



November 2017

www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com

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From the Chair

The Committee has been looking forward to Howard Smith's return from overseas. However, he has now resigned from the U3A committee because he was asked to be treasurer of Aroha Island Charitable Trust. He's been a trustee since the Trust's inception in 2007 and Aroha is dear to his heart. We understand that he cannot undertake both U3A and Aroha committee responsibilities.

This means that the committee is looking for another member to join the committee and take over the Group Convenor role.



Martin and Minnie with Jack Beggs and Grainger Brown, who contributed memorabilia

On a happier note, we are delighted to welcome two new U3A members Pam Nelson and Brian Carter.

I'd like to thank Martin and Minnie Ough Dealy and all the other members who contributed to the interesting display of World War I memorabilia at our October meeting. After Stuart Park's interesting talk there was a steady stream of people viewing the items displayed and reading the posters created by Christine Cronshaw for the Bay of Islands Singers.

Lesley McNaughton

Group News

The *Biology* group, which will start in November, is now full and Ulrike Novak will contact all the members. Pam Jenkins will start a *Story of China* group after her *Adventures in English* group finishes next year. We'll call for applications for Pam's group closer to that time.

New groups starting in February - apply now

Anthropology and Humanity – 4th Wednesday afternoon – facilitator Mary Johnson

How is it that the human race has developed a seemingly limitless physical and cultural diversity? Anthropologists use multidisciplinary methods to explain this and trace the development of religion, agriculture, money, language and other aspects of human experience. This group will be based on *Anthropology and the Study of Humanity*, a set of short talks by charismatic lecturer Scott M. Lacy, Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Fairfield University in Connecticut, where he teaches anthropology, environmental studies, and black studies. Expect stimulating discussions.



World Religions - probably 3rd Wednesday afternoon - facilitator Lesley McNaughton



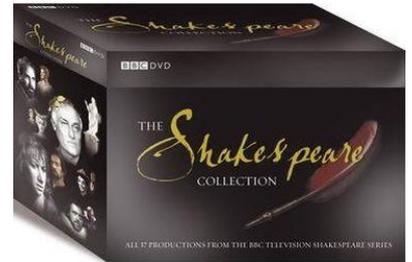
This is a group for members who would like to know more about different religions, their histories and their associated cultures. Our goal will be to better understand people with different beliefs, values and traditions, not to promote or judge any religion.

Using short lectures from Professor Mark Berkson's course, *Cultural Literacy for Religion: Everything the Well-Educated Person Should Know*, supplemented by a variety of other

videos, we'll learn about the main religions that originated in India, Hinduism and Buddhism; the indigenous religions of China and Japan, and Zen Buddhism; the three great monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam; and three religions with a relatively small number of adherents but a significant impact, Jainism, Sikhism and Baha'i.

Shakespeare's Plays – 2nd Thursday afternoon - facilitator Pam Jenkins

This group will watch some of the finest dramas in the English language, featuring many of the greatest talents of 20th century British theatre and television. These plays will be supplemented by a lively series of lectures by Peter Saccio, Emeritus Professor of Shakespearean Studies and English at Dartmouth College. He has also performed in and directed many of Shakespeare's classic plays. For each play, we will watch a lecture one month then the play the next month.



Shakespeare's work is timeless and his themes of love, jealousy, ambition, greed and humanity all have relevance today. The lectures add another dimension to the plays and will encourage discussion.

Board Games – 3rd Friday afternoon – facilitator Tom Everitt – venue Cherry Park House, Kerikeri



Remember all the fun you had playing board games when you were growing up or when your children were small? Well here's your chance to enjoy that experience all over again and keep your brain active. Activities may include card games and board games including traditional games like chess, backgammon, and draughts as well as new games. Some members may enjoy working together to solve puzzles such as cryptic crosswords or to learn new games from other members?

If you are interested, don't let this opportunity pass. When you apply, please tell me if you have any board games or puzzles you could bring along to share.

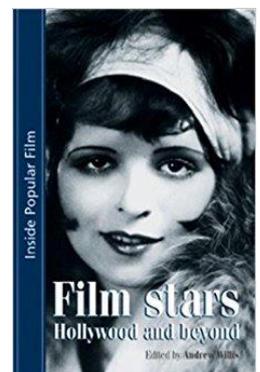
More groups starting in February

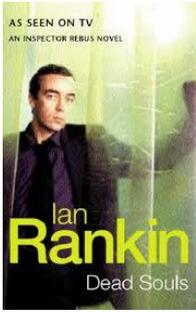
The next two groups are also expected to start in February and we will be able to give you more information about them in the next newsletter.

However, you should apply now if you are interested since this will help the facilitators choose calendar slots.

Stars in Their Eyes – facilitator Jenny Blackler

This film group will focus on a different film star each month. After watching a movie, the group will discuss the style of movie as well as the star's life, acting and other movies. Jenny's enthusiasm for these movies and the knowledge she has gained over many years will ensure that members enjoy this group.





Detective Novels – facilitator Stuart Leitch

This will be a book group for people who enjoy detective stories. After 30 years working with the Metropolitan Police in London, Stuart is enthusiastic about this genre and he will be able to add an extra dimension to the group's discussions.

Stuart and the group will decide whether they'll read and talk about different novels or all read the same novel so they can discuss it at their meeting. Some of the members could download the novels onto their computer, tablet or phone at the library or from the Internet.

Apply now if you are interested in any of the groups starting in February

Many members like to join at least one new group at the start of a new year but the size of each group is limited by the space in the host's home. Some groups fill quickly, others may take a few months and that's why we are calling for applications now. If you would like to join any of the new groups above please contact me: group.convenor.u3a.boi@gmail.com or 09 407 6936 *Lesley McNaughton*

How to join an existing group

As always, if you want to join a group that has already started, you should contact the group's facilitator. You can do this even if the group is full, since the facilitator can put you on a waiting list. The facilitators' contact details are in the Group Schedule that is sent to members with each newsletter.

Report on Stuart Park's Talk - Why? An Exploration of World War I



Why would millions of men from all over the world travel to Europe to try to kill each other in the 1st World War? In 2004, when Stuart Park went to explore the battlefields and cemeteries of northern France and Belgium, he tried to answer this question by looking at the service records of his three great uncles, all of whom were killed and are buried in France. Their service in very different regiments helps us to understand the experiences of many.

Doug left life on the farm to become a member of the Mounted Rifles and saw service at Gallipoli and later the Somme as a sergeant in the NZ Pioneer Battalion where he was killed in September 1916 in a battle which produced the largest number of NZ casualties of the war to that date.

Bill completed his MSc before enlisting in the Otago Regiment in 1916. After officer training in England he rejoined his regiment as a 2nd lieutenant and became an intelligence officer then a gas officer in the NZ Infantry Brigade. It was while inspecting the troops and their quarters on the front line to ensure they had taken proper precautions against gas attacks that Bill received his fatal injuries in August 1918.

Sam had been a gold miner in NZ. When a stalemate in the war led to tunnel warfare Sam became a sergeant in the NZ Engineers whose job was to dig tunnels linking mediaeval quarries under the town of Arras. The aim was to concentrate thousands of troops close to the front line in readiness for the 1917 April offensive, without alerting the Germans. Stuart told us that the New Zealanders prided themselves on being able to tunnel faster than anyone else by building tunnels high enough to allow them to swing pick axes. Sam was the first tunneller to be killed in action.

Five years ago, some of these tunnels were opened up and they are now a tourist attraction. Interpretation and archaeological work is still going on. Stuart visited Arras in 2012, 2014 and again this year for the centenary and found it very emotional to see the names of soldiers inscribed in the tunnel walls along with other reminders of their presence such as depictions of a NZ Engineers' badge and a silver fern. To aid navigation through the tunnels, the NZers named the nine quarries after NZ towns and it was strange to see a sign reading "To Nelson and Blenheim".

Stuart was present this year for the unveiling of a remarkable memorial to the NZ tunnellers, a bronze sculpture by Marian Fountain, a NZ sculptor living in Paris. This is in the form of a 3.5m model of a section of the Arras tunnels with the carved-out silhouette of a lone tunneller. A hole at the top represents the 'exit' from the quarries, designed to evoke the departure of the 24,000 Commonwealth soldiers at dawn on 9 April 1917. The memorial also features excerpts from letters sent home to their families by the soldiers and Stuart was particularly moved to find an extract from a letter his great uncle had written to his wife.

On each of his three visits to the war cemeteries, Stuart has been able to place a poppy on the graves of his relatives. Relics from the war are still being collected from what are now farmers' green fields and it is not unusual for people still to be killed there by unexploded munitions. The headstones of 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth who died in the two world wars are beautifully maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Headstones are uniform with no distinction made by rank, race or creed and are replaced once they become worn.

Although there may be no real answer to the question "Why?" Stuart's three personal stories of the First World War made us very aware of the sacrifices made by the soldiers and their families. A very interesting display of war memorabilia was contributed by Stuart and other members of U3A with family members who served.

Margaret Rasmussen

About Book Discussion Group 2

The group has existed for about 10 years during which time the membership has had very few changes. We seem to get along well together. The format is to meet monthly at the home of members in rough rotation. At the meeting we talk about two books that each has read during the month. One is on a pre-agreed topic but chosen by each individual member. We don't all read the same book. The other book can be on any subject that the individual members have read and chosen for themselves.

For me personally, the benefit apart from the social contact is that I am able to get recommendations from the other members, especially in genres that I might not normally venture into. It also puts me under a tiny bit of pressure to keep reading and think about books that others might find interesting. However, there is no pressure at meetings to come up with a book if a member has been too busy or just didn't like the chosen topic. Members can pass their turn if they have nothing to offer and frequently do so.

We have sadly lost some members recently and can offer a vacancy if anyone is interested in trying out the group.

David Lawton

2017-2018 Committee			
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