

Report on PrimeTimers 2017

Our year began on 9 February with a meeting in the Church Hall, attended by many and our new administrative assistant Helena Reimer in a relieving position for Claire Dooney whose new baby girl was born in February 2017.

Our first outing on February 23 was quite ambitious, all the way to Jacksons Bay away past Haast, where the sun shone brilliantly on us while we admired the scenery and enjoyed the excellent fish and chips at the funky Craypot Café.

We had a movie day on March 9 as we weren't able to use the Church Hall. However, *Alone in Berlin* kept us happy enough.

A trip to Tarras on 23 March was more comfortable than the long trek to Haast and we explored the local historic Church there with its wonderful tapestried cushions. After a lunch at the Country Café, very tasty, we were welcomed at John Perriam's Bendigo property where we listened to the famous Shrek stories and were able to look inside the homestead recreated with memorabilia and photographs of times gone by.

And how lucky were we to have the team from NASA speak to us on April 13 complete with weather balloon from their base at Wanaka Airport.

The Arrowtown Autumn Festival was a very festive outing a week later on April 20, wonderful hats and entertainment from the local cancan dancers and singers, the sherry and afternoon tea a hit as well.

Heather Penny -Cooke was a guest speaker on May 4 and had us riveted with her stories of the slave trade in Thailand, along with Ella Lawton who gave us an in -depth look at her involvement in the Wanaka community.

The outing on 18 May was to Hawea and beyond, off to a flying start at the Silk Road Trading Company on Riverbank Road, feted with champagne and e'claires from Kim and Diana, and we bought a few antiques and knick knacks. After a lunch in the sun at the Luggate Pub we had a quick visit to the Dublin Bay Pottery Shop before seeing the lively pupils at Hawea Flat School perform in their Kapa Haka group, show us the vegetables they had grown at school and demonstrated some science experiments. We left there laden with walnuts. This was a great day, a lot to see, taste and enjoy!

At our meeting on 8 June the musical group *Mulled Wine* gave us a wonderful a Capella performance and Kim from Silk Road gave us an insight into how her shop works. Our very own Ola was a star showing us how to creatively make

our very own Christmas bags. This was a good forerunner to our mid-winter Christmas lunch at the Cardrona Pub with lots of gifts won.

On July 13, while I was in Singapore, Winton ran our meeting with Katie Bennetts, speaking about her experience of optometry in Ghana, and Sarah Holmes, about her time in Kenya. Both delightfully interesting speakers I was told.

The movie outing on 27 July packed out the larger Cinema Paradiso, with a happy tale of Hampstead.

The Bannockburn Pub was a great destination for August, a gourmet menu for some, the more subdued fish 'n chips for the less adventurous followed by a visit to the Transpire Fibre Studio and Craft Gallery. And an impromptu stop at Nichol's Garden Shop to collect up some bargain pots and plants finished the outing off nicely.

The following month in September on a cold clear day we travelled to Clyde to see "Victoria and Abdul after an Oliver's lunch and a wander around the shops.

The big journey to Glenorchy in October was a highlight with gorgeous weather and stunning scenes. The Pub, the cafes and craft shops were pleased to see us, before we visited John Crumps Art Gallery and admired his superb oil landscapes.

The last trip for the year was to Frankton for the shops at Remarkables Park and Five Mile. The credit cards took a battering and the bus was laden on its return.

And what better way to celebrate Christmas and the final get together than a slap up lunch with all the festive trimmings at the Hawea Hotel with the Aspiring Village Line Dancing Group kicking up their heels. Roll on 2018 with even more exciting and adventurous outings!