

THE CAVERSHAM LECTURES 2024



Tuesday, 12 November at 7.30pm
In Saint Peter's Parish Centre
Hillside Road

Dr Daphne Lee, Professor Emerita,
University of Otago Geology Department

"FOSSIL TREASURES OF MIOCENE ZEALANDIA: FOULDEN AND HINDON MAARS AND NEW DISCOVERIES IN OTAGO AMBER"

OTAGO POSSESSES A WEALTH OF FOSSIL TREASURES HIDDEN IN THE ROCKS BENEATH OUR FEET WHICH TELL THE HISTORY OF THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF SOUTHERN ZEALANDIA, FROM RAINFORESTS SURROUNDING VOLCANIC LAKES AT FOULDEN AND HINDON TO AMBER FORESTS AT ROXBURGH, HYDE AND POMAHAKA. THESE REMAINS OF ANCIENT PLANTS AND ANIMALS, ALL HELD IN THE GEOLOGY MUSEUM COLLECTIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO, PROVIDE EVIDENCE FOR PAST CLIMATES, CHANGING LIFE AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS WHICH ARE A KEY PART OF OUR BIOLOGICAL HERITAGE.

DAPHNE LEE IS AN EMERITUS PROFESSOR IN THE GEOLOGY DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO. SHE GREW UP ON A FARM IN SOUTHLAND AND DECIDED TO BECOME A GEOLOGIST AT THE AGE OF 14, A DECISION SHE HAS NEVER REGRETTED. HER RESEARCH INTERESTS INCLUDE FOSSILS OF ALL KINDS FROM DIATOMS TO INSECTS TO PLANTS AND FISH, PALEOECOLOGY AND PALEOCLIMATE. HER MAIN FOCUS OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS HAS BEEN THE REMARKABLE FOSSIL SITE NEAR MIDDLEMARCH CALLED FOULDEN MAAR BUT SHE WORKS ON MANY OTHER SITES IN OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND.