



February 2014

www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com

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From Lesley McNaughton, President

Happy New Year. I hope 2014 has started well for you and that you are looking forward to another year of interesting activities with U3A. Are you ready to join one or more new groups this year? This newsletter has reports from two new groups and two of our long-standing groups that have space for a few more members. These reports only give a sample of our activities but there is information about all our existing groups in the Group Schedule and on our new website. Margaret, Pam and I certainly had a lot of fun developing the website and we'd appreciate feedback from you.

For our general meeting in February, we have Matt McGlone, Senior Scientist in the Ecosystems & Global Change Team at Landcare. Matt was originally scheduled to speak at our last AGM and we are very pleased that we will get to hear him now. He's a lively and interesting speaker, who makes his topic easy to understand. I hope to see you at this meeting.

One friend whose presence will be sadly missed at the meeting is Hilary Mowat. She was a strong supporter of U3A and she gave so much to our organisation. Hilary was Vice President in the 2007 to 2008 year but health problems forced her to stand down from the committee after that. However she continued facilitating many groups – Share Market, Art History, Power of Myth, Music Appreciation and Jazz. She also belonged to many other groups and we appreciated her interesting and often witty contributions to discussions. Our sympathy goes to David and to Hilary's many friends. *Lesley*

Dr Matt McGlone, palaeoecologist

will speak at our February meeting about

Polynesian settlement and environmental change in New Zealand

Polynesian people first settled New Zealand in the late 13th century, migrating from the tropical islands of the western Pacific to a strange and cooler land. How did they adapt? What did they eat, and what impact did their hunting, foraging and farming have on the New Zealand environment?

Matt has spent his career researching New Zealand's vegetation history, and is our foremost authority on this.

His talk will describe the way Maori settlement, climate change, and early European settlement changed the land to create the New Zealand we know today.

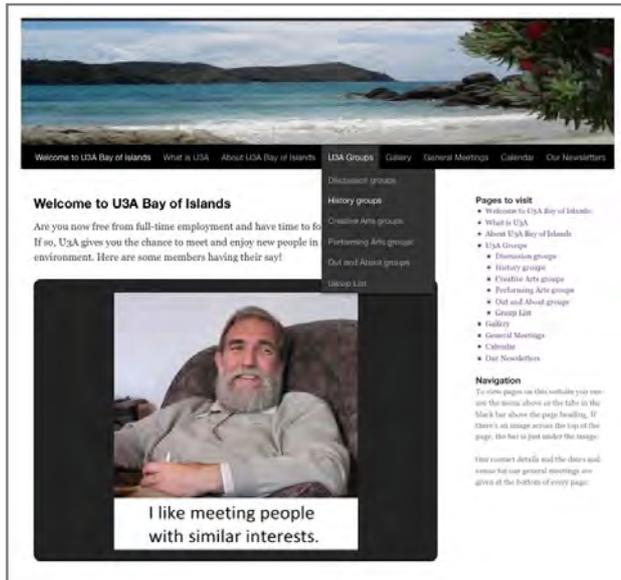


10:30 am Monday 17th February – St John Ambulance Hall,

Please bring finger food for our shared lunch. Kitchen Duty: History of Ireland Groups

New communication tool

<http://u3abayofislands.wordpress.com/>



We are delighted to announce an exciting new way of communicating with you. We now have a brand new website which we hope will become your first resource if you want to know anything about U3A Bay of Islands.

You will be able to:

- look up our latest calendar
- find a group to join
- find information about our general meetings
- download past newsletters
- enjoy photos of our activities

As well as a resource for our members, the website will also publicise our organisation and help to attract new members. You can help to achieve this by talking to people, especially newcomers to the district, about U3A Bay of Islands and referring them to the website or sending them the link. We are pleased to tell you that we already have a new member from the UK who found us through the website.

We have also received feedback from the convenor for the U3A Network Canterbury website. "Your website looks great, and so uncluttered and easy to read. I am impressed by the variety and number of interest groups you have. Most of your members must be involved in at least one group."

Show us how well you can navigate our new website. Explore its pages to find the answers to our "Website Wizard" quiz and send us your answers before 14th February to **'be in to win'**.



Be in to win!

All members have a chance to win two tickets to a film of their choice at the Cathay Cinema in Kerikeri with coffee at the attached Café Cinema. Conditions apply. Members who submit correct entries will be included in a draw and the winner will be announced in the next newsletter.

Entries must be received by Friday 14th February. This allows time for members without computers to use a library computer to find the answers.

Website Wizard

1. When did the U3A movement begin?
2. Approximately how many members does U3A Bay of Islands have?
3. How many film posters appear on the Performing Arts page?
4. What type of animals appear on the urn beside the description of the Greek Odyssey group?
5. Which artist painted "The Kiss"?
6. Which instrument is the musician playing in the picture that appears beside the description of the French Conversation group?
7. Name one of the newspapers pictured beside the description of the Current Affairs group.
8. In which century did Oliver Cromwell's army complete the English conquest of Ireland?
9. Which historical site will the Local History group visit in February?
10. One photo on the Gallery page shows a group admiring a painting. Who was the artist? (Clue - hover your mouse over the photo.)
11. Who was the speaker at our general meeting in April 2013?
12. Where can you find a link to a map showing the venue for our general meetings?
13. In which months does U3A Bay of Islands hold general meetings?
14. What is the date of the earliest newsletter you can download from the website?

Email your numbered answers to Margaret Rasmussen at ras1@clear.net.nz or post them to the Secretary at the U3A address which you will find at the bottom of every page on the website. **Don't forget to include your name.**

Group news

by Margaret Rasmussen, Group Convenor

This year we have 27 interest groups to choose from. Some groups are new and some have been meeting for many years but all are a testament to the wide interests of our members and the enthusiasm of our wonderful facilitators. I am sure we all appreciate their invaluable contribution.

Successful new groups

The *Local History* and *Art House Films* groups started with enthusiastic meetings in December. In fact both were so popular that they were over-subscribed, which shows the importance of applying early to be sure that you get into the groups that interest you.

As a result, we have split the *Local History* group into two, the second of which will meet in Opua on the second Monday of the month at 2 pm. We are very grateful to Don Jansen who has offered to facilitate this group. It will have more of an emphasis on guest speakers and discussion but will also visit sites of local historical interest from time to time. This group is now full but the first Local History group can take more members; contact the facilitator, Judy Ramsey, if you'd like to join it.

We are now taking applications for a second *Art House Films* group. If you are interested in joining, please email or phone me as soon as possible as we hope to start this group soon.

ras1@clear.net.nz or (09) 402 8949.

February start-ups

Three more groups will have their first meetings in February - *Do It Yourself*, *The Victorians* and *Oscar Wilde* and *Sketching for Beginners*. The *Do It Yourself* group is full but there is room for a few more in the other groups. As these groups are already formed, please contact the facilitators if you wish to join.

A later start

Cooking for One will not go ahead at this stage but may start a little later in the year.

Music Appreciation Group

Once again, we have lost one of our facilitators with the sad death of Hilary Mowat. Hilary was the very knowledgeable and enthusiastic facilitator of the Music Appreciation group and will be greatly missed by her fellow members. We are grateful to Jack and Stephanie Beggs who have agreed to host the February meeting of the group. A new facilitator will be chosen at that meeting.

Please see the website, the Group Schedule or previous newsletters for details about all our groups.

Margaret Rasmussen

More from the committee

New members

Welcome to Erik Lautenslager and Moira Warnock. We hope you'll both enjoy our activities and make many friends. You are welcome to attend groups to try them out, and to join as many groups as you like. The Group Schedule shows which groups have space and gives the facilitators' contact details.

Displays coming up

We have two displays coming up. The first is at the Senior Expo in the Kerikeri Retirement Village on 8th March; the second is a display in the window of the Procter Library from 24th March to 6th April. I'll be asking facilitators for items to show the range of our groups at both displays.

We will need a roster of members to look after our Expo stall and talk to potential members between 9 am and 4 pm. I'd be grateful for offers of help. Please contact me (09) 407 7020 or pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz.

A friendly reminder

If you are not able to attend a meeting of your group, please phone or email the facilitator or host.



U3A at 2013 Senior Expo

Featured groups

This month we have reports from four groups, whereas the last three newsletters featured two groups and earlier newsletters had reports from all groups. These changes to the content of the newsletter are part of our plan to try out different ideas before we survey all members to find out what you prefer. We will try out some more ideas in the next newsletter before we send out the survey in March. To ensure that the results accurately represent members' opinions, we will ask all members to respond.

Music Appreciation

We were very sorry to hear of the death of our facilitator, Hilary Mowat. We always enjoyed visiting her house and were impressed by her vast knowledge of music. Her dictionary of composers was often consulted. We often enjoyed her reminiscences of various musicians she had seen or met during her days in Wellington. She will be sorely missed.

The last meeting was held at the home of Jack & Stephanie Beggs, as Hilary was unwell. At the time we did not realise how unwell. We listened to various favourites ranging from Chopin, Beethoven, Rodrigo and Grieg to Liszt.



The subject for our next meeting will be “Music for a summer’s afternoon”. As usual, members are asked to bring a recording of a piece of music on this theme to play to the group. The meeting will be held at Jack & Stephanie’s place again and we shall discuss at this meeting how we shall proceed with future facilitating as well as choosing the theme for the March meeting.

We have space for a few more members in the group.

Jack Beggs

Art House Films



The Art House Film group held its first meeting in December. For us, an Art House Film is any film worth discussing. We are not afraid of subtitles, and the films viewed will cover a wide range, from all-time classics to recent films made on limited budgets but with something special to offer. Films will usually come from members’ own DVD collections, and we are spoiled for choice with a combined list of 300 films to draw on. Each meeting follows the same format; first a presenter briefly introduces our film, then we view the film, take some refreshments and discuss what we have seen. At the end we choose a film and a presenter for the next meeting.

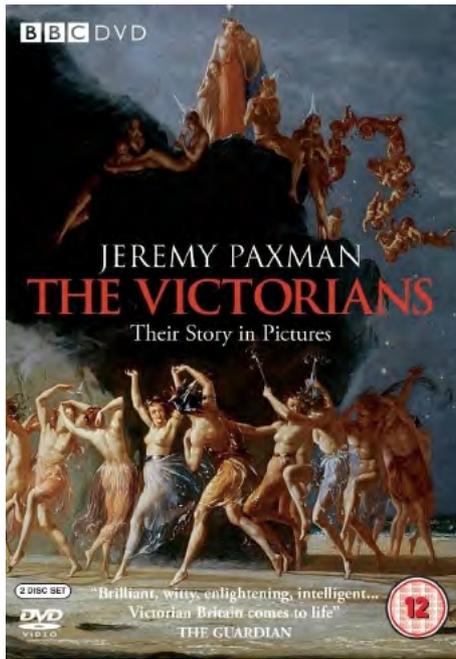
Since we have had only one meeting, our first film was a facilitator’s choice – *Untold Scandal* (2003) by the Korean director Lee Jae-Yong. We see very few Korean films in New Zealand, which is a pity because Korea now has the most innovative film industry in Asia. *Untold Scandal* is a costume drama which translates the French novel *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* from its setting in France in the mid 1700s to Korea in the same period. This is wholly successful. We were impressed by the quality of the filmmaking, the acting and the excellent sets, costumes and cinematography.

At our next meeting, in February, Ian Robinson will present *Un Homme et une Femme* (1966), a classic of the French new-wave, directed by Claude Lelouch.

This group is full since our TV room will hold no more. However Margaret Rasmussen is now taking applications for a second group. Let her know quickly if you want to join it as she already had some members on a waiting list.

Keith McNaughton

The Victorians and Oscar Wilde - your last chance to join!



“Oh, I love London Society! It has immensely improved. It is entirely composed now of beautiful idiots and brilliant lunatics. Just what Society should be.” So said Oscar Wilde. But what was the society that Wilde was satirising? Jeremy Paxton examines Victorian society through its art. He looks at the industrial callousness, the ideas of empire, the moral hypocrisy and rejection by artists of many of these values. Oscar Wilde’s plays satirise the middle and upper classes but I also hope to consider some of the poets of the period and the views they express. Oscar Wilde became a victim of the times, as we shall see when we look at his life.

Pam Jenkins

This group will be facilitated by Pam Jenkins, who presented the very popular History of the English Language groups in 2012 and the C19th New Zealand History groups in 2013. Pam is a retired teacher of English and History and she will draw on her expertise in both these fields to supplement two BBC TV series.

There are still a few places available in this new group, which will start on the first Wednesday in February at 10 am. If you want to join it contact Pam quickly; email pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz or phone (09) 407 7020 during the daytime.

Atlantis

The Atlantis group is currently reading the third book by Gavin Menzies, *The Lost Empire of Atlantis*. At each meeting we all read together, with members taking turns to read aloud while the rest of us follow in our own books. We enjoy stopping regularly to comment on what we’ve read. The wonderful pictures and descriptions of famous historical places fascinate us, and we like hearing more about these places from members of our group who have visited them.



Gavin Menzies is a former British naval officer, amateur historian and author of four very popular books. Each book is an entertaining 'detective novel' and travelogue in which Menzies presents revisionist theories about history. In the Atlantis book he develops his theories that the island of Santorini was the site of the lost civilization of Atlantis described by Plato, that this was part of the Minoan empire, that the Minoans were extremely advanced for their time and that they travelled farther than anyone has ever suspected – from India to North America. Some of this is widely accepted now but historians still reject much of it. So the book gives us plenty of scope for interesting discussions. If this appeals to you, we have space for a few new members.

Joan Lawrence

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