U3A Golden Bay Mohua

March 2018 Newsletter

Our meeting of 25 August 2017 began with a short business session to discuss ideas for how we do things. In response the committee has undertaken several tasks so far. We have joined our U3A with others on the U3A NZ website describing what we do and how to contact us: https://u3a.nz/lists.htm

We have placed adverts in local libraries and some other locations. Another suggestion was that we have more time for discussion regarding our U3A work. One response to this was to have the 2018 AGM without a guest speaker so that there was time to share comments and ideas. The committee reports that they have responded to proposals as best they can as they begin the new U3A year.

The business session was followed by Richard English presenting 'From Stone Pillars to Solar Panels – A short history of Orkney'

Orkney is a special place defined by its climate and history which is quite distinct from, but intertwined with, the history of mainland UK. The talk followed the area's history from its beginnings and the construction of its increasingly famous stone monuments, through to the development of world leading technologies being trialled in the islands today.

Richard had visited the Orkneys frequently in the '60s and '70s as a civil engineer for the Scottish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and developed an intense interest in the history of the islands through talks with local residents on long winter nights. His enthusiasm for Orkney was evident and coloured by humour.

The Christmas function was held on 15th December. This involved a remarkably creative quiz curated by Jenny Maclaren, Margaret Maloney and Liz Lee. Following this challenge of mind, memory and fun we had an excellent shared lunch which ended another year of friendship and learning. Also at this meeting we farewelled long time committee member and treasurer Moira Tilling wishing her and Andrew very best wishes for their new life in Ruby Bay.

At the AGM on 23rd February 2018 we thanked and farewelled Jan Morgan who has stepped down from the committee and from the secretary role. All other present committee members were re-elected along with the addition of Tim Harrington. The Chairman's and Treasurer's Reports were accepted following some questions and discussion. Study group convenors had ample time for full reports of their 2017 activities with some notices of intended programmes for 2018.

Committee news:

Our Committee met on 6 March 2018. As part of our deliberations we discussed the issue of guest speakers from outside of Golden Bay. It was decided that the present arrangements for travel over Takaka Hill created uncertainties and possible stress for those travelling and also for those awaiting their arrival (or not) to speak to us.

We have decided not to invite people from outside of Golden Bay to speak with us until it becomes much easier to get here and then to get back. Waiting in a queue for several hours is not conducive to our speakers' wellbeing.

The next meeting will be announced shortly. In the meantime. short reports from the study groups are below…

Reports from the study groups:

History

The History group has continued to meet in members' homes on the third Thursday of every month. We have been making more use of the huge range of material available on YouTube etc for historical topics and have continued looking at interesting little places, now focussing in on the Mediterranean: Malta, Sardinia, Corsica and Rhodes, Crete, Cyprus, the Peloponnesian Peninsula and the Knights of St John. The programme for 2018 will evolve shortly – but there is much to cover, either by country or singular topic.

Convenor:
Jenny Maclaren
525 7440
pjsmac@xtra.co.nz

Music Appreciation

The programme for 2018 is yet to be decided.

Convenor: Sue Janke
525 8305
sjjanke@xtra.co.nz

Films

The programme for 2018 is yet to be decided.

Convenor: John Pemberton
525 9125
john.pemberton47@gmail.com

Democracy

The Democracy Group has continued regular meetings, finding in either the 'local' world, the "Wellington" world, or the "World" itself, more than enough to stimulate lively and fruitful debate.
We are pleased to have had input into Sir Geoffrey Palmer's efforts to try to persuade New Zealand of the critical need for a Constitution.
The Group has played a role in the circulating petition for a referendum on STV.
Surely the Waimea Dam issue highlights the dearth [or do I mean 'death'?] of Democracy in TASMAN!

Convenor:
John Lee
525 8110
zazamanc73@gmail.com

Twelve steps to a compassionate life

The "12 Steps to a more compassionate Life" group finished after 1½ years of regular meetings. We spent the last meeting reflecting on the whole book and finished in style with a delicious lunch.
There was some interest of keeping the group going and spending more time on each Step, but so far it hasn't been decided, yet.

Convenor:
Silvia Schneider-Rowse
525 8588
11nikaus525@gmail.com

TED Talks

TED is a non-partisan non-profit organisation devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks. TED began in 1984 as a conference where Technology, Entertainment and Design converged, and today covers almost all topics — from science to business to global issues — in more than 110 languages

Our TED Talks group meets on the 3rd Monday of every month at 10am. in the St John's room at the Rec Park. Attendances have been about 15 at each of our three meetings so far. A volunteer usually presents two TED talks between which lively discussion ensues. Our membership is open, so all are welcome. (Unless you are a member of SeniorNet please make a small koha so that we can meet our $10 room hire.)

Next TED talks:
Tuesday 27th March, 10-12 am. at SeniorNet clubrooms in the Show Grounds on the theme of "The earthlings are coming..." presented by Richard English.

Contact:
Richard English
525 6179
rsenglish@xtra.co.nz

24th April (same timing and venue) on the topic of "What makes our grandchildren tick?" A look at the development of a child's brain before and after birth - presented by John Pemberton

Art History

The Art History group has twenty committed members who meet most months in homes with large TV screens, to expand our knowledge of art. We usually base our discussion on a DVD, or You Tube videos, and are blessed by having several artists and art teachers in our group who can put together interesting and informative sessions. In addition, we enjoy going together to the Village Theatre Exhibition series and critiquing afterwards.
Artists we explored in 2017 include Bosch, Michelangelo, Monet, American Impressionists, Turner, Constable, Chagall, Henry Moore, Len lye and other Kinetic Artists. Our group is full, but we do keep a waiting list.

Convenors:
Jocelyn Tracey
525 9125
jocelyn.tracey@outlook.com

and
Margaret Maloney
524 8699
m.maloney@xtra.co.nz

Book discussion groups

Group 1: We have had an interesting year of reading. There have been a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction books chosen by our group, who are now in the process of selecting our reading for the year ahead, the group is fully subscribed.

Group 1 convenor:
Liz Lee
525 8110
leejl@xtra.co.nz

Group 2: We meet monthly on a Friday morning to discuss the book of the month (a copy supplied to each of us through the NZ-wide Book Discussion Scheme based in Christchurch). These titles come from the big and widely-varying pool of titles available and from which we select for each coming year. After reading over the preceding weeks, together we pay attention to the set of questions provided allowing them to take us to whichever place they lead. How best to describe our discussions? Perhaps with a mix of words - interesting, deep, sometimes profound, funny, informative, personal, literary, dynamic and yes, occasionally we've dealt to the book in question faster than in other months - but usually we have chosen well. We bring who we are and where we have been to each occasion and, after three years are enjoying amongst ourselves a goodly level of trust and support. We are thankful that U3A assists by paying the return postage on each pack of books. Our membership is currently fully subscribed.

Group 2 convenor:
Margaret Holloway
525 7411
margaret.holloway80@gmail.com

Economics

After more than a year of studying and discussing the history of economics, some of the significant thinkers through time, their theories and the effects on society and well-being, we finished the year with the rise of neo-liberalism and the impact on New Zealand society. This was made all the more interesting by the September election. Having lost our enthusiastic co-ordinator, Moira Tilling, the group has yet to reconvene in 2018. If there is sufficient interest, there is plenty more to be studied in this subject.

Convenor:
TBA

Saints and Sinners

This year we are basing our study round Peter Simpson's book Bloomsbury South. Again, each member of the group will choose one of the writers, artists, publishers who remade the arts in Christchurch between 1933 and 1953.
Because we were exhilarated by our Bloomsbury study last year, we are meeting monthly this year, but because we meet in each other's homes, we can't accommodate new members at the moment.

Convenor:
Robin Riley
525 7033 or
027 244 7731
ratrobin7@gmail.com

Colonial Impact

This Group will study the impact of early Māori – European contact. Anyone interested please contact Dilyse.

Convenor: Dilyse Roberts
525 9443
redweta.dar@gmail.com

Electricity in the Bay

The group has 15 members.

In the last year we had four meetings, starting with a visit to the Pupu Hydro Power Station. Paul Sangster gave us a talk about the Power Station itself, technical specifications and the history with some stories about how electricity came to Golden Bay and how it developed in the early days.
The Cobb Power Station was the 2nd on the list. A much bigger scale. Again we heard about the history and the setup including the Cobb dam. Even though this power station is part of the national grid and run from Tauranga it is possible to isolate it and run it manually as an island system to service the Tasman District from Motueka to Collingwood and beyond.
Coming to know more about the grid and power distribution was the purpose of the 3rd meeting with Network Tasman. We heard about the network, technical setup and Golden Bay typical issues this network has to tackle. Also, we got a brief outlook on how the progress of technology might change the way we pay and use power in the future.
One common thing in remote places (and the Bay has some) are island systems. So for the 4th meeting we went to see Mike and Bertha Newman's place at Parapara. A combination of solar and hydro power generation and a battery storage. The stories behind that and the engineering skills involved where impressive.
As an additional 5th meeting we are planning on visiting Mike Delceg's new "off the shelf" system at Rangihaeata. Solar and backup battery grid connect.
Last but not least, we would like to have a panel of three experts, talking about the future of electricity in general, the changes we have to expect and how it might change our lives. This could be open to wider audience sometime in 2018.

Convenor:
Erhard Wingels
524 8372
CWDesign@t-online.de

Prosperity without growth? Economics for a finite planet.

As previously advised, two new groups have been formed to explore this topic using Tim Jackson's book as a resource. Economists have traditionally asserted that growth is necessary for our economies to survive. This is now being questioned.
Following the 2008 financial crisis the UK government set up a "think tank" to report on economic models that were more robust. The result was an unpalatable report that was ignored by the government of the day but found favour amongst environmentalists, sustainability campaigners, and thinkers in many other disciplines. The level of interest prompted Tim Jackson to turn the report into a book. In it he examines the causes, and multiple effects, of our economic dilemmas, and signposts a way forward. The book was updated in 2017 and forms the basis for these group studies.
The groups will focus on Golden Bay to evaluate how it could or is working.
Group K is closed but Group H may have one of two vacancies. Enquiries welcome.

Convenors:

Group H.
Henriette Fleischer
525 7367
henriette.fleischer@xtra.co.nz

Group K.
Kevin Durkan
525 9539
kdurkan@yahoo.co.nz

Study Group monthly schedule

Week of Month	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
First week	*7.30pm Film Group*		*9.30 Book Group 1*	10.30 Prosperity-H	
Second		10am Saints and Sinners			*am. Book Group 2*
Third	10am TED Talks	*1.30 Art History*		10am History. *am. Twelve steps*	
Fourth	*am Prosperity-K*				9.30 Democracy
Variable	Electricity Group and *Music Appreciation*				

Italics denotes that the group is currently full.

U3A Golden Bay Mohua Committee

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U3A Golden Bay Mohua is not a registered society.