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U3A WARKWORTH

Learning is forever

Newsletter – June 2009

From our President

My plea for a new secretary for our society was well answered with two volunteers coming forward. Elaine Ellison-Smith has now handed over to Sylvia Diprose, so many thanks to Elaine and welcome to Sylvia.

Members may recall that the committee put forward a proposal to change the financial year to end in October, with the AGM in December. This will be put forward for your vote at the next general meeting in June.

For those of you on broadband internet, I recommend a look at U3A Online. I've recently enrolled for one of their on-line courses (from quite a wide range of options) so I will give it a 'test drive' and let you know. Each course costs A\$20 to members.

Also available to broadband users is access to lectures from top-tier universities. You can now 'attend' lectures from such illustrious institutions as; UCLA Berkley, MIT, Yale, and Stanford.

Go to sites such as; AcademicEarth.org, iTunes U, YouTube Edu, & TED.com and see the range of lectures available.

Your committee was asked to investigate alternative venue options for general meetings; this was due primarily to parking and noise problems at the Masonic Hall. The result is that we have decided to move to Totara Park Community Hall with effect from our very next meeting. This new venue has plenty of free parking, is much less noisy, and has built-in video projector and sound systems.

Please remember that June is also our mid-winter lunch meeting, so each bring a plate of finger food to share after the NZ film presentation.

Enjoy your U3A.

Christopher Field, President

Obituary - Max Hope

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of one of our members - Max Hope.

Max spent his early life with his family on D'Urville Island in the Marlborough Sounds.

He had a remarkable military career spanning some 37 years starting in the NZ Army in 1937. He transferred to the Air Force in 1942 where he remained until he retired with the rank of Group Captain in 1974.

His career in the air force after training, took him first to the Pacific where he served on Corsairs with 16 Squadron and then to a posting in Japan with the occupation forces. Upon returning to New Zealand he became adjutant to RNZAF Wigram and later, C.O. of the General Service Training School. In 1951 he was appointed Commanding Officer at Ohakea, of RNZAF Vampire Jet 14 Squadron, which he later took to Cyprus as part of the RAF Middle East Air Force until 1954.

With awards of MBE and Air Force Cross he returned to NZ, and took up the position – Honorary Aide-de-Camp to the Governor General. He became NZ Air Attaché in Washington from 1969 to 1973 and, after retirement from RNZAF, was stationed as Consul-General to the U.S. Western States for 4 years.

Max retired to Warkworth district some 20 years ago and, with his late wife Barbara, became fully involved in many and various clubs and organisations here. He served as Patron of the local branch of the NZ Air Force Association and latterly was an active member of U3A. For several years Max belonged to the Current Affairs Group. Here, his contributions and comments added wisdom and a depth of understanding to the topics discussed.

Max will be missed by his many friends and family.

Contributed by Elaine Ellison-Smith.

Please let the Editor know if you change your email address, phone number, or postal address so that we can update our membership database.

Luncheon General Meeting

Monday June 8th
10:00 a.m.

Totara Park Community Hall, Melwood Drive, Warkworth
(Please consider car pooling to ensure easy parking)

Duty Group – Local History
Convenor – Lorna Laxon – Phone 422 5362

The hall will be open at 9:15 a.m. to allow the Duty Group to prepare the room and attend to morning tea. Please also clean up and reinstate the room after the meeting.

Meeting programme:-

9:15 Duty Group set up.

10:00 Guest Speaker – Chris Todd

“The construction of a movie sound track from the ground up”

11:15 General Businesses

11:45 Finger food luncheon.

Please bring a plate of finger food for a shared luncheon.

Tea and coffee will be supplied as usual.

Speaker:

Chris Todd's talk will feature the unravelling of film editing from the perspective of a Dialogue Editor, demonstrating the building-blocks of a brand new feature film.

In the twenty-five years of Chris's editing career highlights include:-

'Once Were Warriors'

'Lord of the Rings'

'The World's Fastest Indian'

We are in for a rare treat from Chris and mother Anne will no doubt be glowing with pride in the audience!

Reminder: Our general meeting venue has changed to Totara Park Community Hall (Off Melwood Drive)

Please bring a plate of your favourite finger food for a shared luncheon.

Last Meeting:

A Vote for Cynthia.

This performance by the accomplished actress Helen Moulder was a *Tour de Force!* From 'the word go' she had her audience amused and delighted and, to our surprise, prepared to do whatever she asked of us. This was her ultimate triumph, to persuade the Warkworth U3A members to 'let their back hair down', and have us all cheering, clapping, shouting and singing with joyous abandon.

Helen Moulder's character, Miss Cynthia Fortitude, was single-minded in her determination to be elected Prime Minister of New Zealand in 2011, and as for us to be her supporters, 'The Fortitude Party'. The strategies that Miss Fortitude employed to achieve her aim were varied and compelling. We all sang her version of well know songs and arias, one of the most impressive being from Handel's 'Messiah' '*For unto us a son is born*' becoming '*For unto us a leader is given*'. She became our leader, and we enjoyed her every command. Cynthia Fortitude herself possessed a powerful soprano voice which she used to great effect, and the pace of the whole performance never slackened.

Among the many ideas proposed to improve New Zealand's image was Cynthia Fortitude's goal of building myriad opera houses in unlikely places such as Invercargill and Bluff, and most importantly, of improving the game of rugby. She floated ideas such as mothers, rather than girl friends, accompanying the All Blacks on tour, in order to curb any bad behaviour. As for boys who were not keen on the game, they were to be conscripted into Formation Marching teams demanding strict discipline as opposed to drugs, graffiti *et al*. To all these proposals we found ourselves giving whole-hearted

consent. We were even prepared to commit suicide *en masse* when the election results collapsed to a zero poll, singing as we did so. I was disappointed when all was saved by a donation from Africa, as by now Miss Fortitude held us all in thrall, and I, for one, would not have been at all surprised if her devoted audience had collapsed in death-throes on the floor!

Helen Moulder is a talented and skilled actress, and this was a solo triumph.

I, for one, shall definitely vote for Miss Cynthia Fortitude in 2011.

Submitted by Anne Todd

Group News:

Current Affairs Group.

We now have a core group of around 12 members, with many and varied issues being raised at each meeting. Some topics can be more serious than others, although time constraints sometimes mean that discussions can only touch lightly on matters that need deeper consideration.

We may not always agree with each other's opinions but we are mindful of the need to consider and respect all points of view, and there's often room for a change of mind after further reflection. One thing we all agree on is the need for a more common sense approach in the world of officialdom. We shall certainly miss long-standing member, Max Hope, who often spoke up against what he termed rampant bureaucracy.

For the June meeting we have invited Graham Lamont from the Hibiscus Coast U3A to come and talk with us about the world economic situation - its causes and possible solutions. Graham has been leading a discussion group on this issue and we look forward to being enlightened.

Val Strachan, Convenor.

Music Appreciation Group.

The Music Appreciation Group started last year with 8 recordings of *Widor's Toccata* performed by different organists on different organs. We found that very interesting and enjoyable and made for good comparisons and discussion.

That opened the idea of using the alphabet as the basis for our future program choice. The speaker for each meeting chooses the "letter" and then from this, produces a most interesting afternoon. So much to choose and work with using that letter – composers, music, conductors, singers and

musicians. Twelve letters have been chosen so far resulting in stimulating meetings.

We are looking forward to "C" in June and "P" in July. With twelve more letters to use I don't think we will run out of meeting topics! What about X and Z? Well yes there are many options in the *Oxford Companion to Music*.

Beverley Tipling, Convenor.

Passing of Common Sense.

Today we mourn the passing of a good friend by the name of Common Sense.

Common Sense lived a long life, but died of a heart attack on the brink of the millennium. No one really knows how old he was, since the birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He selflessly devoted his life's service in schools, hospitals, homes, factories and offices, helping folks get jobs done, without fanfare or foolishness.

For decades, petty rules, silly laws and frivolous law suits held no power over Common Sense.

He was credited with cultivating such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple sound financial policies - don't spend more than you earn, reliable parenting strategies - adults are in charge --not kids, and its O K to come in second. A veteran of the Industrial Revolution, the great Depression and the Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived cultural and educational trends, including body piercing, whole language and "new math."

But his health declined when he became infected with the "If it only helps one person it's worth it" virus.

In recent decades, his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of overbearing regulations. He watched in pain as good people became ruled by self-seeking lawyers. His health rapidly deteriorated when schools endlessly implemented zero tolerance policies. Reports of a six year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. It declined even further when schools had to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but could not inform the parent when a female student was pregnant or wanted an abortion.

Common Sense lost his will to live when the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, criminals received better treatment than victims, and federal judges stuck their noses into everything from Boy Scouts to professional sports.

Finally, when a person too stupid to realise that a cup of steaming coffee was hot, was awarded a huge settlement, Common Sense threw in the towel.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son Reason. He is survived by two stepbrothers, "My Rights" and "Ima Whiner". Not many attended his funeral because not many realised he had gone - But I do.

(With acknowledgement to Auckland Justices of the Peace Assoc. Newsletter)

Contributed by Elaine Ellison-Smith.

Diary Notes:

Next General meeting: Monday 10th August

Group reports for June newsletter – Local History and Jazz Listening Groups, due to Editor by 20th July. Thanks.

If you would like future Newsletters sent to you by email instead of by post, please send a blank email to yes@u3a.co.nz

COMMITTEE 2009

President:	Chris Field	422 2247	cgf@xtra.co.nz
Secretary:	Sylvia Diprose	422 0533	ks.diprose@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer:	Eric Toms	425 6335	erictoms@clear.net.nz
Groups director:	Anne Todd	425 9746	
Membership &			
Archivist:	Ina Shaw	425 8667	ina.homewoodcottage@xtra.co.nz
Editor:	Alan Spicer	422 2685	editor@u3a.co.nz
Social:	Lorna Laxon	422 5362	lorna.laxon@xtra.co.nz
	Elaine Ellison-Smith	425 9138	nevlaine@slingshot.co.nz
Speakers:	Full committee		
Publicity:	Keith Canning	422 9965	
Almoner:	Monica Boorer	425 8210	

Warkworth U3A, P O Box 520, Warkworth, 0941

Web site: www.u3a.co.nz

