



West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

August 2024

Next meeting: 10:00 am Friday 9th August, Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Road, New Lynn

COMMITTEE

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Gloria Jean's Cafe coffee morning on July 31st at The Boundary shopping centre in Henderson

MEETING REPORT

July 2024

Chairman: Bill Mutch

Attendance: 20 members

Raymond Barrett, Neil Castle, Bill Fairs, Maurice Forbes, Robert King, John McKeown, Vince Middeldorp, John Mihaljevic, Bill Mutch, Andrew Narayan, Lyndsay Parris, Trevor Pollard, Paul Robertson, Noel Rose, Ian Smith, Alan Verry, Ken Watson, Ken Webster, Allan Williamson, Garrick Yearsley.

1. Welcome:

The meeting started with a greeting and a comment on the beautiful winter's day.

2. Visitors:

No visitors were present.

3. Apologies:

Apologies were noted for Charles Nicholas, Mensto De Roos, Andrew Geddes and John Corban.

4. Matters Arising from June Meeting:

No specific matters were raised from the June meeting.



Trips organiser Ian Smith checking his phone during the morning tea break

5. Correspondence:

Letter from Trust Community Foundation showing approval of \$500 grant (application 40098).

6. Treasurer's Report:

Kiwi Bank: \$837.44; Cash Box: \$444.90; Savings Account: \$698.17.

The club is on track for a small profit at the end of the year.

7. Trip and Coffee Mornings:

Coffee morning organized for July 31st, as mentioned in the July newsletter.

Potential trips mentioned: Pūkoro Miramira Shorebird Centre near Thames; new boardwalk at the Kauri Glen Reserve Northcote.

8. Welfare Report:

A card for Andrew Geddes was circulated for signatures. Trevor Pollard provided an update on Andrew's condition and said he was still in Waitakere Hospital.

9. General Business:

No general business was raised.

10. Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for the 9th of August, which is Bill Mutch's birthday.

Claudia's Corner

I lost my Mood ring
I don't know how I feel about it.

Long fairy tales tend to dragon.

What did one flag say to the other flag?
Nothing they just waved.

Two guys walk into a bar
The 3rd one ducked.

How do you make holy water?
Just boil the hell out of it.

Did you hear about the guy
who invented lifesavers?
He made a mint.

Enjoy the next meeting! I hear one of the members is
turning 95 on August 7. Cheers, Claudia



PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE **President's Report June 2024**

Bill Mutch

A warm hello to everyone,

This month has been quite busy for me with hospital visits and doctor appointments, but I'm doing okay.

Currently, I'm not driving, which makes me miss my car, but Claudia has been a tremendous help.

I live in Titirangi, and there have been a few house break-ins recently. Please be extra vigilant and take the necessary precautions to stay safe.

On the welfare front, Andrew Geddes is now in a care home. He has shown some improvement but still struggles with speech. Strokes are truly challenging.

As for myself, dealing with leukaemia and Parkinson's has its difficulties, but I'm grateful for each day. My birthday is on Friday, the 9th, and every birthday feels like a bonus.

We also have a special milestone coming up. On Wednesday, August 7th, one of our members will be turning 95! Can you guess who? Here's a clue: he loves gold!

Time for me to take a nap.

Cheers,
Bill

A LIGHT-HEARTED JOURNEY: POEMS AND PERSONAL TALES

GUEST SPEAKER JAN BEAUMONT

Whisper AI & Copilot AI



Jan Beaumont speaking about life, poetry and change

Good morning everyone! Thank you so much for inviting me here today. It's unusual for me to be speaking in front of a group of men, as it's usually more women than men in my audience. So, this is quite different for me.

If someone had asked me a couple of years ago if I'd like to go somewhere and listen to poetry, I would have said, "No, thank you." But what I'm going to share today will put a smile on your face. It's not airy-fairy blank verse; it's quite light-hearted and relatable. I think you'll enjoy it, and along the way, I'll tell you a bit of the story of how this all came to be.

I live in the Logan Campbell Retirement Village in Green Lane. I've been there for six years and absolutely love it. My son suggested a few years ago that it might be time for me to move into a retirement village. So I tried it, and it turned out to be one of the best decisions I ever made.

After leaving school, I worked in the legal field as a legal secretary for quite some time. Then I went overseas for what we in New Zealand call the big O-E (overseas experience). I first went to Seattle, then immigrated to Canada and lived in Vancouver for a while. While in Vancouver, I saw a job advertised for the New Zealand Consulate in New York City. I applied, got the job, and then made the big trip across Canada over the Rockies to New York, where I stayed for a few years.

Living in New York City in the late 60s and early 70s was very interesting. During my time there, Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. I worked at Rockefeller Centre, and Bobby Kennedy was lying in state at St. Patrick's Cathedral, right across Fifth Avenue from where I worked. People stretched out in lines that spanned entire city blocks, all waiting to pay their respects and see him lying in his casket. While I was there, Martin Luther King was assassinated, sparking riots in New York. Entire city blocks in Harlem were engulfed in flames. Men walked on the moon; and I got married to someone I had met just five and a half weeks earlier.

As an only child, I called my mother in New Zealand to tell her the news. She was surprised when I revealed that I was getting married the following week. My husband was with P&O and was leaving, so we needed to get married before he left. We spent our honeymoon watching the men blast off from the moon to come back to Earth.

After that, I moved to the UK with my English husband, spent some time there, and then returned to New Zealand. I went back into the legal field but also started my own cooking school. I had a program on ZB,

wrote for the papers, and would go to work in the legal office every day. At lunchtime, I would travel to Broadcasting House to do a cooking show, then return to continue working as a legal secretary.

For the last 23 years of my working life, I worked for a funeral director. It was one of the best jobs I've ever had. The people who work in the funeral industry are very special, and I hope your experiences with funeral directors have been positive because they are truly wonderful people.

Now, let me tell you a bit about what started it all. As we get older, we don't like change very much. I don't like change. You get things just the way you like them, and you want them to stay that way. The only thing that's permanent in life is change.

I've had three significant changes in the last few years of my life. The first one was 9-11. It was perhaps more meaningful for me because, just 24 hours before the hijackers flew the planes into the Twin Towers, I was standing at the top of one of the Twin Towers. I came down at 3:30 pm that afternoon, and the next morning I watched the buildings fall. It was a very frightening time to be in New York City, and it made me realize that life is not always safe.

The second change was in 2015 when my kids thought I was getting dementia. I wasn't holding conversations, kept forgetting appointments, and even got lost while driving. I went to my doctor, who referred me to a geriatrician. My daughter did not like the wait time for the geriatrician and took me to see her doctor. That afternoon, a scan was done, and it revealed a brain tumour the size of an egg. It had been growing for about 15 years. I was operated on, and most of it was removed. I had radiation and annual MRIs to check on things. Last year, my neurosurgeon told me I had a talent for growing things – not flowers, but brain tumours. I had four more tumours, so I had more surgery and radiation. As of now, I am tumour-free, and my brain is as sharp as a tack.

The third change that affected me, and probably you too, was COVID. I was sitting on my couch in 2020 when Jacinda came on TV and announced a four-week lockdown because of COVID. For some reason, I thought, "I think I'll write a poem."

I wrote a poem called "Let's All Drink to Lockdown" and put it on my Facebook page. My daughter said, "That's a damn good poem. You should make it public so everyone can see it, not just your Facebook friends." So, I did, and within hours, it went viral and it's now been shared hundreds of thousands of times.

People were looking at my Facebook page, cutting and pasting the poem, and sending it to their friends, who sent it to their friends, and so on. Along the way, someone forgot to include my name. Apparently, someone said, "I think it's Pam Ayers." From then on, it became known as Pam Ayers' poem. She's been online at least three times, saying, "I didn't write this poem; it's not mine." But now that she knows it's me, whenever anyone contacts Pam Ayers, she directs them to me.

Let's All Drink To Lockdown

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s –
If you only knew the truth!



There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd wile away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

After I wrote "Let's All Drink to Lockdown," the BBC called Pam Ayers, asking if she'd like to come on and talk about her new poem. Pam told them she didn't write it and directed them to me. The BBC tracked me down in New Zealand, and I did the interview. That started the ball rolling, and now I get calls from radio stations, newsletters, and groups worldwide wanting to feature my poetry.

During COVID, people were anxious and depressed because nobody knew what was going to happen. My daughter said my poetry resonated with people. I wrote a poem called "The Best Medicine," as I'm a firm believer in friendship, especially at this age. It's important for both men and women, but women tend to be more supportive and open about their feelings.

Men might go to the pub or club and have a beer after an argument with their partner, but they rarely mention the fight to their mates. Women, on the other hand, call their best friend, go out for a wine or coffee, and vent about it. It's important for men to have friendships too. I recently read about Dr. Michael Mosley, a famous UK doctor who passed away in Greece. He emphasized the importance of cultivating friendships, especially for men around retirement age.

So, please keep your friends. Groups like this are essential because you get together once a month, make friends, and some of you may see each other outside the group. It's crucial to maintain those connections.

The Best Medicine

I'd wake up every morning
Feeling pretty low
What on earth was wrong with me?
I really didn't know.

So I went off to the doctor
And I told him what was wrong
He wrote me a prescription
And he said "It won't take long
Before you are yourself again
And back to loving life
You're just like others everywhere
Depression has been rife.

I took it to the pharmacy
But then the chemist said
"There's nothing on here I can give -
It's up to you instead."

I looked at the prescription:
'For joy that never ends
Just ring someone you care about
And share some time with friends.

Make sure you follow closely
This advice I have to give
And once again you'll be yourself
And really start to live.'

I did just what he told me
Spent time with those who cared
It helped much more than any pill
As our feelings we all shared.

And afterwards I really felt
A sense of such elation
So do the same, just take a dose
of friends ... not medication!

Now, I live alone quite happily. I have to let you in on a little secret: the five-and-a-half-week marriage that began in New York lasted 18 years. We're still good friends, but I'm very content being on my own, which inspired me to write a poem titled "Turning In."

Turning In

It's cold here in New Zealand
So there's something to be said
For grabbing my warm hottie
And toddling off to bed.

'Who is this man?' I hear you ask
'You're taking to your room?'
Could it be perchance that somehow
Romance is now in bloom?'



I hate to disappoint but it
Is nothing that exciting
This hottie's filled with water
And is so much more inviting!

It doesn't hog the duvet and
It doesn't have cold feet
It doesn't snore or let off wind
And it is quite discreet.

If it gets too hot I simply can
Just push it to the side
It never sulks or whinges
It just takes things in it's stride.

So I'm as happy as can be
All snuggled up and cosy
And life Down Under my duvet
Just couldn't be more rosy!

One day I had a call from a Catholic church, and the priest said, "Jan, I read your poem at Mass on Sunday. The congregation loved it." So, I decided maybe I should write a little poem along sort of religious lines, a funny one. I said to one of the priests, "Father, I've written this poem, but I'm not sure if it will offend anybody." He read it and said, "Hell no, Jan, go for it." The poem I wrote is called "Requiem for Rover."

Requiem for Rover

Muldoon's dog had died and Muldoon was distraught
As he wanted to send him off well
So he went to his priest to just ask if he said
Catholic Masses for canines as well.

But Father was sadly not open to this
And he said to Muldoon right away
That Masses for creatures were just not his thing
It was only for people he'd pray.

But he had a suggestion he thought might just solve
The quandary Muldoon was now facing
He suggested the Baptist church right down the street
Might possibly be all-embracing.

Muldoon felt so grateful and said to the priest
'Do you think I should give a donation?
I was thinking that three thousand pounds might suffice
To guarantee Rover's salvation!'

Father then had a complete change of heart
'Why didn't you tell me' he said
'that your dog is a Catholic?' and that is the tale (tail?)
Of how Rover's Dog Mass went ahead!

I was on my way to the supermarket listening to The Breeze radio station, when Robert Scott, the host, said, "Today we're talking poetry. If anybody's written a poem in the last couple of days, a topical poem you'd like to read out on the radio, give me a call." So, I pulled over and rang The Breeze. He said, "Right, Jan, go for it."

I had written a poem about naked gardening called "Get It Off." As I read it out, all I could hear were giggles and sniggers coming from the radio station.



Get It Off

It's the day all fellas hang out for
It's the first Saturday every May
When their girlfriends or wives get their gear off
They just love naked gardening day.

I'd have done it if I was much younger
If you have it then flaunt it, I say.
Now sadly they don't want to see saggy bits
On World Naked Gardening Day.

Let's face it, there's too many dangers
Like rose thorns or bees that might come
And I'm too old to be pollinated
So they'll just aim their sting at my bum.

I do wish that I was still a young mother
For I'd sure like to set it all free
But I'm not, so I'll have to accept that
Naked gardening is just not for me.

So the time has come for me to finish, and it's lovely. It's been really nice to talk to you. I must admit, I was a little bit nervous being the only female here, but you've all been very well behaved.

You know, a few years ago they did a survey that said, to be happy and healthy we all need 15 good laughs a day. So I hope I've started you off. You've had a few laughs this morning. I have a friend that I worked with, and we have 15 laughs by morning tea time.

And just to make sure, I'm going to tell you one last story.

I was teaching my cooking school, and it was the May school holidays. My mother was looking after my three children while I taught the class. During the break, I rang her and said, "How's it going, Mum?"

She said, "Don't ever ask me to look after this kid again."

Now I didn't have to ask her which one, I knew it would be the eight-year-old boy. So I said, "Put him on the phone, please, Mum."

I said, "Listen, your gran is doing me a big favour while she's looking after you while I'm working. And when you misbehave for her, that makes her very unhappy, and when she's unhappy, that makes me sad. So I think when I get home I'm going to have words."

So I said goodbye, and we hung up. According to my mum, when he got off the phone he went into his bedroom, opened his money box, got on his bike, and went up to the dairy. Because Sunday was going to be Mother's Day, and he must have thought if I don't sort this, I might not have a mother.

When I got home, I was scarcely out of the car and he came running out and gave me a box of chocolates and a Mother's Day card. I took the envelope and opened the card, and when I took it out it said, "May God be with you in your time of sorrow." Inside, he had taped over the words of condolence and written, "Happy Mother's Day, Love from Mark."

I've still got that card, and when I go, that's going with me in my casket. I think I must be the only mother that got a sympathy card from her eight-year-old for Mother's Day.

So I just put a smile on your face, and I promised I would do that before I leave. You know, I don't know if any of you have heard of a lady called Maya Angelou. I know a lot of the women have heard of her. She was an American, black activist, author, and poet. She had a lot of wonderful quotes. One of her quotes is the one that I love the best. She said, "People may forget what you did, people may forget what you said, but they'll never forget how you made them feel."

And that's so true. So I hope I've made you feel nice today and you've enjoyed it and that you remember. Thank you very much for being such a lovely audience.



GUEST SPEAKER FOR AUGUST



We are excited to announce that our guest speaker for the meeting on August 9th is John Small. John has dedicated 35 years to full-time work in the Department of Corrections and currently serves as a Corrections Manager.

NEXT COFFEE MORNING

Join us for our next coffee morning on **Wednesday, 28th August at 10:00 am!** The event will be held at Metlifecare Orion Point, Hobsonville, located at 62 Tahingamanu Road, Auckland, 0618.

We have a special invitation from Amanda McCullough, who has recently been seconded from Waitakere Gardens to work at this brand-new retirement village.

To ensure Amanda can cater for everyone, Ian Smith will be conducting a headcount at our monthly meeting on Friday, 9th August. Please make sure to let Ian know if you plan to attend.



The dining room at Metlifecare Orion Point Hobsonville

SUPPORTERS



Our meetings are held at 10:00 am on the **2nd Friday of each month at New Lynn Friendship Hall**, located at 3063 Great North Rd. The date for our September meeting is Friday, 13th September.