



October 2013

U3A Bay of Islands, PO Box 833, Kerikeri 0245

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From Lesley McNaughton, President

You will notice that our newsletter is much shorter this month. This change was proposed by our new editors after they produced two editions in the traditional format. Although their efforts would have made Marilyn proud, they felt that the task was very time-consuming, both for the reporters from all the groups and for the editors. They also felt that some members might be finding the newsletter too time-consuming to read. They suggested that we feature a special report from just two groups each time, our 'groups of the month', rather than a report from every group. The committee agreed to give the shorter newsletter a try, then seek feedback from members.

We will produce a separate information sheet with a brief outline from each interest group to provide members with all the information they need when deciding which groups they might like to join. This will be available at meetings and will be sent to potential new members. We are also planning to post this information on a new web site. Watch out for news of this.

The speaker for this month's general meeting is Dr Paul Buchanan. Paul is an internationally recognized authority on democracy, political strategies, foreign policy and international security. Before moving to New Zealand in 1997, he was an intelligence and defence policy analyst and consultant to US government security agencies. Now he is the Principal of 36th Parallel Assessments, a non-partisan, non-governmental consultancy that provides independent analysis of matters of economic, political and social import from a South Pacific perspective. Paul is frequently interviewed by the media but it is us who will be asking the questions this time. Paul also spoke at our general meeting in November 2008, and those who attended will tell you what a highlight that was. Don't miss this opportunity to hear this fantastic speaker.

Lesley

International security and mass surveillance

Dr Paul Buchanan

will speak about the Evolving Nature of Intelligence Operations in the Early 21st Century, and New Zealand's role in that regard.



U3A October General Meeting

10:30 am Monday 21 October 2013

St John Ambulance Hall, Kerikeri Road

Please bring a plate of finger food for our shared lunch.

Kitchen Duty: Current Affairs 2, Thursday group

From your committee by Margaret Rasmussen, Course Convenor

Members of the former Iberian Studies group have re-formed as the Atlantis Group. The group plans to read Gavin Menzies' book "Atlantis" and view excerpts from the "Legacy of Ancient Civilizations" DVDs. Eileen Welch is the facilitator and members will take turns leading meetings. Please contact Eileen if you are interested in joining this group. 09 407 6053. New members are welcome.

Would you like to try something new?

We are still asking for expressions of interest in the following new groups. **If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible as these groups can only go ahead if there is sufficient interest from members.** Margaret Rasmussen: 09 402 8949 or ras1@clear.net.nz

- Art House Films - a chance for film buffs to watch in each other's homes films that are not usually available in commercial theatres. These could follow a variety of themes such as foreign films or the films of a particular director or genre.
- Local History - a group likely to appeal to people who are prepared to contribute ideas and share in arranging visits to places of historical interest.
- Poetry for Pleasure - members will share their love of poetry and read some of their favourites to the group. They may like to discuss one poem in more depth or look at the work of one poet or one genre, e.g. landscape or humorous poetry. Personal composition is not part of the format.

A New Year, New Opportunities

We are considering the following interest groups for next year. We will ask for applications in next month's newsletter when we will be able to provide more details.

- Sketching for Beginners
- Handyperson Skills for Women - small maintenance tasks around the home
- Oscar Wilde and the Victorians
- Brewing Your Own Beer
- Natural History in the Local Area

Some of the best ideas for new groups come from members so we always welcome your suggestions. Perhaps you have a special interest you would like to share with a group. Please contact me for a chat about it.

Just a little reminder to facilitators - Please let me know if members leave or join your groups so that I can keep our records up to date.

New members

Welcome to Eric and Christine Cronshaw and Pat and Don Jansen. We look forward to meeting you.

Welcome to our 2013 - 2014 Committee			
President	Lesley McNaughton	09 407 6936	Lesley@mcnaughty.com
Vice President	Stuart Leitch	09 407 3458	sleitch21@gmail.com
Secretary	Ngairie Bates	09 407 8219	mikni@ihug.co.nz
Treasurer	Maebeth Hart	09 407 5100	casatres@xtra.co.nz
Meeting Coordinator	Liz Berry	09 407 3202	berrynice@xtra.co.nz
Course Convenor/Almoner	Margaret Rasmussen	09 402 8949	ras1@clear.net.nz
Publicity Officer	Pam Jenkins	09 407 7020	pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz
Committee Member	Grainger Brown	09 407 7247	g-brown@paradise.net.nz

U3A Book Group 2 by David Lawton



The group meets every month at the home of a different member each time, roughly taking it in turns. There are nine members. The format for the meetings is in two parts. In the first part, each member reports to the group on a book read on a topic chosen the previous month. In September the topic was 'medical'. Other recent topics have been 'North America, Land Sea or Air, the Pacific. The rules are not rigidly applied, and the topic is more perhaps a general guide of what the member may choose to talk about. There is no pressure to read. So, if you haven't done your homework this month, no one minds. There is no sense of any intellectual competition.

We then break for tea and fortunately we have some excellent bakers as well as readers. After tea the second part of the meeting is open for each member to tell the group about a book they have read which may be on any subject at all. The members tend to have varied interests with the result that the books they read vary also. The benefit of this is that the members will hear about authors and genres that they would not otherwise have thought of considering. This stimulates a wider choice of reading.

Perhaps the best thing about membership of the group is that at the end of each meeting the members can go away with a list of maybe one or two or more books that have been recommended and which can form the basis of a reading list. Membership has been more or less steady over the period of about 6 years since the group was formed, so hopefully it means the group is meeting members' expectations.

Greek Odyssey Groups by Iris Steensma



The Greek Odyssey groups started a few months ago. We are using several series of DVDs relating to Ancient Greek history, the first one, "Minotaur Island", will be followed by "In Search of Troy" next month, then others about Classical Greece and democracy and Sparta. The DVDs are broken up into shorter sections so that there is plenty of time to look further into the various topics that crop up. We will explore how this ancient culture is still with us today.

Greek myths have influenced our art and literature for centuries. Walt Disney made an animated movie called "Heracles" which has a great bouncy song called "Zero to Hero". The New Zealand printmaker Marian Maguire has made a beautiful series of prints based on the myth of Heracles. She has given this old myth a twist and relates this tale to the colonisation of New Zealand, truly a Herculean Labour!

The books of the ancient writers such as Homer, Hesiod and Herodotus continue to be in print and Derek Jacobi will read bits from Homer's "Iliad" to us. These Greek writers inspired poets such as John Keats and C.P. Cavafy. In the book "Travels with Herodotus" the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński tells how he always carried Herodotus's "Histories" with him as he travelled to different countries. So many ancient Greek words are still used in English today, dyspepsia, heroes, catastrophe, climax, nous, economy and ostracise are just a few. Why is the word psephology, meaning the knowledge of pebbles, so important to us today?

The image above shows a Linear B clay tablet using a very early ancient Greek script dating back to 1450 BCE. It was used for making inventories of wine, oil, sheep, slaves, flax, swords, chariot wheels, and more. We have made our own clay tablets and, yes, we have a smattering of this old written language. It is all par for the course. The Greek alphabet will be learnt. No hand written notes from parents, full of excuses for homework not having been done, will be accepted.

These two groups are on an odyssey which the Oxford dictionary defines as "a series of wanderings, a long adventurous journey."