



West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

May 2025

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

COMMITTEE

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Ian Smith sitting across from Vince Dennehy and Charles Nicholls at the April Meeting morning tea

MEETING REPORT

April 2025

Chairman: Bill Mutch

Attendance: 22 members and 1 visitor (Gary Marshall)

Members: Neil Castle, John Corban, Vince Dennehy, Mensto De Roos, Bill Fairs, Maurice Forbes, Robert King, Vince Middeldorp, John Mihaljevic, Eddy Molloy, Bill Mutch, Andrew Narayan, Charles Nicholls, Lyndsay Parris, Trevor Pollard, Paul Robertson, Noel Rose, Ian Smith, Alan Verry, Laurie Vincent, Ken Watson, Garrick Yearsley.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks:

- Chairman Bill Mutch opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
- A visitor, Gary Marshall, was introduced. Gary is a former President of Friends of Waikumete.

2. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Ken Webster and Allan Williamson.



Nice smile from New Lynn Anytime Fitness owner Lynley McGovern and a startled look from Alan Verry

3. Matters Arising from March Meeting:

No specific matters were raised or recalled regarding the March meeting.

4. Correspondence:

- An email was received from Citizens Advice to confirm contact details (no changes required).
- Notice of the Rebus AGM was received; members interested in attending were asked to notify the Secretary.
- Final paperwork for a TTCF grant has been submitted.

5. Treasurer's Report:

- Income slightly exceeds expenditure due to speaker donations being returned to the club.
- Speaker donations are recorded as \$50 per month for accurate tracking of actual costs.
- Only 19 members have paid their subscriptions to date. Charles stressed the importance of reaching 30 financial members to ensure the club's sustainability.

6. Trips and Coffee Mornings:

- The recent bus trip to Miranda was enjoyable, though somewhat rushed. Birdwatching was limited, but there was a well-received lecture at the venue.
- A coffee morning was held at the Delicious Cafe in Te Atatu North with good attendance.
- Next coffee morning: Kreem Café, Universal Drive, scheduled for 30 April.
- Upcoming trip plans:
 - Visit to Highwic House, Newmarket. Entry fee: \$10 (optional for house tour, gardens free).

- Lunch at Pah Homestead, with a table reserved for approximately 30 attendees.
- The previously mentioned stop at Alberton has been dropped; return will be directly after lunch.

7. General Business

- Trevor Pollard was recently hospitalized but is now recovering at home.
- Trevor celebrates his 89th birthday this coming Sunday. The club extends warm birthday wishes.

8. Invited Speaker:

- Lynley McGovern, owner of Anytime Fitness in New Lynn, addressed the meeting.
- She spoke about the transformative power of exercise, particularly for older adults.

9. Morning Tea

- The business session concluded with morning tea.
- Members were reminded that subscriptions could be paid at this time.

Claudia's Corner *Time for a smile!*

Two budgies were standing on
a perch
One says to the other, Can you smell fish?

Dad: When granddad was in the army he saved the whole
regiment

Son: What did he do?

Dad: He shot the cook.

Dad: You promised you would make 100%
effort at school this week.
Son, but Dad, I did 35% on Monday and 15%
on Tuesday, 25% on Wednesday and 25% on
Thursday, that's 100%,
So I had Friday off.

Customer to Hairdresser: Hey, you're hands are dirty

Hairdresser: It's not my fault that no one
has had a shampoo today.

A large hole has appeared in the High Street
But the council workers are looking
into it.

What is green and pear-shaped
A green pear.

Enjoy the meeting, and I hope Trevor brings chocolate biscuits.

Cheers Claudia



PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE

Bill Mutch & Claude AI

President's Report

As we welcome the month of May, we're reminded that winter is now upon us. Our club room heat pumps will be operating to ensure your comfort during our gatherings.

Just a friendly reminder that Vince opens our club room doors at approximately 9:30 AM, providing a wonderful opportunity to socialize with fellow members before our formal meeting begins. As always, visitors are most welcome to attend.

On a personal note, I recently experienced a fall at home which gave me quite a fright. While I sustained some minor bruises and cuts, I'm pleased to report that I'm otherwise doing well. No other welfare updates to share this time.

You may have seen in the news that Just Funerals in Mangere Bridge recently experienced a fire. Let's hope no one was cremated against their wishes!

Our group recently enjoyed a delightful and economical excursion to Waiuku, which boasts a wonderful museum and several charming cafés. We took full advantage of our Gold Cards, travelling by train to Pukekohe and then boarding the 396 bus to Waiuku.

For lunch, members had their choice of venues. Some opted for local cafés while others dined at the historic Kentish Hotel. The meals were excellent and reasonably priced.



The Kentish Hotel was built in 1852 and lays claim to the longest continuous liquor licence in New Zealand

Speaking of historic hotels, the Tuakau Hotel has been in the news recently with plans for a \$5 million renovation. This brings back fond childhood memories, as my grandmother would take me there between the ages of 2 and 12. They had a special room for ladies—I made do with a glass of lemonade.

What made the Waiuku trip particularly appealing was the minimal walking required. I believe this would be an excellent outing to repeat in the future, especially with the convenience of the Gold Card.

Warm regards,

Bill Mutch
President

FITNESS AT ANY AGE: INSIGHTS FROM ANYTIME FITNESS

Lynley McGovern & Claude AI

Thank you for inviting me to share my passion for fitness and health with you all.

I've owned the Anytime Fitness gym in New Lynn (opposite LynnMall, next to BedsRus) for about two years now. Before this venture, I spent 20 years as a real estate agent, but I've always been passionate about exercise.

I'm a firm believer that staying fit, healthy, strong, and mobile is crucial for everyone, regardless of whether you're 16 or 80+ years old. While I previously focused heavily on cardio exercise, I've learned through the fitness industry about the tremendous importance of resistance training.

Resistance training—using your body weight, weights, or bands to make your muscles work harder—is especially important as we age. It helps minimize muscle loss (sarcopenia), strengthens bones, and improves balance and mobility, all of which enhance quality of life.

By performing resistance exercises, you stimulate bone tissue, which helps prevent osteoporosis and reduces fracture risk. It's never too late to start; even beginning in your 70s or 80s can produce significant benefits.

Strong muscles improve posture, which reduces fall risk. Core strength through your abdomen and back is particularly crucial for spine health and overall balance. This preparation means that if you do lose your balance, you can react more quickly and minimize injury.

Today's fitness buzzword is "functional training" – exercises that enable you to use your body as a whole rather than just lifting weights. This approach helps you perform daily activities with greater flexibility and mobility, making it easier to walk, rise from a chair, and move with confidence.



The Stairmaster works quadriceps, hamstrings, calves and glutes

It's wonderful to see how gyms today are filled with people of all ages. Social media has also played a significant role in promoting fitness trends, like Pilates.

One notable fitness guru has developed an approach called "knees over toes," which was initially created for his mother who, in her late sixties, couldn't get down on the floor to play with her grandchildren. Through specific exercises to improve knee flexibility and strength, she transformed from someone who struggled with mobility to a woman who walks miles, moves up and down easily, and feels fantastic.

I highly recommend watching "The Blue Zone" on Netflix if you haven't already. This fascinating series follows people in their eighties, nineties, and even over one hundred years old from five regions around the world, exploring why they live such long, healthy lives.

The researcher discovered their longevity stemmed from lifestyles that combined regular physical activity (walking, jogging, or even advanced stretching like the lotus position performed by a Japanese centenarian), healthy eating based on whole foods, and—crucially—strong social interactions like what you're fostering in this club. Good health and longevity require a holistic approach to physical activity, nutrition, and social connection.

You don't need to be a "gym monkey" to reap the benefits of regular exercise. The sweet spot appears to be about three 30-minute sessions per week. My partner, who's 62, started with twice-weekly training sessions and eventually increased to three. People who haven't seen him for a while are amazed by his transformation—he's lost weight, gained strength, eliminated his back problems, and feels fitter than he did a decade ago.

The more exercise you do, the more you want to do, thanks to those dopamine boosts. Conversely, the less active you are, the easier it becomes to remain sedentary. Remember: two weekly sessions are infinitely better than none!

While we focus on exercise, diet remains crucial, especially as we age when we might be less inclined to prioritize nutrition. Keep it simple by eating a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables to ensure a wide range of vitamins and minerals. Choose whole grains over refined options, opt for brown rice and whole wheat bread rather than white alternatives, and incorporate nuts, seeds, legumes, and healthy fats like avocado and olive oil.

Last year, a 72-year-old gentleman who had been walking past our gym finally decided to come in—and it changed his life. We also work closely with New Lynn Physiotherapy, offering 12-week packages for their patients, and we accept green prescription cards from doctors.

I'd love to invite you all to try our gym with a free seven-day trial. For seniors, membership is just \$17.50, with a one-time \$49 fee for a fob that gives you 24/7 access. If you sign up for six or twelve months, we'll waive the joining fee and give you the first four weeks free.

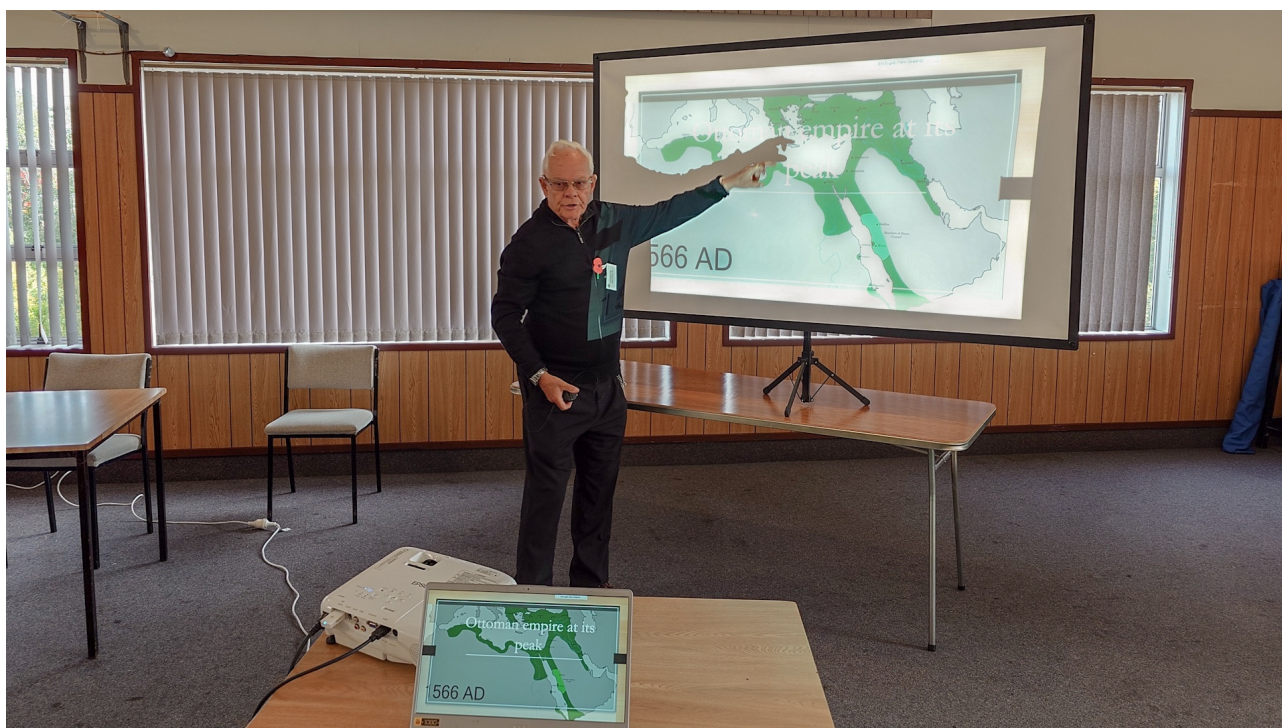
Our staff are available Monday to Thursday from 10 AM to 7 PM and Friday from 10 AM to 2 PM. Feel free to pop in anytime during these hours, and someone will be happy to help you get started on your fitness journey.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you all. Remember: it's never too late to start improving your strength, mobility, and overall health!

REFLECTIONS ON ATATURK: A COMPLEX LEGACY

CHARLES NICHOLLS

Whisper AI & Claude, Grok, ChatGPT



Charles Nicholls talking about the Ottoman Empire at its peak in 566 AD

Last year, I had the profound privilege of attending the Anzac Day service at Westminster Abbey. As a New Zealander, I felt immense pride watching our flag, alongside Australia's and Turkey's, carried through the historic abbey. The London Maori Choir sang before me, and a resplendent representative of our forces stood tall in full dress uniform. Amid the solemnity, my thoughts turned to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, a figure whose legacy intertwines with the Gallipoli campaign and the birth of modern Turkey. His story, as I've come to understand it, is one of remarkable achievement, complexity, and contradiction.

Walking through Westminster Abbey, I reflected on why Ataturk fascinates me. His poem, often read at ANZAC services, resonates deeply: "Those heroes who shed their blood and lost their lives... you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country... There is no difference between the Jonnies and the Mehments to us, where they lie side by side."

That spirit of chivalry stands in sharp contrast to the bitter nationalist fervour elsewhere in early 20th-century Europe. Following the collapse of the great empires—the Romanovs, Hapsburgs, Hohenzollerns, and the

Ottomans—chaos reigned. In Russia, autocracy gave way to Lenin and Stalin; Germany fell to National Socialism; Austria was annexed by Hitler. And in the Middle East, the mess born of imperial carving persists even today.

Gallipoli looms large in New Zealand's history. We suffered staggering losses per capita in World War I, more than most Commonwealth nations. Standing in the abbey, I grappled with why we celebrate a defeat. It dawned on me that Gallipoli marked the moment we began to see ourselves as New Zealanders, not merely British subjects. The Australia-New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) was a crucible for our national identity, a process that began there and continued through our dominion status in 1907, formalized only decades later.

I have long had mixed feelings about the icons of history. For instance, I greatly respect Winston Churchill for his role in the Second World War, yet I cannot ignore his earlier imperialist policies that contributed to the conflicts leading up to the First World War. As First Lord of the Admiralty, Churchill was a key architect of the Dardanelles campaign—a military disaster for which we, as New Zealanders, paid dearly.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, born in 1881 in Thessaloniki, then part of the Ottoman Empire, was a complex personality. His devout Muslim mother, who hoped he would become a religious leader, gave him the name "Mustafa". "Kemal," meaning perfection or maturity, came from a mathematics teacher impressed by his abilities. "

His early education showed his determination and independence. At age 13, without telling his mother, he studied for and passed the entrance exam to military school, enrolling himself before finally informing her. This self-motivated teenager would later transform a nation.



Formal portrait of Kemal Atatürk wearing the Gallipoli Star and Balkan Medal

Military education shaped him profoundly. At the Monastir Military College, he first encountered Christians in a school that was 70% Muslim and 30% Christian. He graduated second in a class of 700 and continued to the prestigious Ottoman War Academy, where despite being involved in producing a clandestine newspaper critical of the Sultan, he graduated in the top ten of 450 students.

His military career was distinguished by strategic brilliance, culminating in his legendary defense at Gallipoli in 1915, where he repelled the Allied invasion of the Dardanelles. This is where our ANZAC story intersects with his—the battle we celebrate as a national defeat but also as the birth of our distinct national identity.

After World War I, as the victorious Allies carved up the Ottoman Empire, Atatürk emerged as the leader of Turkish resistance. By 1923, he had established the Turkish Republic, abolished the Sultanate, and become the nation's first president—a position he would hold until his death in 1938.

What makes Atatürk remarkable isn't just his military or political success, but the breathtaking speed and scope of his reforms. In just 15 years, he:

- Secularized the state, replacing Islamic law with Swiss, Italian, and German legal codes.
- Introduced the Latin alphabet, boosting literacy rates, and mandated surnames, taking “Ataturk”—meaning “Father of the Turks”—for himself
- Instituted the Western calendar in place of the Eastern Calendar
- Outlawed polygamy and championed women's rights far ahead of his time
- Made primary schools co-educational
- Grew the railway network by 65%
- Pursued rapid industrialization and economic modernization

Imagine: in the 1930s, an ex-Muslim nation had women sitting as judges, flying fighter planes, and elected to Parliament. His economic policies, blending statism with private enterprise, modernized agriculture and industry, even amidst the Great Depression.

He once said, “We shall not catch up with the modern world if we only modernize half the population,” a nod to his push for women’s education and rights, though his personal life, marked by infidelity, complicates his feminist credentials.

Ataturk’s nationalism, while unifying, excluded minorities like the Kurds, who faced harsh assimilation policies. The Armenian massacres during his era remain a dark stain, and though he promised investigations, political expediency led to pardons. His authoritarian streak silenced dissent, banning trade unions and opposition parties. A heavy drinker, he died of cirrhosis in 1938, leaving a cult of personality that still dominates Turkish politics.

Three days after London, I found myself in Thessaloniki, standing in Ataturk’s birthplace, now a Turkish enclave in Greece. The coincidence struck me—here was where his journey began, and it felt like fate guiding me to explore his legacy. His home, preserved as a museum, and his mausoleum in Ankara are sacred to Turks. His image graces every banknote, and memorials to him dot the globe, from Wellington to Canberra.



The current series of Turkish banknotes includes a new ₺200 denomination

Ataturk’s vision was to align Turkey with the West while preserving its independence. He navigated a collapsing Ottoman Empire, outmanoeuvring Allied powers to secure Turkey’s borders through the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. His “six arrows” of Kemalism—republicanism, populism, nationalism, statism, secularism, and reformism—guided his nation’s transformation. He participated in the forced population exchanges between Turkey and Greece that relocated 1.5 million people based on religion.

When I think of Churchill, I see both the hero who defended democracy in World War II and the imperialist whose policies contributed to World War I. Ataturk represents both visionary modernization and authoritarian nationalism—a man who transformed his nation while trampling those who stood in his way.

Ataturk once said: "There are two Mustafa Kemals. One is the flesh and blood Mustafa Kemal who will pass away. The other is you... I stand for the nation's dream and my life's work is to make them come true."

Major historical figures such as Ataturk show us that history is rarely black and white, that rapid progress is often associated with some atrocious outcomes, and that even flawed leaders can change the course of nations for the better.

APRIL COFFEE MORNING AT KREEM CAFE

Vince Middeldorp, Grok AI & Claude AI

Our April coffee morning at Kreem Cafe on Universal Drive was a lively affair, with the bustling cafe packed with customers and staff working tirelessly to keep up. The popularity of this spacious venue never ceases to amaze!

Upon arriving at the car park, I spotted what appeared to be Trevor Pollard's van with a small dog inside. A quick glance revealed shelves stocked with various plumbing parts, confirming it was indeed Trevor's vehicle.

The day prior, Alan Verry had organized a Kiapara Harbour cruise on the Kewpie Too. Linda Narayan, who participated in the cruise, mentioned she enjoyed it thoroughly and expressed surprise at my absence. I'd been deterred by the weather forecasts—Metservice predicted heavy rain; Accuweather predicted overcast skies and blustery winds. Opting for caution, I didn't book for the cruise. At home I looked out the windows and, to my dismay, saw sunshine and very little wind. When I asked Alan about his remarkable luck with the weather, he attributed it to his dedicated praying in the days leading up to the event.



Suzanne Barrett, Raymond Barrett, Alan Verry, Linda Narayan and Trevor Pollard at the busy Kreem Cafe

Raymond and Suzanne Barrett were also at the coffee morning. Suzanne serves as the greeter at the Mt Albert Ladies Rebus Club. As they were leaving, I suggested to Linda Narayan that members of the recently closed Avondale Rebus Club, with Linda being one of those affected, might want to consider joining the Mt Albert club. Suzanne said that Mt Albert has a large membership, a contrast to the challenges many clubs, including ours, are facing.

When Ian Smith moved to our end of the table, the conversation turned to driver's license renewals. Trevor Pollard, now 89, shared that he temporarily lost his license after failing a medical exam but regained it after a second opinion from a doctor on Rosebank Road, recommended by Bobby Bland. Ian Smith recounted his own recent renewal, where he benefited from a fortunate coincidence during his medical examination—overhearing another patient being given the same name and address recall question at just the right time, enabling him to answer with perfect accuracy.

As I departed around lunchtime, I noticed a table with diners enjoying hamburgers and chips—unexpected for a cafe but perhaps a clue to Kreem's enduring appeal. The food, clearly not just cabinet fare, might be what keeps the patrons coming back.

UPCOMING BUS TRIP

Vince Middeldorp, ChatGPT AI

Because the St John Hall is being used for a training course on the day when Waitakere Combined Rebus Club meets (3rd Wednesday of the month) Ian Smith, has lined up a day out for his members, and for West Auckland Men's Rebus club, on **Wednesday 21st May**, exploring two of Auckland's charming historic spots.



Highwic is a 19th-century house that is listed by Heritage New Zealand as a Category I structure

The first stop will be **Highwic**, located at 40 Gillies Avenue (off Mortimer Pass Newmarket). It is a large house of Carpenter Gothic design built in 1862 for Alfred Buckland, a wealthy colonial settler and landowner. It was purchased by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and Auckland Council in 1978 and opened as a historic house museum in 1981. **If you want to look around inside the house, the cost is \$10.**

Second stop will be the **Pah Homestead**, situated in the lovely Monte Cecilia Park at 72 Hillsborough Road, Hillsborough. The homestead, now a public art gallery owned by Auckland Council, is a historic treasure in its own right. We'll enjoy a coffee or lunch at the Hill House Café, located right inside the homestead.

The cost for the trip is \$20, and the bus will leave from the usual place – St John Hall, Edmonton Road, but at the slightly later time of 9:45 am. Aim to arrive early because those on the St John Course will also look to park outside the hall. Make payments to Waitakere Combined Rebus Club **12 3232 0318628 00**.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT COFFEE MORNING



Google review says, "Staff always so friendly, great food and the BEST coffee in Henderson."

Mark your calendars for our next coffee morning on **Wednesday, 28th May, at 10:00 am**. We'll be at **Sierra Cafe**, which located at 111 Lincoln Road. This is the address for the Lincoln Road shopping centre that includes The Warehouse, Crackerjack, Spotlight, Warehouse Stationery and Noel Leeming Appliances.

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 Road. The date for our June meeting is Friday, 13th June.