



# West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

**March 2024**

**Next meeting: 10:00 am Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March, Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Rd, New Lynn**

## COMMITTEE

|                          |                  |  |             |
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| Secretary                | Vince Middeldorp | <a href="mailto:secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz">secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz</a> | 828 5250    |
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*Consulting Engineer Bryan Leyland's talk on March 8<sup>th</sup> is titled, "Net Zero: The Dream & The Reality."*

## **MEETING REPORT**

**February 2023**

**Chairperson: Bill Fairs**

**Attendance: 19 members plus 3 visitors (one arrived late)**

Neil Castle, John Corban, Stephen David, Vince Dennehy, Bill Fairs, Maurice Forbes, Andrew Geddes, John McKeown, Vince Middeldorp, John Mihaljevic, Andrew Narayan, Charles Nicholls, Terry Shannahan, Ian Smith, Trevor Pollard, Alan Verry, Allan Williamson, Ken Webster, Garrick Yearsley.

### **1. Opening Remarks:**

The meeting was opened by Bill Fairs due to the absence of the President and Vice President. Two visitors, Paul and Terry, were welcomed.

### **2. Apologies:**

Apologies were received from Lindsay Parris, who is recovering from skin grafts, Bill Mutch, who has Bell's Palsy, Peter Cox, who is currently in the hospital and Noel Rose whose wife is in hospital.

### **3. Correspondence:**

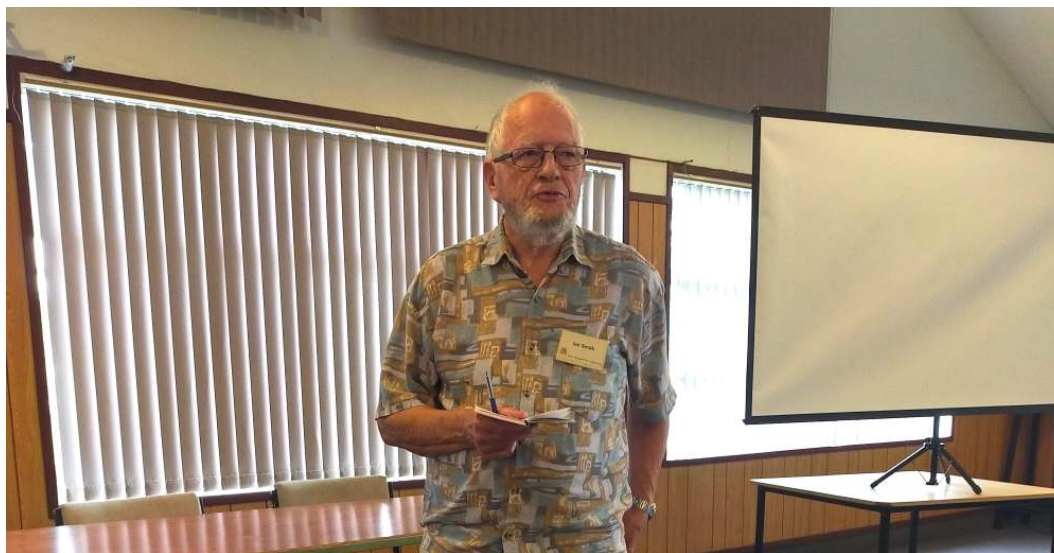
An email from Tom Lowndes which recalled a talk given by Ray Hancock about his time as a meteorologist in the Air Force during World War II.

### **4. Treasurer's Report:**

Charles Nicholls reported that the club had \$656.19 in the current account, \$155.50 in the cash box, and \$692.19 in the savings account. Regular expenses include \$58 out for the hall each month and \$50, usually for the speaker. The capitation fee of \$68.75 to Rebus New Zealand Incorporated is due next month. He urged members to pay their memberships; only about eight have been paid so far. The membership fee is \$30.

### **5. Club Membership:**

The club's transition from Probus to the Friendship Club was discussed. The decision to join Rebus was made after finding the Friendship Club's plans unsatisfactory. The benefits of the Rebus membership, including the use of the name, public liability insurance, and monthly newsletters, were highlighted.



*Trips and coffee morning organiser Ian Smith at the February 2024 meeting*

### **6. Trips and Coffee Mornings:**

Ian Smith said the next event is a coffee morning at Delicious Cafe in Te Atatu North. He made mention of the cafe's reputation for not obeying its liquor license. The next trip is on the Jane Gifford on the 13th of March. The bus is leaving at 9 o'clock from St John's Hall in Edmonton Road. Members are asked to pay \$50 for the trip. Bus hire costs are being paid by the combined club.

## 7. Timespanner:

Lisa Truttman, who spoke about the explosion in Rosebud Road last month, has a Facebook page called [Timespanner](#) where she posts some interesting photos.

## 8. General Business:

No general business was discussed.

## 9. Club Speaker:

Vince Middeldorp demonstrated how to use an AI tool called Copilot to write a letter. He compared it with Google's Bard for providing information and said that Copilot was superior.

## **PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE**

### **President's Report March 2024**

**Bill Mutch**

Dear All,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the card you sent last month. As you may know, I was diagnosed with Bell's Palsy, which was quite a challenge to overcome. It affected my speech and made eating a difficult task. However, I am pleased to inform you that I have now fully recovered.

Interestingly, this wasn't my first encounter with Bell's Palsy. I had a similar experience when I was 20, but this recent episode was significantly more severe. The prescribed medication had some strong side effects, but I am relieved to have completed the course.

The passing of Peter Cox was very sad news to me. Peter was a regular at our meetings, always ready to lend a hand to Vince and a constant presence at our coffee mornings. His absence will be felt deeply.

Unfortunately, due to my health, I was unable to attend Peter's funeral. However, Trevor Pollard was kind enough to share a detailed account of the ceremony. Speaking of Trevor, I would like to request your assistance in helping him with the morning teas.

As a reminder, there are still a few outstanding membership fees. The annual fee of \$30, which equates to just \$2.50 per meeting, contributes towards the cost of the hall and guest speakers. We have been fortunate that some of our guest speakers have generously donated their \$50 fee back to us.

I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting on Friday, 8th of March.

Best Regards,  
Bill Mutch

## **Claudia's Corner**

Why did the Walrus go to a Tupperware party?  
He was looking for a tight seal!!

What did the blanket say as it fell off the bed?  
Oh sheet.

Why did the fish get bad grades?  
Because it was below sea level.

What do you call a sleeping Bull?  
A Bull Dozer!

Helping the aged:

I saw this old dude outside my local pub, fishing, using a rod, in a big puddle. He looked really cold.

I said to him, "Come in and I will buy you a drink and you can get warm."

As we sipped our double whiskeys thought I would humour him, so I asked him how many had he caught today.

He replied, "Oh, you are the 8th so far!"

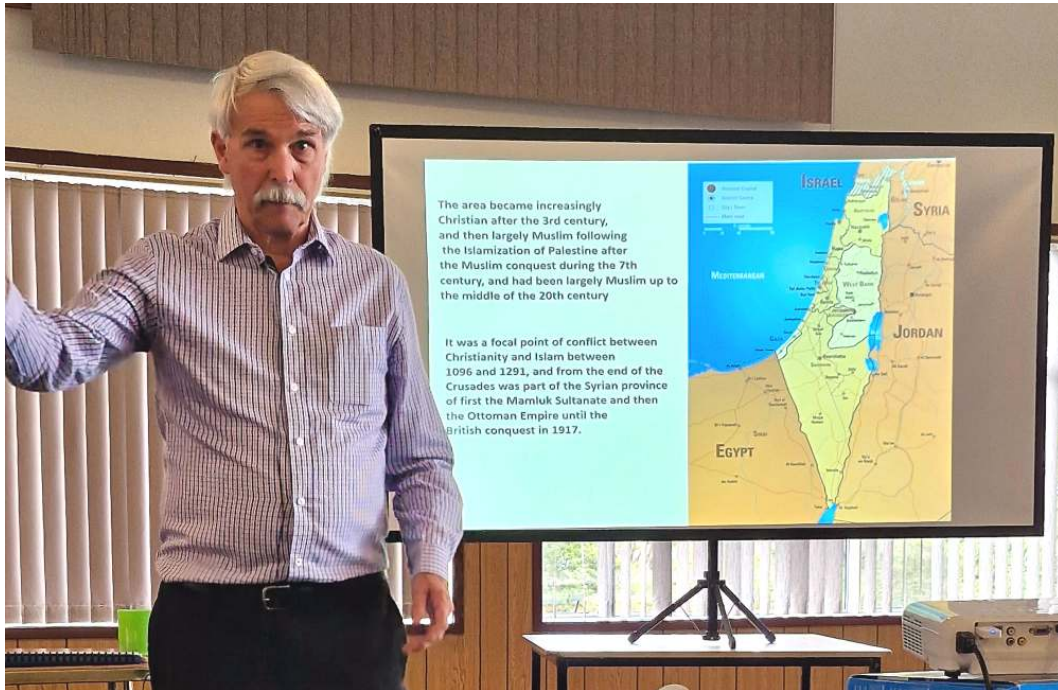




## **NAVIGATING THE HOLY LAND: INSIGHTS FROM AN UNCONVENTIONAL TOUR GUIDE**

**GUEST SPEAKER MARK BEALE**

*Whisper AI & Microsoft Copilot AI*



*Mark Beale speaking at the February 2024 meeting*

In 2010, I found myself in the heart of Israel and Palestine, a world away from my usual surroundings as the vicar of St. Elizabeth's in Clendon. My journey began when a tourist company, impressed by my biblical and historical knowledge, asked me to lead a tour to the Holy Land and then to Oberammergau in Germany for the passion play.

As a tour guide, I quickly realized that the confines of a tour group often limit the true experience of a place. So, I made it a point to venture out on my own when the rest of the group retired for the night. This allowed me to see the places for what they really were, often revealing stark differences between the narratives we were told and the realities I observed.

One of the most striking aspects of leading a tour through Israel was the requirement to have an Israeli guide. While our guide was a lovely person, I couldn't help but notice the propaganda woven into her narratives. It became clear that the presence of an Israeli guide was more about controlling the narrative than providing guidance.

Before delving into my experiences, it's crucial to understand the geography of the place. Israel-Palestine, despite its historical and biblical significance, is surprisingly small. The entire area measures just 8,630 square miles. To put that into perspective, New Zealand is 269,026 square miles, with the North Island alone being 113,729 square miles.

The conflict-ridden Gaza strip is a mere 356 square kilometres, with a staggering population of 2.5 million. In contrast, greater Auckland, which is 4,894 square kilometres, houses a population of 1.6 million. The density of the population in these areas is incredibly high, making them feel much larger than they are.

The history of the area is another aspect that often gets distorted. As an Anglican priest and a biblical scholar, I've noticed that the interpretation of Israel is often seen through biblical eyes, which can lead to certain distortions. The history of the area is not limited to biblical events; it includes the great Persian empires and other historical occurrences.

The nation of Israel, as we know it today, was decimated around 1180-550 BC through the kingdoms from Egypt and especially with Nebuchadnezzar. The Persian king defeated Nebuchadnezzar and freed the people

of Israel around 550 BC. However, they never went back and formed a nation. Instead, there were small kingdoms. So, it would not be accurate to say that there was a nation of Israel from 550 BC until 1948.

The history of the region we now know as Israel and Palestine is a complex tapestry of empires, wars, and political movements. The last major empire to control this area, known as the Levant, was the Ottoman Empire. This vast empire encompassed Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, and Palestine.

During the First World War, Britain went to war with the Ottoman Empire. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire led to the division of its territories, including the Levant.

Behind the scenes, from about 1840 through to the First World War, the Zionist movement was gaining momentum. This movement aimed to establish a Jewish state in the region. Much of the work towards creating what is now known as the State of Israel was done behind closed doors, with influential figures like the Rothschilds playing a significant role.

From 1914 to 1917, decisions were being made about the future of the region. However, the people living in the area were not consulted about these decisions. In 1914, there were only 24,000 Jewish people living in the area, while the majority of the population was Muslim and Christian. Despite this, the decision was made to create a State of Israel in the area.

One of the key agreements during this time was the Balfour Agreement. This was a letter written to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the Zionist movement at the time, by the British government. The letter, dated 2nd October 1917, expressed the British government's support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. However, it also stated that nothing should be done to prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

The problem, as I see it, is that a third group was determining the lives of two other groups without their consent. This issue still exists today and is a significant source of animosity in the region. As a British-born individual, I can't help but reflect on the role that the British Empire played in shaping the fate of this part of the world.

During my travels, I experienced first-hand the palpable tensions that permeate the region. Crossing into the West Bank and engaging in late-night conversations with the Palestinian people in cafes, I could feel the angst, the hatred, and the resentment. Imagine two and a half million people squeezed into the tiny area of Gaza. The density of the population is so high that it reminded me of an old psychology concept I learned during my university days: when you put a lot of people in a small space, they become like rats.

There are two distinct Jewish communities in the region, a fact often overlooked. At the time of the Balfour Declaration, there were many Jewish people, usually very strict Orthodox Jews, who opposed the formation of the State of Israel. These anti-Zionists believed that the State of Israel should come about through divine revelation, not through the secular formation of a country.



*Jerusalem's stone buildings and arid landscape*



Before 1948, the area was not called Israel; it was called Palestine. It only became the State of Israel in 1948, following the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The declaration of the Free State of Israel in 1948 led to a mass exodus of people from Europe, the United States, and Muslim countries into the area.

I found a stark difference between a secular Israeli and a strict Orthodox Jew. This difference reminded me of the Christian refugees I've met in New Zealand, particularly the Assyrian Orthodox from the Middle East and the Eritrean Orthodox from where the current problems are happening with Ethiopia and Eritrea. These refugees often struggle to reconcile their expectations of New Zealand as a Christian country with the reality of its secular nature. In my personal view, religious faith should not be directly involved in politics. We should be involved in issues, values, directions, and concerns, but not politics.

As you travel around the region, the scars of conflict and constant war are inescapable. Old embankments and other remnants of war are everywhere, a stark reminder of the area's tumultuous history.

Jerusalem, in the 1940s, was a small village with a population in the tens of thousands. Today, it's a sprawling metropolis with modern developments everywhere. Despite the arid conditions, pockets of great fertility can be found throughout Israel, yielding some of the most delicious fruits I've ever tasted, thanks to their extensive irrigation efforts.

The irrigation practices in the region, while beneficial for agriculture, are causing problems. They're killing the Dead Sea because the water isn't flowing in as it should.

During my travels, I visited a place called Panais, or Banais. Originally dedicated to the god Pan, this site was a melting pot of different religions, with statues of various Roman and Greek gods scattered around. It was here that Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" This question, posed in a place dedicated to multiple gods, seemed to me to be a broader inquiry: "Am I Zeus or am I Pan?"

I was also intrigued by the Jezreel Valley, a site of numerous battles throughout history. As I led my tour group to Megiddo, also known as Armageddon, I couldn't help but make a joke about it being our last stop. The valley has been a battleground between good and evil for thousands of years. But what makes this area so significant? One reason is its strategic location on trade routes. But there's another factor: a well. Despite the arid conditions, this well has been a source of conflict for centuries. Descending the steps to the well, I was struck by the thought of all the lives lost over this tiny puddle of water. This seemed symptomatic of the entire Palestine-Israel area, a region of constant conflict and wars over seemingly insignificant things.

As you travel around, you're constantly confronted by highly armed soldiers, all conscripted from the ages of 18 to 21. Every Jewish person, except the Orthodox kids, must serve in the army, regardless of gender. This conscription is a source of resentment, as many don't want to serve.



*When you travel around highly armed, conscripted soldiers are everywhere*

One night, after the tour party had gone to bed, I ventured into the Gate of Damascus in the old city. I always wore something that identified me as a New Zealander. This is crucial if you ever travel there. If you're

British or American, you might face resentment due to historical tensions. But as a New Zealander, you're welcomed with open arms. It's amazing to see the warmth and hospitality extended to you when people realize you've travelled so far to visit them.

The landscape of Israel and Palestine is a constant reminder of its tumultuous past. Signs warning of mines, remnants of the Six-Day War in 1967, are a common sight. Memorials commemorating battles and fallen soldiers since 1948 are scattered throughout the region.

One of the most intriguing sights I encountered was the dome security system in Israel, an anti-missile defense system. I took a photograph of it from about five miles away, near a large prison.

The region is a land of contrasts. From desolate areas to fertile lands near the Sea of Galilee, the diversity is striking.

One place that left a deep impression on me was Yad VaShem, a large museum dedicated to the Holocaust. It's often the first stop for any tour party visiting Israel. The museum seems to have become an integral part of Israel's identity, a symbol of their history as a persecuted people. However, I was perturbed by a quote from St. Augustine at the entrance, which blamed the persecution of Jews on Christianity. As someone who studied St. Augustine extensively, I found the quote to be taken out of context.

At Yad VaShem, I also found a memorial to Schindler, which intrigued me.

Travelling from Israel to what we now call Palestine, to the West Bank, involves going through checkpoints and searches. There are two roads to Bethlehem, a short distance from Jerusalem. One is a rough road used by Palestinians, and the other is a smoother road used by tourists and Israelis.

The wall dividing sections of the West Bank from Israel is a stark reminder of the divisions in the region. Graffiti on the wall seemed to echo my feelings: people will never get along if there's a wall between them. You only get to know people if you cross into one another's boundaries.

The antagonism is on both sides. In Bethlehem, I saw a sign with a quote from the Quran that seemed to discourage religious diversity. Despite this, Bethlehem was a peaceful place when I visited, although there was a lot of underlying resentment.



*Sign seen in Bethlehem with a quote from the Quran*

One of the most striking sights in the region is the children. They're just kids, around eight or nine years old, playing with toy guns and air pistols that are readily available in shops. I couldn't help but wonder what lessons these toys teach the children. After all, a pistol has only one function: to kill.

From the heights of East Jerusalem, you can see all the towers in the area, including the Blue Mosque and various churches. In the front area, there are grave-sites. In Judaism, the dead are not buried underground but above the ground, under a concrete slab.



Jerusalem, one of the oldest cities in the world, has a long and tumultuous history. It has been attacked 52 times, captured and recaptured 44 times, besieged 23 times, and destroyed twice. The oldest part of the city was settled in the fourth millennium BC.

In Jerusalem, you can see a large model of the old city, including Herod's palace and the ancient Jewish temple. The blocks used to build the temple are staggering in size, each one measuring 446 feet by 11 feet by 16.5 feet and weighing 628 tons. The hope of the strict Orthodox Jews is to rebuild the temple, but the Blue Mosque now sits on that site. This is a source of much conflict, as the Wailing Wall is the only part of the temple that remains.

In the mid-19th century, with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Jerusalem was a backwater with a population not exceeding 8,000. Today, it's a bustling city. As a photography enthusiast, I took photographs from the exact spots where photos were taken for a book called "1919 in Palestine." Comparing the old and new photos, I noticed that while some things had not changed, others had radically transformed.

In Israel, smoking is prevalent, but alcohol is noticeably absent. Instead, you'll see groups of men playing cards, often while the women are working. This absence of alcohol was somewhat refreshing.

One night, I entered a gate where young Muslim men were celebrating the end of Ramadan. In the middle, there was a row of conscripted soldiers, aged 18 to 21. On the other side, there were strict Orthodox Jews, identifiable by their distinctive dress.

I decided to interact with each group. First, I joined the Muslim men, sharing food, laughter, and stories. Then, I chatted with the Israeli soldiers. One young woman soldier, training to be a doctor, expressed her resentment at being conscripted, as it was taking away three years of her medical studies. Finally, I approached the Orthodox Jews, but they turned their backs to me because I had spoken to the other groups. This experience made me wonder how peace could be achieved when there's such reluctance to communicate.

Against the ancient wall of Jerusalem, I took a photograph of a young boy running to his mother, who seemed to live under a piece of cardboard. The scene was reminiscent of what you might see in any city. The phrase "God is great" was written in Aramaic on the wall. It was a poignant image, reflecting the sorrow and hardship faced by many in the region.



*Boy running to his mother, who is sitting against the ancient wall of Jerusalem*

Jerusalem is riddled with churches, including a Russian Orthodox Church near the Garden of Gethsemane. I took a photograph that was identical to one in a 1919 book, except for one detail: a house at the top.

There's a gate in the city that's completely walled up. In Judaism, it's believed that the Messiah will not come until this gate is opened. This belief, like many others in the region, adds another layer of complexity to the already intricate tapestry of Israel and Palestine.



In Jerusalem, two conflicting beliefs coexist: the Christian community believes that the Messiah came as Jesus, while the Jewish community believes that the Messiah is yet to come and will only arrive when the walled gate is opened.

Among the numerous cemeteries in the city, one member of the British royal family is buried there - the mother of the old Duke of Edinburgh, who was a Greek Orthodox nun in the latter part of her life.

The city streets are lined with various places of worship, including Russian Orthodox and Jewish-Christian churches. If you're planning to travel in this part of the world, I recommend getting a suitcase with steel wheels and wearing sturdy footwear. The streets can be very bumpy, and you'll be doing a lot of walking.

You'll also encounter a diverse range of people. From Bedouin beggars to Orthodox Jews and their families, Egyptian Coptic Christians, and Greek Orthodox priests like Father Bordeaux, whom I befriended during my visit. I met him one night when I ventured into the Islamic part of Jerusalem, which is divided into four parts: Armenian, Christian, Jewish, and Islam.

Religion is out in the open here. People openly read their holy books, like the Muslim man I saw reading the Quran. There's no need to hide or apologize for your faith.

Israeli soldiers are a common sight, as are members of the Druze faith, an offshoot of Islam that also incorporates elements of Judaism. The Druze are conscripted into the Israeli Army and are known for their ferocity.

One of the most spiritual moments of my trip was at the Wailing Wall. Here, people write down the name of the person they're praying for on a piece of paper, fold it up, and push it into the cracks of the wall. I did this for my daughter-in-law Ruth, who had been diagnosed with MS.

The act of placing my hands on the wall and offering her up to God was an overwhelmingly emotional experience. When I returned to New Zealand, I found out that Ruth had been completely cleared of her condition. Whether my prayer at the Wailing Wall had anything to do with it or not, it was a meaningful moment for me.

The Wailing Wall is also a site for Jewish festivals and functions. There are two parts to the wall: one that gentiles can go to, and one that only Jews can go to.

Inside the Holy Sepulchre, a large church in Jerusalem, there are multiple different denominations. There's an interesting story behind this church. Christian groups - Catholic, Orthodox, Protestants, and so on - were always fighting over who had the right to use this church. To prevent these squabbles, the key to the church was given to a Muslim, and only a Muslim can open the door to this day.

One of the most fascinating places I visited was Masada, a flat-top mountain in the middle of the desert. It was Herod's fortress and retreat house, and it's a site of significant historical events involving the Romans and the Zealot communities. The Zealots would live up there and raid the Romans like guerrilla soldiers. Fed up with these attacks, the Romans tried to invade Masada but had trouble getting up the mountain. They ended up spending a considerable amount of time building a rampart to get up there.

The water you see in the distance is the Dead Sea. Due to irrigation practices, the Dead Sea has shrunk significantly over the past 30 years. The water that would normally feed the Dead Sea is being used for irrigation, causing the sea to evaporate and become full of salt.

I decided to walk up Masada via the Snake Path, so named because it winds up the mountain, not because it has snakes. I had a jacket with pockets full of water to prevent dehydration. After spending 45 minutes to an hour going up in 40-degree heat, reaching the top and walking into an air-conditioned café was a relief, albeit a sweaty one.

From the top of Masada, you can see how desolate the surrounding area is. You can imagine the Roman soldiers down below in the 40-degree heat with all their armour on, while the Jewish Essenes and Zealots up top had no shortage of water. They had devised a system that channelled water from the valleys during the wet season. The pressure pushed the water up to fill giant cisterns, ensuring they had enough water to last for decades.



*Masada, a flat-top mountain in the middle of the desert, was Herod's fortress and retreat house*

The occupied territories, as they're known, were home to the Palestinians who were living there before 1947-49. Many Palestinians were forced to leave their homes and have never been able to return. The term "Palestinian" encompasses more than one ethnic group, much like the term "New Zealander" includes Pacific Islanders, Māori, Europeans, South Africans, and others.

I'll leave you with a thought, though it may be alarming. I have a deep-seated feeling that humanity is on the brink of self-destruction over the next two years. This dramatic statement stems from observing the current state of the world - the environmental issues in Europe, the global tensions involving Ukraine and Russia, the huge exodus of people from Africa and Latin America seeking refuge in places like the States, Europe, and Britain.

In New Zealand, we see Afghan and Eritrean people fleeing their countries. They'd rather be back in their own countries in peace than being here. A good book to understand the African refugee situation is "After the Tampa," which discusses the ship that was prevented from offloading people at Christmas Island. When you look at all these factors, you can't help but worry about the future of humanity.



*Mark Beale asked if this Bedouin was giving him the finger?*



**COFFEE AND CONVERSATION**  
**DELICIOUS BISTRO TE ATATU PENINSULA**  
**Vince Middeldorp (Copilot AI)**



*The Delicious Café in Te Atatu: A welcoming haven with ample seating for all.*

On Friday, February 16th, we ventured to a new café: the Delicious Café, located on the Te Atatu peninsula. Despite the rainy weather and seemingly small indoor seating area when viewed from the road, our concerns were quickly alleviated upon discovering a spacious conservatory at the back of the café. This provided a delightful setting for us to converse and savour coffee expertly prepared by a barista using a commercial machine.

Coincidentally, we weren't the only group at the café. When I ordered my flat white, I was mistaken for a member of a sports group, who were the other patrons present. With both groups arriving simultaneously, the small café staff was under considerable pressure to fulfil orders and ensure they reached the correct customers.

Unfortunately, there were a few hiccups. My coffee was mistakenly delivered to someone else, and a replacement had to be made. The owner would undoubtedly have been displeased to see unpaid coffee being served. I only observed the stressed staff, so hopefully, the owner was unaware of the mix-ups.

It was a pleasure to see former Treasurer Justin Griffith and his wife Ann at the coffee morning. They are temporarily back from Scotland and are staying in accommodation that is exclusively kept for their use, at their daughter's home in Remuera. Charles Nicholls, Bill Mutch, and I were in the process of adding new signatories to the club's bank account and the bank had requested a resignation letter from Justin. Aware of this request, Justin brought with him a suitably drafted and signed letter for the bank.

Prior to the coffee morning, Trevor Pollard mentioned that some of us might be interested in the shower system he built for Hamish Paterson's Grohe sales brochure. He had assembled the shower box in his home workshop, disassembled it, and then reassembled it at the warehouse for the photo shoot.

Trevor brought along the photos taken in his workshop, and I brought my laptop and scanner to digitize them. The scanning process took longer than anticipated, limiting my time for conversation at the main table. I left thoroughly impressed with Trevor's setup but also cautious about undertaking tasks at future coffee mornings that might seem like they'll only take a few minutes.

**OUTINGS AND TRIPS**

The 2 hour sightseeing trip on the Jane Gifford, is set for Wednesday the 13th of March. The bus will leave St John Hall at 9:00 am. The river boat trip (we are not going out to sea) will hopefully start at 10:30 am.

We will have time in the Walkworth township for coffee and something to eat, before getting back on the bus at 2:00 pm for the trip home; arriving back about 3:00 pm.



*The Jane Gifford is the country's last remaining rigged sailing scow*

### ***NEXT COFFEE MORNING***

Our next coffee morning is at [Kreem Cafe](#), 189-193 Universal Drive (opposite Morrisons Funeral Home), on Friday 22nd March 10:00 am.

### ***A TRIBUTE TO A TRUE COMPANION***

#### ***REMEMBERING PETE***

***Vince Middeldorp (& Copilot AI)***

A few years ago, fate wove its intricate threads, leading me to the Rebus Club—a haven where camaraderie thrives and friendships are made.

Peter Cox lived around the corner from me, and our paths often intersected during his walks with Oscar, the family dog. Pete, who had retired as a self employed electrician, took little convincing to come along to the Rebus Club.



*Andrew Geddes and Peter Cox at One Sip Cafe in Te Atatu South*



As the years rolled by, Pete revealed facets of his past. One day, he showed me a photograph—a young man astride a horse, leaping over a railed jump. It was Pete, competing in the show jumping ring. Showjumping requires more than just skill; it requires pluck and courage. In his youth, Pete must have had both.

Pete’s sporting endeavours didn’t end with equestrian sport. His son, Alex, a gifted competitive swimmer, drew him into the world of aquatic sports. Early mornings witnessed father and son embarking on training sessions at the Waterhole Swimming Centre, nestled just beyond Parrs Park. Those chlorinated waters held memories for Pete—of strokes perfected, and stunning wins by Alex at major swimming events.



*Peter Cox discussing the menu at Ki Maha on Waiheke Island with Andrew Narayan*

Joining the Rebus Club wasn’t enough for Pete. He became our steadfast companion on outings. Whether we toured the Chelsea Sugar Refinery, sailed to Pine Harbour aboard the SeaLink ferry, or rode the Kiwicoach to Hamilton Gardens, Pete was there. The MV Kewpie Two carried us across the Kaipara, witnessing the dredges returning laden with sand and listening to skipper Terry Somer’s commentary on the history of the Kaipara.



*John McKeown with Peter Cox at Chelsea Sugar Refinery*

Pete never missed a coffee morning wherever our club organised one. Te Atatu Peninsula’s Sugar Grill, Esquire’s Cafe at The Boundary, Lincoln Road’s Sierra Cafe and even Zeke’s Mediterranean Cafe in Henderson, all bore witness to Pete’s unwavering presence.

If there was a downside to Pete’s friendship, the problem was entirely mine. His home stood as a testament to meticulous care and orderliness. My dwelling resembled a tempest-tossed ship, papers and clutter adrift. At half-past eleven, I’d often scramble to tidy up, fearing the possibility of his early morning knock on the door.

Pete loved Kurol lollies. When I picked him up at the front gate of his house for club meetings at the Friendship Hall, he’d settle into the passenger seat, fasten his seat belt, and ask, “Want a lolly?” And without fail, it was always a Kurol. I found myself buying Kurols too—original mentholated formula.

One day, at the LynnMall shopping centre, Pete said he needed to go into Countdown Supermarket for a minute. He reappeared, clutching a bottle of HP Sauce—that iconic condiment with a story of its own. “This is for you,” he said, with a mischievous glint in his eyes. “Houses of Parliament Sauce—don’t put it in the fridge.” My cupboard is now always stocked with that iconic bottle.

Pete’s cheeky attitude extended beyond lollies and sauces. When he needed a new vehicle, he saw an \$18,000 car gleaming on the dealer’s lot? Pete, with his street-smart flair, drove a hard bargain. “I’ll give you \$11,000,” he declared, leaving the dealer with his phone number written on a piece of paper. Next day the car was his—a testament to Pete’s hard nosed negotiation.

About one year ago, Oliver, Pete’s first grandchild, entered his life. Joy radiated from Pete’s face whenever he spoke of Oliver. The little one, who bore a striking resemblance to Pete, carried his legacy forward, a torch passed from one generation to another.

When I think back and remember Pete, it is with enduring memories of shared moments and good times. I’m sure in the Rebus club there are many others who have their own fond memories of Pete.



*Peter Cox’s son Alexander, daughter-in-law Nicole, and grandson Oliver at the Davis Funeral reception lounge in Dominion Road*

## **SUPPORTERS**



***The April meeting date is Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024***

Our meetings are at 10:00 am, **2nd Friday of the month**, New Lynn Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Rd.