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[www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com](http://www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com)

U3A Bay of Islands, PO Box 833, Kerikeri 0245

U3A.Bay.of.Islands@gmail.com

## From the President



I find myself writing the President's Report still excited by this month's General Meeting presented by Chris Booth. What an inspirational speaker! But I'll say no more on this subject, as I do not wish to stand on Mary Johnson's toes.

A big thank-you to all the members who attended and also to those of you who brought guests. On that note you might consider forwarding our newsletter electronically to friends or acquaintances living in the BOI area, and for those who receive a hard copy you might wish to pass it along also.

It was, yet again, a very tasty and convivial shared lunch. Thanks to all the contributors and special thanks to the Art House Film Group 2 who carried out the kitchen duties.

As I said at the meeting, we are looking for new committee members. I encourage anyone who might be prepared to stand to contact a member of the current committee to express their interest and to have any questions answered.

I trust you will enjoy this month's newsletter.

*Stuart Leitch*

## Report on the February General Meeting

Chris Booth's fascination with basalt boulders began in childhood play in the boulder-strewn river that flows into the Kerikeri Basin, where he liked to balance stones one on top of another to form columns. We are all familiar with how that eventually developed into his early theme of boulders threaded together as in the Rainbow Warrior memorial at Matauri Bay, The Gateway sculpture at the entrance to Auckland's Albert Park and the magnificent installation near The Proctor Library.

It was hard not to feel the reflected glow of his success as Chris, a product of his local heritage and proud of it, traced his artistic journey describing art teacher Selwyn Wilson of Northland College as inspirational. Sculpture Tutor Tom Taylor at the Ilam School of Fine Arts continued to nurture the developing talent followed by specialist sculpture studies and work with prominent sculptors in UK and Italy including Barbara Hepworth and Quinto Ghermandi.

His site-specific sculptures, sourced from local materials used with cultural sensitivity, are now to be seen in a dozen different countries.

This excellent talk has inspired me to make a list of Chris Booth's accessible land art projects to view on both sides of the Tasman.

*Mary Johnson*

Photo: *Wairau Strata*: Chris Booth: Marlborough 2000



## Group News

Our groups have all made a good start to the new year including our three new groups, *Geology and Cosmology*, *Poetry for Pleasure Two* and *20<sup>th</sup> Century NZ History*. Remember – if the group you would like to join is full, give the facilitator a ring. They keep a waiting list and will know you are interested if a vacancy occurs. If there are a number of people on the waiting list, we may be able to form another group.

Members of *History of Aviation* have decided to discontinue the group but some members will continue to meet informally to enjoy each other's company. We may look at another transport-related group later in the year.

The two *Greek Odyssey* groups have been combined into one group, meeting on the third Wednesday of the month at 1.30 pm.

We are still considering a new *Current Affairs* group based in the Paihia/Opua area and we have a facilitator prepared to run this group if enough members are interested. Please phone or email me if you would like to join this group or if it would be more convenient for you than the group to which you currently belong.

The *Creative Writing* group will meet in March with an interim facilitator to discuss the future objectives of the group. If you are interested in coming along to the discussion to see if Creative Writing appeals, please let me know.

Further to Stuart's comments in his last newsletter report, we are seeking expressions of interest from members who would like to join a group *Singing for Fun*. We already have a facilitator and host for this group but I would love to hear from a member who could play the piano to keep the singers on the right track. The emphasis will be on the sheer enjoyment of singing so there will be no scary auditions or requirement that you have a superb singing voice. Please contact me if you are interested.

Phone 09 402 8949 or email [ras1@clear.net.nz](mailto:ras1@clear.net.nz)

*Margaret Rasmussen*

## Group Reports

### Geology/Cosmology

Our host through the four part series "*Rise of the Continents*" is congenial Scottish geologist, Iain Stewart, Professor of Geoscience Communications at the University of Plymouth.



He interprets clues in the world around us to uncover evidence of how our landmasses have evolved from Pangaea and Gondwana to the forms we know so well today.

We started in Africa using clues like its spectacular landmarks, mineral wealth and wildlife and saw how the continent was formed from the wreckage of a long lost super-continent.

Featured amongst other things were the creation of the Victoria Falls, the diamond mines of Sierra Leone, skeletons of early whales buried in sand and the nutrient rich grass of the Serengeti Plains.



Above: Victoria Falls

Left: Serengeti Plains

Centre: Ancient whales buried in sand

Next month 'Australia' followed by 'The Americas' and 'Eurasia'.

*Mary Johnson*

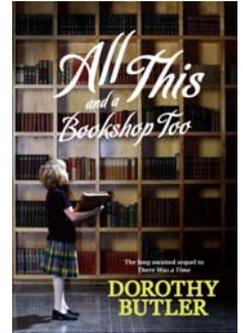
## Book Discussion Group Two

The topic this month was “Something I read in the holidays”. As one would expect of lively bibliophiles the books chosen demonstrated a wide variety of interests and ranged from *Snobs* by Julian Fellowes, through *There Was a Time* and *All this and a Bookshop Too*, two autobiographical works by the indefatigable Dorothy Butler, to the journals of the much maligned Captain Bligh. Two members brought *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* by Richard Flanagan. It was interesting to compare their reactions to this 2014 Man Booker Prize winning novel.



*Hijacking Enigma* by Christine Large and *Nimitz Class* by Patrick Robinson, each enjoyed by their reader, stirred memories of connections to the navy, the role of aircraft carriers and the work at Bletchley Park during WW2.

The beautifully presented afternoon tea of delicious rolls and cakes prepared by our hostess, Gillian, was thoroughly enjoyed by the group.



After tea the books chosen sparked discussions on chick lit, romantic fiction and the relationship between Tennyson and Hallam. We listened to an extract from *Simple Abundance: A Daybook of Comfort and Joy* by Sarah Ban Breathnach. This book encourages the reader to approach each day with a positive attitude and to recognise and be grateful for good things in their life.

A thought provoking afternoon spent in genial company discussing literature from all over the world is, in my book, something to be very thankful for.

*Moirá Warnock*

## C20th New Zealand History – A Personal View

At our first meeting we considered the idea that New Zealand came of age in the twentieth century and discussed events that contributed to that. The notes sent out prior to the meeting described some of the legislation passed by the Liberal government of the 1890s as the forerunner to the Labour legislation of the 1930s. There was also a list of the areas (with maps where applicable) in which New Zealand forces served in WWI.

We watched *Once on Chunuk Bair*, a film version of the Wellington Regiment capturing the highest point on the Gallipoli peninsular in WW1. The New Zealand troops were sent up to capture and hold this ridge while the British generals remained on the beach or on ships off the coast. At one point the brave troops



Illustration: The Wellington Battalion Defending Chunuk Bair (Source: anzacsite)

came under fire from a British vessel. It was hardly surprising that the men had little or no respect for any officers other than their own. They showed great courage and determination, even when they were running out of water and ammunition. Of the 700 men who set out to take and hold the ridge only seven were still alive when the long awaited reinforcements finally arrived.

The film generated a lot of discussion about the horrors of war and moved on to the effectiveness (or failure) of the League of Nations and the United Nations.

The film was longer than anticipated so morning tea became lunch. Fortunately there was plenty of delicious food and discussion continued.

Next meeting will be on New Zealand's fear of invasion in WWII. That is the last war to be discussed. In subsequent meetings we will discuss New Zealand's position on nuclear arms and nuclear power and the anti-apartheid movement.

*Pam Jenkins*



## French Conversation Group

The French Conversation group meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the home of a group member. We are a small friendly group and all have a reasonable to good command of the French language.

We do not follow a course and there is no homework. We simply enjoy chatting about anything and everything, e.g. books we have read, films we have seen, holidays, current affairs, the weather, food, – in French of course. Sometimes we watch a DVD or a recording of a TV programme about some aspect of French life or culture.



We round off the afternoon with a very welcome cup of tea and some goodies.

Here we are at our last meeting of 2014 just before Christmas. We noticed that we were all dressed in red white and blue – the colours of the French flag ‘ Quelle coincidence! ’

New members are welcome to join us at our next meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

*Stephanie Beggs*

## New Members

Welcome to Jeanne Brain, Kathryn Honiss (Enid's daughter-in-law), June McLeary, Brenda Welch, Heather Wilson and Marion Wyness. We hope you will enjoy belonging to U3A. You are welcome to join any groups that indicate in the Group Schedule that they have space for more members.

<b>2014 - 2015 Committee</b>			
President	Stuart Leitch	09 407 3458	<a href="mailto:sleitch21@gmail.com">sleitch21@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Pam Jenkins	09 407 7020	<a href="mailto:pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz">pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz</a>
Treasurer	Christine Cronshaw	09 407 6871	<a href="mailto:annachristinec@gmail.com">annachristinec@gmail.com</a>
Group Convenor	Margaret Rasmussen	09 402 8949	<a href="mailto:ras1@clear.net.nz">ras1@clear.net.nz</a>
Meeting Coordinator	Liz Berry	09 407 3202	<a href="mailto:berrynice@xtra.co.nz">berrynice@xtra.co.nz</a>
Publicity Officer	Sue Robertson	09 407 3452	<a href="mailto:robertson8148@yahoo.co.uk">robertson8148@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Almoner	Maebeth Hart	09 407 5100	<a href="mailto:casatres@xtra.co.nz">casatres@xtra.co.nz</a>
Newsletter Editors	Moira Warnock	09 407 6389	<a href="mailto:warnock2@btinternet.com">warnock2@btinternet.com</a>
	Lesley McNaughton	09 407 6936	<a href="mailto:lesley@mcnaughty.com">lesley@mcnaughty.com</a>
Webmasters	Lesley McNaughton	09 407 6936	<a href="mailto:lesley@mcnaughty.com">lesley@mcnaughty.com</a>
	Margaret Rasmussen	09 402 8949	<a href="mailto:ras1@clear.net.nz">ras1@clear.net.nz</a>