



Newsletter

October – November 2007

From the President

I hope that you enjoyed the last general meeting in August as much as I did. It was timely to be updated about the Warkworth Centre plans presented to us by Graham Woodside – and satisfying to have his sympathetic ear about our members' thoughts regarding the proposed appearance of the building.

We were most fortunate that Peter Oettli was able to come at such short notice to speak to us, and his knowledgeable glimpses into many aspects of travel were both enthralling and entertaining.

Another plus was the increased numbers of members attending this meeting...which has made me wonder at what it is that draws folk, or doesn't draw them, to meetings. Is it the venue? - The topic? - The celebrity status of the speaker? - Or his/her reputation as an outstanding speaker?

U3A Warkworth members strongly support their interest groups. But of the 130 plus on our roll, only an average of 50 comes to the bi-monthly meetings. If you have any ideas or explanations as to the reason for this rather disappointing attendance figure, the committee or I would love to hear from you.

Several of our members are away, some have just returned and others are about to depart. Godspeed and a safe return to you all.

Regards,

Lorna Laxon, President.

Editor's Desk:

Berris and I are presently enjoying a house exchange near Bedford, England, where we are being treated with wonderfully warm and sunny days and so much to do.

What a pleasant transformation I saw in London last weekend when we went there to see a performance at The Globe theatre, compared to the London I worked in 45 years ago – it's still old, yet it's new and vibrant.

Thanks to the wonders of modern communications, timely newsletter submissions from many members, and the generous help of Pip Perrins with the publishing and distribution of the newsletter, it's 'business as usual'.

I must admit that I found it hard to sit down at the keyboard and finally collate the content from the lovely cottage near Truro where we and our two UK resident sons are staying for a few days.

Alan Spicer, Editor.

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Monday October 8th, 9:45 a.m. at the New Masonic Hall, Baxter Street

Meeting commences at 10:00 a.m.

DUTY GROUP–Philosophy
CONVENOR: - Ray Bradley 422-9222

(The hall will be open from 9:15 a.m. to allow the Duty Group to prepare the room and attend to morning tea. Please also cleanup and re-instate the room after the meeting)

Meeting programme:-

- 9:15 Duty Group set up
- 9:45 Assemble
- 10:00 General Business
Mini Speaker – “Just a Minute”
Hear a smattering of views on life from your committee, as they have found it along the way
- 10:40 Morning tea
- 11:00 Guest Speaker – Pat Booth
“The Giraffe Club”

GUEST SPEAKER:

Pat Booth is the recipient of the rare “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Press Club. As a veteran journalist with the Auckland Star, he was well known for his in-depth coverage of the Arthur Allen Thomas case, the Mr Asia Drug Ring and a host of other issues. Present readers of the Rodney Times will follow his regular articles.

The intriguing title of his not-to-be-missed talk: “**The Giraffe Club**”

GROUPS NEWS

Water Colour Painting from Yvonne Elliott:

Fifteen members have enrolled.

We had our first get-together at Leigh, as I had promised a warm fire and studio, but we quickly realized we'd need more space to work.

Totara Park came to the rescue and as some of their residents are with our group, they haven't charged for the use of their hall, an ideal venue, which is sunny and light and has lots of tables.

Because of some members 'Grandma Duties', overseas trips and the like, we haven't had more than eight or nine members at a time ---- which is fine.

We have some very experienced Artists and some beginners----we help each other and it's been fun. We are discovering hidden talents----some happy messes--- and learning how watercolour moves.

Ina Shaw kindly took my place recently when I went to my Dads' 96th Birthday in Napier. We meet at Totara Park 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 10am.

Philosophy:

Religion is all the rage these days. Fundamentalism in its varied manifestations haunts the corridors of political power in the USA; and faith-based reasoning threatens, as many see it, to set back the gains made two centuries ago during the Age of Enlightenment. Many articulate secularists are fighting back.

So it is little wonder that when the topic for the new Philosophy Study Group was announced as being "Does a supernatural God exist?" members flocked to join. 14 attended our first meeting, held at the home of convenor Professor Ray Bradley. And our mailing list now stands at 28. Clearly a more accommodating venue had to be found, and--courtesy of the Heron's Flight Restaurant--we now meet in one of their spacious rooms on the second Wednesday of each month.

Our sessions are organized in the following way. Ray distributes reading material in advance so members can get their thinking caps on in preparation for Ray's more detailed presentation of the scheduled topic. Sometimes he'll lecture for a bit. But always he pauses to ask questions in such a way as to encourage discussion. There's no strict adherence to the announced agenda: discussion of a topic that wasn't adequately covered during one session may well flow on to the next.

We spent a good bit of time at the outset getting a feel for what it is like to approach questions from a philosophical point of view. Subsequently we've discussed: faith and reason, the logical bases of the rivalry between religions, the causes and reasons for religious belief, the credibility of sacred scriptures and of personal experience. And we are about to move on to a discussion of the classic arguments for and against the existence of a theistic God: especially arguments to do with the need for a cause and designer of the universe, and the problem of evil in that universe.

We are grateful to local John Patrick for leading the discussion during June when Ray was overseas.

Film Appreciation Group:

It is with considerable regret that I have to announce that we have disbanded the group.

When the Group was formed some four years ago, it was to fill a void that some of us felt quite strongly. We missed being able to go to the movies!

So one morning each month at 10 o'clock we would car-pool and visit a cinema, usually the Bridgeway at Northcote.

Our numbers varied from five to fifteen. We often arrived in time to have a coffee before the film, but at its completion the first item for discussion was always about where we'd have lunch. Many a lively discussion, often controversial, ensued across the table. We had a good time and formed friendships.

So I have mixed feelings about the splendid cinema complex at Matakana. I have to acknowledge that it's ever so much easier now to get to see a film but I shall miss the fellowship I shared with the members of our group.

From Beulah Heaven

Play Reading:

The group numbers 16 members and we are all there to enjoy reading aloud good play scripts, and endeavouring to bring our allocated characters to life without the help of movement or gesture. No mean task, but one in which we are increasingly successful.

In 2006 and 2007 choice of play ranged from Shakespeare – ‘Twelfth Night’ and ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream’ and Chekhov’s ‘The Seagull’, to Robert Bolt’s ‘A Man for all Seasons’; ‘Face to Face’ and ‘Charitable Intent’ from the Jack Manning trilogy by David Williamson; ‘The Crucible’ by Arthur Millar, ‘The Pohutukawa Tree’ by Bruce Mason and our current ‘The Winslow Boy’ by Terence Rattigan.

Casting can be problematic with such a large group to cater for. So far we have managed but a part often has to be shared by two readers, and continuity of characterisation suffers as a result.

Obtaining sets of plays isn’t always easy, and on at least two occasions valiant group members have typed out whole plays and then copies have been made. A true labour of love! Scripts are sent to members in good time so that there is no excuse for not studying the script and the allocated role...This is a vital requirement if the play is to come to life, and justice be done to the playwright.

The group is indebted to Rita Rowsell for her contribution as current convenor; for Mike Glover’s current secretary-ship; and for Mike’s and Rona letting us gather in their Brick Bay home every month....A large, airy, comfortable room with good acoustics is ours from 9:30 to 12 noon. What more could we ask?

From Anne Todd

Volunteer Service Abroad's latest pro-poor tourism option - Addventure VSA.

Unlike VSA's usual 2 year skill-share assignments, Addventure offers small groups of New Zealanders the chance to explore a new country and a new culture, learn about the work of development organisations and pitch in on a community project - all in 2 weeks. (Travel with a purpose).

Addventurers are committed to responsible travel, to engaging with communities and, on their return, to sharing their experience. As VSA is a charity, a percentage of the trip cost is a donation back to VSA. Participants can fundraise for their Addventure trip.

VSA has four Addventure opportunities coming up:

Cambodia - 30 December 07 and 15 January 08 departures

East New Britain, Papua New Guinea, early April 08

Laos August/September 08

For more information, please check out www.vsa.org.nz

or phone 0800 872 8646

Addventurers come home with insights they'd never get as a tourist. Participants from the Addventure options that have run to date came back changed, moved and blown away by their experiences.

Welcome home, Mildred Hooper!

We were shocked to hear reports of her accident and hospitalisation in the UK recently but are now delighted to learn of her safe return and continued improvement; having that "scaffolding" off must have been a great relief.

Returning to church for the first time Mildred was greeted with a much deserved rendition of "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow" from the congregation.

And so say all of us.

Sir Douglas Robb Lectures 2007

A series of three lectures by Dr Yash Ghai, a renowned constitutional lawyer from Kenya with interests in human rights and ethnic conflicts, on *Ethnicity, human rights and democracy*.

Tuesday 2 October, 7pm: *The emergence of ethnicity as a political force*.

Thursday 4 October, 7pm: *The challenge of ethnicity to human rights*.

Monday 8 October, 7pm: *Designing the state in multi-ethnic states*.

Lecture Theatre B28, Library Basement, University of Auckland, 5 Alfred Street, Auckland City. Admission is free and all are welcome.

Evening parking is available for \$5 in lower levels of Owen G. Glenn Building, 12 Grafton Road.

Further information: 373-7599 ext 87467. www.auckland.ac.nz/robb

Auckland Museum

The Museum website was recently given a fresh new look. If you are planning a visit there by yourself, or to take overseas visitors to view a slice of our culture and history, check out the web site to see what's on. www.aucklandmuseum.com

DIARY NOTES:

Next General meeting:

Monday 10th December

U3A International Conference, 19 - 21 November 2007, Christchurch

For more information:

Here is the web page address: <http://u3a.netfirms.com/Conference.htm>

(Please note, there is no 'www' in this address.)

If you would like your next newsletter sent by email please send a blank email message to: yes@u3a.co.nz

U3A WARKWORTH STUDY GROUP MEETINGS 2007

Key	STUDY GROUP	Convenor	Phone	Time	Date	October	November
anh	Ancient History	Jim McKinlay	422-9063	9:30 a.m.	5th	"Croatia" 5 Apollo Place, Snells Beach	2nd "New Grange, Ireland" 35 Rivendell Place, Warkworth
bot	Book Talk	Judith Larsen	425-0571	10:00 a.m.	2nd	2/5 Walton Ave, Warkworth	6th 99 Sharp Rd, Matakana
cua	Current Affairs	Elaine Ellison-Smith	425-9138	2:00 p.m.	18th	1216 Sandspit Rd, Sandspit	15th 9a Bennett Rd, Warkworth
fia	Film Appreciation	Beulah Heaven	425-6545	Varies		Group discontinued, refer to separate note	
for	Food For Thought	Anthea McKergow	422-6219	1:30 p.m.	24th	"Potatoes" 15 Willjames Ave, Algies Bay	28th "Group Lunch" - yummy!
jal	Jazz Listening	Val Couling	425-5766	2:00 p.m.	15th	"N.Z. Jazz revisited" 4 Mellwood Place, Warkworth	19th Will be notified later
meh	Mediaeval History	Chris Hoogerwerf	425-5022	9:30 a.m.	19th	"Tudor Navy pt.II" - Chris Field 25 Kauri Drive, Brick Bay	16th Mediaeval Medical Practices - Bev Voisin 1/10 Pound St, Warkworth
mua	Music Appreciation	Pip Perrins	425-0383	1:30 p.m.	4th	"History of Music - 3" 14 Coquette St, Warkworth	1st Topic later 1 Hibiscus Avenue, Snells Beach
nza	NZ Art Appreciation	Deb Green	422-7785	10:00 a.m.	3rd	Mangawhai Visit	7th Will be notified later
phi	Philosophy	Prof. Ray Bradley	422-9222	10:00 a.m.	10th	Meet at Heron's Flight Vineyard	14th Meet at Heron's Flight Vineyard
plr	Play Reading	Rita Rowsell & Mike Glover	425-6078 425-9897	9:30 a.m.	9th	"Lord Arthur Savile's Crime" 19 Puriri Drive, Brick Bay	13th "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime" continued
por	Poetry Reading	Colleen Kangwai	425-4333	1:30 p.m.	17th	"Elizabeth Smither" 10b Amanda Lane, Snells Beach	21st "Bill Manhire" 34 Hill St, Warkworth
wcp	Watercolour Painting	Yvonne Elliott	422-6653	10:00 a.m.		First and third Mondays Totara Park, Warkworth	First and third Mondays Totara Park, Warkworth
wrs	Writing Stories of Your Life	Joan Romano	425-5517	1:30 p.m.	8th	Will be advised	12th Will be advised