



The disappearance of MH370, the Malaysia Airlines

Fay Weatherly is one of our outstanding members who has embraced U3A with enthusiasm and belongs to many groups. Before retirement Fay was Head of Mathematics at a large secondary school. Her passion for learning and research have resulted in this highly recommended presentation.

At the U3A Browns Bay Puzzle group, we deal with all sorts of puzzles, mostly 'man made' such as mathematical puzzles, word puzzles and games. We are always keen to examine the methods that people use to solve puzzles. As I listened to a documentary on TV, I was struck by the methods used, the persistence shown and the ingenuity displayed in trying to solve the puzzle of the disappearance of MH370, the Malaysia Airlines flight that vanished 5 years ago. After a fair bit of research, which involved skirting around the abundant speculation and false news, I put together this talk. Although this is not my field of expertise, it does show a great aspect of U3A: we learn as much or more through the talks we give as the ones we listen to.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome Matariki – your appearance heralds the Māori New Year and the winter solstice. On Saturday 22nd June this cluster of seven stars, also known as the Pleiades, appeared low on the north-eastern horizon just before dawn. For Māori, their appearance signifies remembrance, fertility and celebration. For all they herald the comforting knowledge that the sun has started its journey back to the Southern Hemisphere and that slowly, longer and warmer days will return.

Last meeting U3A Browns Bay held a remembrance and celebration where we recognised and honoured the fifteen founding members and twenty 15+ year members who are still attending and contributing their knowledge, wisdom and leadership to U3A Browns Bay. Our congratulations to all the members honoured. You will recognise them by the name pins you now wear. Two members I particularly want to single out are Greta and Alf Fisher. For years Greta and Alf have arrived early in all weathers to act as greeter and to direct traffic. Thank you for your dedication. These duties are two that other members can now contribute to.

Between now and our 20th Anniversary in June 2020 we need to look at how we do things. We are a 100% voluntary organisation so our sustainability needs all of our members to contribute. The committee will be leading the conversation. The role of Hall Manager was never filled but has been ably served for a year now by several members from the Inventors and Inventions Group supporting the scheduled Interest group. Do we need one Speaker Manager or could we have a small team thus providing a wider network base? Could our monthly meeting catering be covered by a small team with scheduled times? Could more groups share the convenor leadership between two people? The AV members have shown how to work effectively as a team, thank you. We need to get creative and try other ways so all can participate. Glen Plaistowe PRESIDENT

COMMITTEE REPORT

The faulty HDMI cable that goes into the back of the TV in the Sherwood room has been fixed. This cable should never be disconnected from the TV it is the other end that goes into your computer. It has cost the Community Centre a significant amount to get this repaired.

At the July meeting will review your thoughts on the newsletter's new format that we changed to nine months ago.

Nominations for Committee: Nomination forms, for people interested in joining the committee, are available at the front desk at our meeting

NOTICES



Auckland U3A Network Event "Celebrating U3A" August 30th 2019

This year the celebration is being held at the Barfoot & Thompson Netball Centre - 44 Northcote Road, Northcote. The main speaker is Mike King an advocate on Mental Health and "The 2019 New Zealander of the Year". \$25 covers registration, morning tea and lunch. Places will fill-up quickly.

Register at http://u3a.net.nz/2019_event.html

SIG REPORTS from previous month

Archaeology – <http://u3abb.net.nz/archaeology.html>

As the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's arrival in New Zealand is commemorated this year, have you ever wondered what happened to that sturdy little Whitby collier, renamed the *Endeavour*, for its great journey of discovery? Barbara led us through the various careers of the *Endeavour* over the next few years as she was sold off and renamed several times and used for various naval and merchant services. We were amazed when Barbara explained that the little Endeavour came to an ignominious end when, in company with some other vessels, she was scuttled off Newport Rhode Island! Marine archaeologists have identified which hulk was the Endeavour by examining the timber and also finding buttons and uniform fabric left there by Hessian mercenaries who had been on her last voyage. Our government has been contacted for possible financial support to investigate what lies there. Watch this space.

Closer to home, Peter gave a presentation about the ship *Daring*. The almost complete wreck was exposed on the sandy beach at Muriwai in 2018. Built at Matakana in the 19th century, it was beached after a rather unfortunate navigation error. The *Daring* has now been stored away at Hobsonville Point awaiting restoration. So now we have two archaeological finds to keep an eye on.

Art History – <http://u3abb.net.nz/art.html>

At our June meeting Penny Walton presented on New Zealand Potters and Pottery, illustrating how far we have come in the last 50 years. We watched a short movie from the 70's of well-known potter Barry Brickell working in his Coromandel studio at Driving Creek. We also looked at the more recent submissions for the annual Portage Ceramic Awards which draws contestants and judges both nationally and internationally. Nowadays, it is a very different style of ceramic artistry than the old 70's style pottery we all remember and may still be using. Different types of pottery styles and techniques were displayed and discussed.

Art Pot Pourri – http://u3abb.net.nz/Art_Pot_Pourri.html

We had a small meeting on 11th June at which we spoke about some of our favourite art works. This provided a very wide variety of topics which included: the Australian artist Bruce Cassels Lawrence, 1932- 2010, who was influential in both art and music. We then discussed the French artist Auguste Renoir, 1841 – 1919, and his painting of The Luncheon of the Boating Party. We also talked about the statue of Venus de Milo, now in the Louvre, and the New Zealand artist Karl Maughan and his paintings of gardens.

Book_Group

As usual we talked about books we had recently read. These included: Out of the Dark by Greg Hurwitz; Gabriel's Bay and What You Wish For by Catherine Robertson; Shell Game by Sara Paretsky; The Long and Faraway Gone by Lou Berney; Dark Sacred Night by Michael Connelly; Humble Pi: a comedy of maths errors by Matt Parker; Two Steps Forward by Graeme Simsion and Anne Buist; On the Bright Side: the new secret diary of Hendrik Groen by Hendrik Groen; The Cottingley Secret by Hazel Gaynor; The Mousetrap and Other Plays by Agatha Christie; Appointment With Death by Agatha Christie; The Murdoch mysteries by Maureen Jennings; Tell the Wolves I'm Home by Carol Rifka Brunt; Once Upon a River by Diane Setterfield; The Overstory by Richard Powers; The Woman at 72 Derry Lane by Carmel Harrington; The Secretary by Renee Knight; The Soldier's Wife by Pamela Hart; In Falling Snow by Mary-Rose MacColl; This Mortal Boy by Fiona Kidman and Worth Dying For by Lee Child.

Books and Beyond

Thelma's presentation this month was about poetry. She took us through its evolution from the epic poem of Gigamesh in 2000BC to the present day, then read us a selection from 20th and 21st century poets such as Hilaire Belloc, John Betjeman, W.H. Auden, Pam Ayres, Sam Hunt and our poet laureate Selina Tusitala Marsh. We then shared remembered and loved poems from our childhoods. The 'challenge' this month was to write a limerick, and the results were fun. Here is an example –

There are lots of bright stars in Browns Bay
Who love to attend U3A
They learn and they teach,
Present - but not preach -
Listen well, but have plenty to say.

Français pour rire

In June, Anna talked about Agnès Varda (1920-2019), a Belgian-born french film director, photographer and artist. She earned a bachelors degree in literature and psychology from the Sorbonne, studied art history at the École du Louvre, and photography at night school. Agnès has many films to her name and was central to the development of the widely influential french New Wave film movement of the 1950s and 1960s. She was married to Jacques Demy and is survived by Mathieu, her son with Demy, and Rosalie, a daughter from an earlier relationship with the stage director Antoine Bourseiller.

International Studies across Countries

The presentation in June was about Argentina, a South American Country with a Spanish speaking population. Argentina is known for its beef and gaucho culture, football and the Tango. It was conquered by the Spanish in the 16th century and 98% of the current population is now of Spanish and Italian descent after extensive immigration in the nineteenth century. Present problems in Argentina include nationwide strikes against austerity measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund after a bailout loan in 2018, and a very high rate of inflation.

Inventors and Inventions – <http://u3abb.net.nz/inventions.html>

We welcomed three newcomers to our meeting. Terry showed us a video about the vast container loading and unloading port of Yangshen Island artificially built 30 km off-shore from

the Port of Shanghai. Yangshen is connected to Shanghai across the water by a new 32 km long road bridge, the largest of its type in the world. The Port now handles 35 million containers a year. Geoff played two videos showing how the invention and development of techniques in producing human tissue and body parts by bio-growth and 3D printing, have led to, or will lead to, a vast improvement in the lives of people who are suffering debilitating disease or disabilities.

Local History

At our June meeting we heard from one of our members about her local history - Canals in Britain. We compared that with early transport in New Zealand. As part of our 'snippets' we heard about 2 slates that have been found in Kerikeri. They had been written on by 2 Maori ladies early last century and are still legible.

Maori / Te Reo

At the third meeting of this newly formed group, we continued with Te Reo exercises practising the Maori words for God Defend New Zealand and formal and informal greetings when meeting people. The members present planned forward for the next sessions.

Medical Science and History

Heather gave a personal talk on a personal journey with Plasmacytoma - a blood tumour contained within the iliac crest. I cannot empathize the need for early diagnosis, you can look well but a second opinion or a paid for MRI can be a lifesaver. Treatment at N-S hospital Haematology excellent with a 24 hour helpline. A book by Charles Graeber "The Breakthrough" gives a new insight into our immune system. **Mini-topics** - Ian showed two videos one about research being done using stem-cells to regrow cartilage and the other a researcher warning about some of the risks and side-effects of stem-cell treatments. Geoff produced a recent article telling how the Imperial college in London has produced a "pumping Patch" containing millions of living beating stem cells that could help repair damaged heart muscle. The 3 x 3 cm "patch" is grown from the patient's own cells in a laboratory and then sewn onto the damaged muscle. The "patch" then turns into healthy heart muscle. Human tests will begin in two years.

Modern History

Patricia talked about Dr G.M.Smith, the legendary backblocks doctor in the Hokianga in the early part of the 20th century, and the unique medical system he developed. A brilliant Scottish surgeon, he battled with authorities to set up the Hokianga Special Medical Area, based in Rawene Hospital, which he ran from 1914 to 1948. He was a dedicated and somewhat eccentric man, passionate about his health system that controversially had district nurses at the forefront of diagnosis and treatment. The system still functions today along the lines Dr Smith advocated. We then viewed a National Film Unit documentary filmed in the Hokianga in 1948 that featured Dr Smith, followed by a modern recruitment video for Rawene Hospital.

Music - Mainly Classical

At our June meeting, Terry presented two of his favourite pianists. We started with Jacques Loussier playing at a "Swinging Bach" concert at the Market Square in Leipzig and then at the St Thomas Church, Leipzig. Jacques' Trio played Bach's Fugue No.5 in D major and then Pastorale in C minor. We then watched Yuja Wang playing at open air concert at the Odeonplatz, Munic. She played Brahms Piano Concerto No.1, followed by two encores: Prokofiev Sonata No.7 in B major, Pt.3 – Precitato and then variations on Mozart's Turkish March.

Philosophy

Our discussion was on free will. A short TED talk highlighted the impact social media had on influencing peoples perceptions and behaviours in both the Brexit debate and in the election of Trump. This was an example of how external influences can override free will. We debated the opposing beliefs that each human's life is predestined versus that a person is free to choose.

Renaissance

Joyce talked of Cosimo Medici's banishment from Florence and gave a description of 15th Century Florence: the Ponte Vecchio, and other buildings, the markets and the clothes people wore and were policed for wearing ornamentation such as buttons and lace but most had plausible excuses; how slaves were looked on as mere chattels. We also looked at the Baptistry and Ghiberti's beautiful doors and Brunelleschi's Cathedral dome.