

GUEST SPEAKER: John Reynolds
Title: A Writer's Journey



John Reynolds is a New Zealand writer who has written the story and lyrics for a number of successful rock musicals including; *Robyn Hood Outlaw Princess*, *Starblaze*, *Valley of the Voodons*, and *Windust*. John has also written a youth novel titled *Robyn Hood Outlaw Princess* (based on his musical) a book for aspiring writers titled *Writing Your First Novel* and an alternative World War II novel titled *Uncommon Enemy*. He has an MA from San Jose State University, California and a PhD from the University of Auckland. His PhD was on the life and works of pioneer New Zealand filmmaker John O'Shea. John is a qualified teacher who has taught/lectured in New Zealand, Australia, UK, Canada, the USA and Zimbabwe and has also written several textbooks.

His experience also includes radio broadcasting, TV and screenplay writing, public speaking and debating. He now lives in Torbay and has three sons and three granddaughters. John and his wife Bess are both members of U3A Browns Bay

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sunday 20th July 2019: I have just watched the fiftieth anniversary of the moon landing. The technology they had to work with was less than a modern toddler's chipped toy! Fifty years later (where have they gone?) my cell phone is 100,000 times more powerful than the computing power used in 1969! Mission Control scientists sat with pen and paper check lists, slide rulers checking the calculations done by rooms of women: the human computers! They did not have electronic calculators, iPads, smart phones, GPS I found it a more emotional experience than when I watched in 1969!

Last month our own Fay Weatherly gave an engrossing presentation on the disappearance of Malaysian Flight 370. Fay's depth of research and logical presentation came to a systematic conclusion on the cause. Thanks Fay,

In October we have our AGM. We still need nominations for committee and for someone to take over as President. The role of Hall Manager was never filled but has been ably served for a year now by a couple members from the Inventors and Inventions Group supporting the scheduled Interest group each month. The AV members have shown how to work effectively as a team, thank you. Sheets will be passed around at the meeting for people to join teams to lead the kitchen duty, find speakers and be part of our welcome and welfare group. Please consider putting your name down and contributing. We need 5-6 on each team. Glen Plaistowe
President

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

Active Travellers

Ian & Gabrielle Graham recently returned from a tour to Egypt & Jordan. This was the fulfilment of a long-held promise to take Gabrielle to Petra (one of the modern World’s Seven Wonders) and to return to some of the places where he lived and went to school as a child while his father worked for UNRWA in the Middle East. The vastness and colourful rock beauty of Petra was clearly a highlight, but so too was the experience of Wadi Rum (where Lawrence of Arabia spent time) and that day culminated in a magical glamping evening in a Bedouin tent.

Archaeology

Nanette took us to the Middle East and explored whether there is actually any concrete evidence to support the biblical story of the Tower of Babel. Most interesting was the discovery of an ancient stone tablet which showed an engraving of a ziggurat and King Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylon, beside it. We also discussed whether the languages known in the area may have been connected with the story, and the way families of language develop around the world. We then moved from Iraq to Jordan to take a look at the fabled ancient city of Petra. More to discover on this later!

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

At our July meeting Sylvia gave a talk on miniature portrait painting, looking at the work of five painters from the Elizabethan era through to Victorian times: Nicholas Hilliard, Isaac Oliver, Samuel Cooper, Richard Cosway and Andrew Robertson. Miniature portraits were typically about 4 x 5 cm in size, and were made on a tiny scale so they could be easily carried around or worn. Sylvia talked about the changes in purpose and painting styles over the centuries, from the decorative effects of Nicholas Hilliard, to the psychological realism of Samuel Cooper, to the naturalism of Andrew Robertson.

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

Co-convenor Denise described some art related highlights from her recent trip to Singapore, Normandy, the Channel Islands (Jersey, Guernsey and Sark), then Exeter, Cornwall, Windsor Castle and finally Amsterdam. Monet’s garden was glorious in the late spring sunshine. It was wonderful to see paintings by Jongkind and Boudin (Monet’s “Masters”) Monet, Raoul Dufy, Velasquez and Damien Hirst in various Normandy museums. Barbara Hepworth’s St. Ives sculpture garden has a Torso 2 bronze. Another is in the Auckland Art Gallery. The Tate St. Ives is a magnificent gallery which displayed one Frances Hodgkin’s painting. Their second one is now on loan to Auckland. Stitched treasures seen were the Bayeux Tapestry and the Bailiwick of Guernsey Millennium Tapestries, both in purpose built galleries. Rembrandt’s house (where he lived before his bankruptcy) has etchings etc. by artists influenced by him on display as part of national commemorations of his death 350 years ago.

Book_Group

As usual we all talked about the books we had read over the past month. These included: *The Element in the Room* by Helen Arney and Steve Mould; *The Wall* by John Lanchester; *Skeleton Crew* by Stephen King; *The Dakota Winters* by Tom Barbash; *The Elephant of Surprise* by Joe R Lansdale; *Whiplash River* and *Gutshot Straight* by Lou Berney; *At Home in the Dark* edited by Lawrence Block; *Nine Perfect Strangers* by Lian Moriarty; *Slack-tide* by Elanor Dymott; *Last Stories* by William Trevor; *The President is Missing* by Bill Clinton and James Patterson; *Big Sky* by Kate Atkinson; *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi; *Digging for Richard III: how archaeology found the king* by Mike Pitts; *The Daughter of Time* by Josephine Tey; *Necessary Secrets* and *The Antipodeans* by Greg McGee; *The Moscow Sleepers* by Stella Rimington; *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean; *See Naples and Die* by Penelope Green; *Scrublands* by Chris Hammer; *Lucky Man* and *Always Looking Up* by Michael J Fox; *Home Fire* by Kamila Shamsie and *How to Escape From Prison* by Paul Wood

Books and Beyond

Our theme for the day was the 'desert'. Glen introduced us to *The Alchemist* by Brazilian author Paulo Coelho. It tells the story of an Andalusian shepherd boy who dreamed of finding treasure in Egypt. He set off to find it, helped on his journey across the Sahara by a gypsy woman, a King and an alchemist. It is a modern day parable about pursuing your dreams and the transforming power of love. Glen illustrated her talk with photos taken on her recent trip to Morocco.

Our 'challenge' continued the desert theme, uncovering interesting books: about an artist who painted the New Mexico desert: a scientist who explored the Gobi desert: an ethnologist who worked with aborigines of the Nullabor desert: the experiences of women travellers in desert regions last century: the creation of Israel: plus two novels set in drought-stricken Australia.

Classical Music

This month we viewed a DVD on the life and times of Bizet. Bizet was a French composer of the Romantic era who lived from 1838 to 1875. In his short life he achieved few successes before his final work, *Carmen*, which he was convinced was a failure, and died 3 months later, unaware that it would prove a spectacular and enduring success. This has now become one of the most popular and frequently performed works in the entire opera repertoire. We also listened to excerpts from *The Pearl Fishers*, and *Carmen*, on CD, and *Symphony in C*, a very energetic composition, viewed on You Tube.

Cycling - <http://u3abb.net.nz/cycling.html>

Our July ride was to explore the Long Bay Subdivision. We approached up the central road, Te Oneroa Way, then turned seaward, meandering the streets with great views over the gulf. Next down to the village and a circuit of the pond where birds were sheltering from the nor'easter. The highlight of the ride was cycling on the fabulous cycle way up to Glenvar Rd, followed by an exhilarating zoom back down the hill. Finally an enjoyable stop at the village cafe, "Nice". We returned to the park and our cars via the now open northern access to Long Bay Regional Park.

Film Appreciation

Ruth presented the DVD of "BOMBSHELL: THE HEDY LAMAAR STORY" Not only was Hedy Lamaar the most ravishingly beautiful actress of the 1930s and 40s, she was the inventor of the basis of cell phone and blue tooth technology and the technological trailblazer who perfected a radio system to throw NAZI torpedoes off course during WW11".

Français pour rire

Eugene Francois VIDOQUE 1775 - 1857 was a French criminal turned criminalist whose varied, adventurous, and notorious life inspired several writers, including Victor Hugo, Edgar Allan Poe, and Honore de Balzac whom he befriended during one of his "respectable" periods. The former criminal became the founder and first Director of the crime detection Sûreté Nationale as well as the head of the first known private detective agency. Vidoque is considered to be the father of

modern criminology and of the French police department. He is also regarded as the first ever private detective. He spent his early years engaged in criminal activity including thievery, forgery, blackmail and embezzlement, in and out of prisons across France. Eventually he turned police informer to escape the prison galley, and was recruited in Paris to form a new crime fighting group. It was so successful that he became a legend with the public, even though his methods were often questioned. He was, however, a superb organizer and ran the Sûreté for 17 years before setting up his own, very successful agency.

International Studies across Countries

Alan Dabaliz inspired our group with a very interesting account of Yemen, a country in which he taught for 2 years. Alan described a country of wonderful and enduring architecture, a country which boasts having the first sky-scrapers in the world, has no earthquakes, sits on the equator and has 2 rainfalls each year. It is also classified as a National Heritage Site. The constitutional Capital and Government for Youthi's is Sana'a, a walled city and Aden has been a temporary capital city since 2015. Yemen is bordered by Oman and Saudi Arabia, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Women were not educated prior to 1970. Yemen is reported to have the youngest ever woman winner of a Nobel Peace Prize.

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

Anton Blijlevens, was our guest speaker from A J Park, Patent Attorneys office who gave us a presentation on the various aspects of Patents. Geoffrey Duffy gave a talk on Particle Separation and Optimisation related to the paper industry. Images of the talks on the website.

Local History

Last month we had a talk about the life of Sir George Grey - Politician, linguist, collector, soldier and explorer. He was the most influential of New Zealand's governors, serving in the role from 1845 -1853 and again in 1861 - 1868. His life on Kawau Island produced a lot of discussion. We also looked at the changes in the Eastern end of the Auckland City Waterfront.

Māori / Te Reo

We continued with Te Reo exercises practising Māori words and vowels and then had an introductory presentation on whakapapa and the important role it plays of linking past and present, spiritual and temporal.

Medical Science and History

Denise gave a talk on the recent spread of **Oak processionary moth** into Northern Europe and UK. This is an increasing public health issue. Global warming and lack of predators are contributory factors. The caterpillars can have 63,000 venomous setae (hairs) which become airborne, causing epidemic dermatitis, eye, pharyngitis, lung symptoms and occasional anaphylaxis. These caterpillar hairs affect humans, dogs and sometimes horses. Scott presented recent research from the Centre for Brain Research, Auckland University, on **Dementia** (Dr Brigid Ryan) and **Parkinson's Disease** (Dr Peter Freestone) Catherine talked of the recent study comparing the use of **Honey vs an antiviral for the treatment of cold sores**. Seventy-six pharmacies and 950 patients were involved. The results showed the honey was just as effective as the antiviral in the time it takes to reduce pain and heal a cold sore.

Modern History

Murray gave us a presentation on the development of the Hydro Electricity Power Stations located on the Waikato River including reminiscences of his 4 years of working on the construction of several of the stations. He covered an overview of the different types of generation in New Zealand of which 81% is now renewable. We heard about the building of the 1st power station constructed on the Waikato River at Hora Hora for the Waihi Gold Mining Coin 1914, later flooded in 1946 by the filling of the lake behind the Karapiro Power Station. Finally he discussed the development of the power stations on the Waikato River by the Ministry of Works and its dis-establishment in 1996 by the government.

Music Appreciation and History

Andre Rieu, The Flying Dutchman (DVD)

We watched a spectacular 2 hr open-air concert at Kerkrade before an audience of 18,000 fans. The programme included a number of noted international artistes. The youngest guest, 3 year old prodigy, Akim Camara, playing violin, stole the hearts of audience and orchestra alike. The dramatic appearance of the Cavalry (Otto van Bismarck's Equestrian Company) lent a special dimension to the orchestra's performance of Triumph March (Aida) and the Overture Light Cavalry with one hundred horses and riders accompanied by a corps of trumpeters and percussionists. The Flying Dutchman certainly provided a lavish and memorable collaboration.

Music - Mainly Classical

At our July meeting, Valerie introduced us to Richard Fuchs. He was born in Germany in 1887 and became an architect and composer and believed by his father to be the third Richard, successor to Strauss and Wagner. Unfortunately, being Jewish, his music was later banned by the Nazis. He was able to escape Germany and to get as far away as possible, he chose New Zealand. When NZ joined the Second World War he was put into custody and not allowed to work. He died in 1947 at the age of 60 and his compositions are only now being played to, great acclaim, in Germany and New Zealand.

Philosophy

Our discussion was on ethics; the moral principles that govern that affect how people make decisions and lead their lives. The ethical principles: egoism, utilitarianism, pragmatism, hedonism, duty ethics, natural law ethics, the Golden Rule, virtue ethics, divine command and veil of ignorance were identified and discussed. New members welcome.

Photography

This month we looked at how light in early morning, evening, bright day and overcast is different and needs to be adjusted for. Digital cameras have many settings to change the aperture and shutter speed so the amount of light can be adjusted for. We then looked at how post production adjustments can best be used to enhance photos. New Members Welcome

Puzzles Patterns & Paradoxes

The Bonnici Paradox, "The map is not the territory" was our first topic at our June meeting. This is the foundation of Neurolinguistic Linear Programming. A good book on this topic is "Frogs into Princes" by Richard Bandler and John Grinder. This is a process that can be used for personal growth and for marketing. Our second talk was about number patterns.

7	8	9
4	5	6
1	2	3

Take the four corners of this array, [1397, 3971, 9713, 7139]. Why is each number divisible by 11? What about the corners of smaller squares and rectangles in the array?

Renaissance

Jacques Cartier, a French explorer sent by Francis I to find the North West Passage to China, discovered the St Lawrence River [and therefore Canada] in 1534. He made two more voyages to the area but was unable to found a settlement because of the intense winter cold, the hostile locals and scurvy. He was convinced that Canada was part of the Orient until the day he died.

Bess presented a talk on 'Shakespeare's Women'. She looked at an eclectic range of the female characters in Shakespeare's plays that included bawdy women - working class women such as Maria from 'Twelfth Night'. They mainly spoke in prose and used sexual innuendoes when conversing. Their risqué behaviour made them a great favourite with the Elizabethan audience; also tragic innocent women - usually chaste and pure and upper class and who die once their innocence is lost - for example Lavinia from 'Titus Andronicus'. And the Femme Fatal such as Lady Macbeth, how her ambition for her husband to take political power was the driving

force behind Macbeth becoming King. This led to a lively discussion, ending her presentation with a short quiz, whereby we had to place the Shakespearean characters in their right plays.

Ukulele www.u3abb.net.nz/ukulele.html *Website has tutorials & contact form.*

At the meeting we play and sing popular songs, chosen previously by group members, mainly from a 2,400 page songbook. Our web page has Ukulele lessons for all levels of experience. Whether you are a beginner, with or without a Ukulele, have a Guitar or love to sing, you are more than welcome. Meetings held at group members homes.