry valleys are 90 miles away from Scott Base across McMurdo Sound.

When we landed, we were on the continent. A lot of New Zealanders that go down to the ice, only go to Ross Island. So technically they don't stand on the continent of Antarctica.

As the name implies, there is no ice or snow in these valleys. The absence of ice and snow has nothing to do with temperature; it's actually cooler in the valleys than it is in the surrounding areas. To my knowledge there is still no satisfactory explanation for the dry valleys.



US Navy Iroquois helicopters flown by Royal New Zealand Air Force pilots carried underslung loads to places such as Vanda Station in the Wright Valley. The pilot explained to me it's quite tricky flying 90 miles with an underslung load. If you're not careful it starts swinging like a pendulum and it can flip the helicopter on its back. If you can't correct for it, you have to release the load or it will bring the aircraft down.

Vanda Station was established in 1967. I was there in 1973. In that six years, the wind had never dropped below 30 knots.

We had work to do here, and of course you can only work when the weather allows. A lot of the time it doesn't.

If the weather clears up at 1:00 am, then you go out at 1:00 am and start working and you work for as long as you can while the conditions allow.

I was getting historic weather information in the valley when the temperatures were hovering around minus 25 and we had about a 40 knot wind. I managed to get my cheeks and my nose frostbitten and that is not fun.

Basically, frostbite is when the flesh gets frozen solid. Blood circulation stops, that part of the flesh dies, turns black, rots and falls off your face. It's very painful and the smell of the decaying flesh is nauseating.

At the South Pole, the altitude is about 8,000 feet, but there's 12,000 feet of ice, so the massive weight of ice has depressed the land mass.

There's a lake in the Wright Valley called Lake Vanda. For about two days a year, a stream flows, the Onyx stream, and it flows from the sea inland, which doesn't happen anywhere else in the world. The Wright Valley terrain has been likened to the surface of the moon.

While we were up there, a Hercules went over high up and parachutes appeared from out the back of the plane. It was the US Pararescue team on an exercise and they parachuted down to where we were.

The lake itself has 12 feet of ice on the surface of it, but it's 30 degrees Celsius at the bottom of the lake. Nobody quite knows why the water's so warm. There is no evidence whatsoever of geothermal activity.

So the theory is that it's a greenhouse effect: the sun filtering through the ice warms the water and the ice actually insulates it to hold the warmth in.

One afternoon, I got the opportunity to visit the historic huts across Ross Island.

The Discovery Hut was built by Scott not for accommodation but as a store hut. In 1901, he moored the Discovery and wintered over on board the ship. Shackleton used this hut, returning from his attempt on the pole in 1907.



*Shackleton's Hut erected at Cape Royds in early 1908*

The hut that Shackleton built at Cape Royds is the most interesting of all. In his autobiography, Ed Hillary talks about seeing the ghost of Ernest Shackleton inside the hut.

We walked into this hut and the place had an aura about it; a presence. It was bitterly cold, but we all took our hats off because it just seemed irreverent to have them on.

In 1914, Shackleton attempted the Endurance Expedition which was to cross Antarctica because the South Pole had now been reached.

A team of four New Zealanders were ensconced in this hut to receive the men who had crossed the Antarctic Continent. Shackleton's main expedition was unable to land after Endurance was crushed in the Weddell Sea ice. Shackleton eventually led his men to safety, but the transcontinental march did not take place.

The men stayed in the Cape Royds hut for three years waiting for an expedition that never came. Facing their fourth consecutive winter, they sat down for dinner one Sunday night and spotted masts of a ship on the horizon. So they leaped up, ran across the ice, got on the ship and left. And if you go into that hut today, those half-eaten meals are still sitting on the table from 1918.

Also at this place is the world's southernmost Adelie penguin colony. They are particularly stupid birds. The most precious thing, if you're an Adelie penguin, is stones with which you make your nest. If a penguin got off its nest, another one would run and steal the stones leaving its own nest exposed so somebody would steal it. And you'd see two penguins running backwards and forwards between nests, stealing each other's stones. At the end of the day, they have achieved exactly nothing.

We left Cape Royds and flew to Cape Evans, where the hut that Scott built in 1910 is located and from where he set out for his fateful journey to the pole. This hut was restored by New Zealanders in the 1950s and, as with all of these huts, are administered today by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

I stood right beside Scott's bed and there's a picture of his wife Kathleen pinned to the wall.



*AA Wellington sign at Scott Base*

A New Zealand Press Association photographer took some shots of the three of us. Me on the left, Gary Hooper in the middle from St John's Ambulance, Peter Duncan from the Boy Scouts on the right.

I've actually contacted these two guys and we've organised a reunion in November to get back together. Gary Hooper is now Head of Orthopaedic Surgery at Christchurch Hospital.

After many false starts, finally we were booked on an LC-130 Hercules for the trip home. We were waiting to leave when somebody rushed in and said there's a blizzard coming in from the South Pole that will be here in 30 minutes. We had to get away before it came or else we would be engulfed by it. So everyone was yelling get on board, get on board.



The Hercules was equipped with skis that cost a million dollars a set. Once they start running, water between the ski and the ice creates suction, which makes it very difficult for the aircraft to lift off. So they use a process called JATO, jet assisted take-off. There are bottles on the side of the aircraft and once the Hercules reaches take off speed, the pilot activates the jet assistance to break the suction and get the aircraft airborne. But it means that as you lift off, there's a mighty lurch and then you're thrown into the air.

As we headed north, we encountered something that we hadn't seen for the whole time. Darkness.

The Hercules is unpressurised in the hold and unheated. So we had our full Antarctic gear on. You sat in a webbing seat with a bar at your back. The noise and the vibration were unbelievable. The temperature was around minus 25.

After living in the black and white of Antarctica, the colours of the grass and everything else outdoors, on our return home were amazing.

## **AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER**

### **ELIN NOYER**

*Microsoft Edge AI generated text*



The guest speaker for the August monthly meeting is Elin Noyer, the community strength and balance trainer at Harbour Sport!

Elin Noyer specializes in helping older adults improve their physical fitness and prevent falls.

Elin will be talking about the benefits of strength and balance training for older adults, how to stay active and safe both at home and in the community.

This will be a very informative presentation.

## **MOVIE AND ROAST AT RYDERS**

### **MESSAGE FROM ALLISON TURNER**

*Microsoft Edge AI generated text*



I have some unfortunate news to share with you regarding our planned visit to J C Ryders Cinema. I spoke to Clint Ryder, the owner of the cinema, and he told me that his place was badly damaged by a flood in January. He is still working on repairing the damage, and he doesn't expect to reopen until October at the earliest. He also needs to get some permits from Auckland Council, which could take some time.

On top of that, Clint told me that the cost of food for the roast dinners has gone up significantly. He buys his food from Gilmores, and they have increased their prices by around 50%. This means that Clint would have to charge us \$40 per person instead of \$25, which is what he was charging before. He said he understands that this might be too expensive for some of us, and he is sorry about that.

Because of these issues, I have decided to postpone the visit to J C Ryders Cinema until November. I will try to book a Tuesday in November, and I will let

you know as soon as I have a confirmation from Clint. I hope you understand and appreciate the situation that Clint is facing. He is worried about the future of his business, and says he will make a final decision after Christmas.

I apologize for any disappointment this may cause you. I know we were all looking forward to seeing a movie and enjoying another roast dinner at J C Ryders Cinema. I hope we can still do that in November, or sometime in the future.

Allison Turner  
Avondale Historic society

## **HIBISCUS COAST REBUS CLUB**

**AUGUST 2023**

**Vince Middeldorp**



*The pleasure of meeting with others of a similar age and interests*

On the 1st of August, I was the guest speaker at the Hibiscus Coast Rebus Club. This is the Club which set up Rebus NZ Incorporated in December 2015.

Both George Tregidga, the current chairman of Rebus NZ and Graeme McIntosh were at the meeting. It surprised me to see Graeme because I thought he was a member of Gulf Harbour Rebus Club. Graeme told me he was a member of both clubs and that there were about twelve people who were members of both clubs.

My main takeaway from visiting this club is that anyone who says a men's club is no longer sustainable really doesn't know what they are talking about. The Hibiscus Coast Rebus Club is a very successful men's club and is proof that such clubs can still thrive in this day and age.

We've been talking about using a lapel or headset microphone instead of a handheld one for a while now. Hibiscus Coast Rebus Club use two lapel microphones and I couldn't have been more impressed with how well they worked. We should follow their example and buy two lapel microphones; not just one.

At the end of my talk, the club gave me a Certificate of Appreciation. The template for this certificate is downloadable from the Rebus NZ website. Printed on thin card with a textured surface, it comes up looking really smart. We should print these certificates for our guest speakers. Presenting them is a nice gesture and they constitute a memento the recipient will probably want to keep.

### **SUPPORTERS**

**West Auckland Men's Rebus** acknowledges the support and assistance of:



***Our meetings are held on the second Friday of the month  
at the New Lynn Friendship Hall 3063 Great North Road***

***The September meeting date is Friday 8 September 2023***

If anyone has any views, opinions, or information they want to share with members, please do not hesitate to send them to [vince@rebuswestauckland.nz](mailto:vince@rebuswestauckland.nz), so that they can be included in the Newsletter.