



July 2014

www.u3abayofislands.wordpress.com

U3A Bay of Islands, PO Box 833, Kerikeri 0245

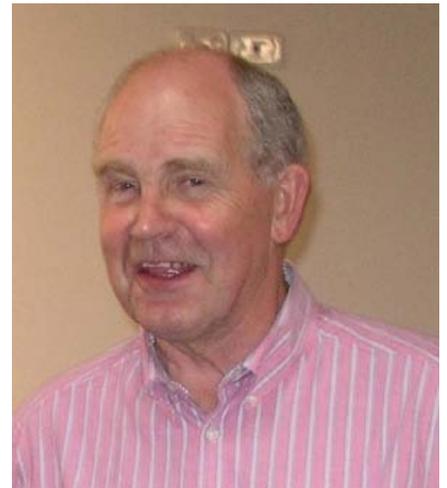
U3A.Bay.of.Islands@gmail.com

From our new President

I would like to start this report by thanking Lesley for handing over such a thriving organisation. My thanks also go to the committee members who agreed to be re-nominated: Pam, Maebeth, Margaret and Liz, and to our new committee members: Christine, Moira and Sue. Thanks also go to Grainger who leaves the committee; his contributions will be missed.

I hope we continue to support and add to the diverse and interesting spread of “subjects”.

My background is not one of academia, but of policing. In 1999, I retired after 30 years service with the Metropolitan Police in London, having specialised in training. Since then I have been involved in contract work as a consultant, mainly in the police training field, which more recently took me as far afield as Nigeria.



Anne and I made the move to NZ from the UK following our two sons, who arrived with their respective fiancées. Both subsequently married in NZ, became NZ citizens, and both have two sons born in this country. Our decision to move here was therefore very easy. We originally rented in the Kerikeri area for about two years prior to obtaining our permanent residency in December 2013, and have very recently bought property in Access Road.

To keep the grey matter active and meet like-minded people I joined U3A, Kerikeri Men’s Probus Club, a local walking group and the Travel Club.

Anne is a member of U3A and is on the committee of the Community Toy Library, but her driving passion is Kawakawa’s vintage railway. That is why I often refer to myself as a “Railway Widower”.

I look forward to visiting all the groups and making the acquaintance of all U3A members.

Stuart Leitch

2014 - 2015 Committee			
President	Stuart Leitch	09 407 3458	sleitch21@gmail.com
Secretary	Pam Jenkins	09 407 7020	pmjenkins@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer	Christine Cronshaw	09 407 6871	annachristinec@gmail.com
Group Convenor	Margaret Rasmussen	09 402 8949	ras1@clear.net.nz
Meeting Coordinator	Liz Berry	09 407 3202	berrynice@xtra.co.nz
Committee member	Moira Warnock	09 407 6389	warnock2@btinternet.com
Committee member	Maebeth Hart	09 407 5100	casatres@xtra.co.nz
Committee member	Sue Robertson	09 407 3452	robertson8148@yahoo.co.uk
Immediate Past President	Lesley McNaughton	09 407 6936	lesley@mcnaughty.com

Introducing our new committee members

Christine Cronshaw worked as an engineering draughtsperson, then Manager of the Whangarei District Council's Engineering Design Office and Property Records Department. She retrained and taught Graphic Design, IT and Maths at Okaihau College and overseas.

She has always been passionate about education, which she believes is the key to so much this world has to offer. There have been few years when Christine has not been involved in formal study, as a student or a teacher or both. She is looking forward to a greater involvement with U3A.



After reading English at Leeds University, **Moira Warnock's** first job was with John Murray, a famous London publishing house founded in 1768. After 10 years in publishing she took a career break to look after her family. When her late husband retired they bought and ran a terrace of holiday homes in Cornwall.

Moira came to NZ to be with her daughter and son-in-law. She loves painting, reading, cinema and travel. She is enjoying various U3A groups and is looking forward to joining the U3A newsletter editorial team.

Sue Robertson and her husband, Ian, emigrated to NZ from York, England in 2004. Her background is as an occupational therapist in mental health, working with children and the elderly. This included leading a variety of groups, counselling and developing social skills. Sue's last job was at the Kerikeri Retirement Village.

Her hobbies are cooking, reading and gardening. While Sue and Ian were on the committee of the Kerikeri Garden Club, she organised day trips and three one-week garden holidays for the club. In the U3A, Sue attends the History of Aviation, Local History, Art House Film and Music Appreciation groups.



Group notices

The **Do It Yourself** group had its last meeting in June. We would like to thank John Button very much for helping members with their challenging home maintenance tasks.

New Groups

Ian Robertson has kindly offered to facilitate and host the **Political Ideologies** group, which will be based on the U3A Online course, *Left, Right or Centre - a brief introduction to political ideologies*. Ian has lots of ideas on this subject which I am sure will lead to plenty of stimulating discussion. This group will start in July. There is still room for a few more people so please contact Ian on 09 407 3452 if you are interested.

Cooking will also begin in July, hosted and facilitated by Stuart Leitch. This group is now full and I know the members are in for some tasty treats.

I am delighted that we now have a facilitator and host for the **Poetry for Pleasure** group. Sue Robertson will look after this group but we are looking for a few more members before we start in August. Please contact me if you would like to share your love of poetry with others. Email me at ras1@clear.net.nz or phone 09 402 8949.

At this stage, we do not have enough participants to start groups in **Religions of the World**, **Antiques and Collectibles** or **China – Mao to Now** but we will keep them in mind for the future.

Margaret Rasmussen

New member

Welcome to David Welch. We hope you enjoy the Computer/Camera Group and that you will also sample other groups.

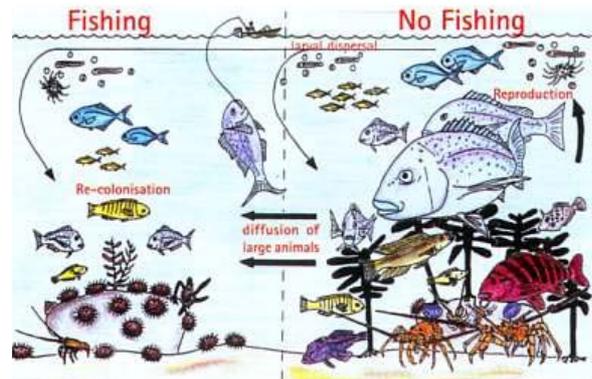
Report on John Booth's talk about no-take marine reserves

We were privileged to have Dr. John Booth as our speaker at the Annual General Meeting. He has spent his working life studying shellfish with a particular interest in spiny lobsters (crayfish) and has until his recent retirement been with the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research in Wellington. He now lives at Te Rawhiti in the Bay of Islands and is putting all his energy and expertise into "Fish Forever" and the development of two marine reserves and a scientific study reserve.

Currently 10% of land area in New Zealand is protected but only 0.05% of our coastline is in reserves of any kind. The two proposed marine reserves are in the Eastern Bay of Islands area and the proposed scientific study reserve is at Tangatapu an area of wonderful diversity, floodplain, marshland, mudflats, rocky reef and deeper water; home to numerous species of fish and birdlife.

John explained the reason for the 'barren areas' is over-fishing of the larger fish, which enables the kina population to explode. The kina devour the kelp beds that shelter numerous smaller fish, shellfish, micro-organisms etc. With the vanishing kelp the seabed is left barren and devoid of sea life. Marine reserves would be reviewed in 25 years, as that degree of time would allow regeneration to occur.

These reserves are of great importance. They act as 'nurseries' so marine life can flourish. Once they regenerate there is a 'spillover' and fish move from the protected area into open sea. The scientific areas provide an environment for different species to be studied and evaluated.



John Booth has a wealth of experience and his enthusiasm for his subject was infectious. We enjoyed his descriptions and the slides that depicted the changes on the seabed. He encouraged his audience to learn more about marine life and the need to care for our coastline for future generations.

Judy Barrett

Featured groups

Philosophy Group

Philosophy is a huge topic such that it influences our daily life. It is almost impossible to examine as a whole, it's rather like eating an elephant – we must progress with care and patience and start with the rear left foot as it were. Our group has selected and is attempting to digest a rear foot meal from this metaphorical philosophical elephant listed on the menu as the Theory of Knowledge; how do we know, how can we know things, things such as morals. How do we know what is right and what is wrong; why is one thing good and another evil? Do we know these differences through intuition? Are they innate? Or are they genealogical, developed by means of our evolution?

We, that is our group, approach these questions by examining the ideas, theories and hypotheses of great thinkers such as Socrates and his pupil Plato, who in the middle of the 5th century BC suggested a theory for the definition of knowledge in his *Theaetetus*, which Socrates examined and rejected. Then in the 17th century René Descartes developed his '*Method*' for achieving true knowledge for the individual.* This requires one to deny all opinions, accept only what you know to be true, and arrive, as in his case, at a beginning that one is only a thinking, existing mind. As Descartes described it " I think, therefore, I am". Finally there are the modern philosophers for example those like Michael Huemer who focuses upon Intuitionism – we know things a priori, and Sharon Street who produced an intriguing theory that evolutionary forces have played a role in shaping human attitudes.

There are no definitive answers in philosophy, we can all offer opinions, that is what doing philosophy is, each thinking about these questions, discussing our views in the open forum of our meetings, arriving at a personal conclusion and having a great deal of fun along the way.

**Discourse on the Method for Rightly Directing One's Reason and Searching for Truth in the Sciences*

Robert Wright

Wednesday Opera Group

The second Opera Group started about 14 months ago with Elva Clark as facilitator. Dainty and petite in stature, Elva is a real aficionado of opera with an extensive knowledge plus a vast collection of DVD's which she generously shares with us.

Sometimes, she arrives with 2 or 3 versions of the same work and asks us to choose one. She tries to alternate an opera with a tragic theme with a more light-hearted one the following month.

Some works are quite new to us so our knowledge is broadened. It is always fascinating to see how the operas are staged, produced and costumed sometimes in the original style and occasionally in a modern one.

Our group though small, is most appreciative of Lesley's hospitality and Jan's baking. With pleasant surroundings, comfortable seats, afternoon tea and a roaring fire when required - what more could one ask for!

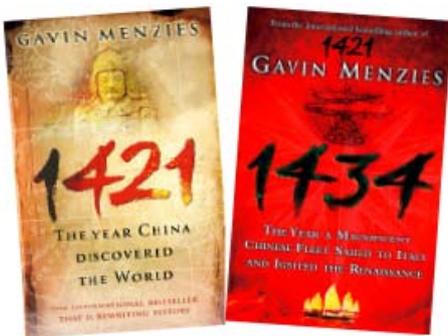
We can fit in a few more if this scenario appeals to you.



Elva, Anne and Patricia

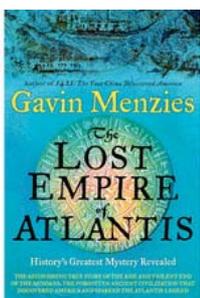
Anne Collinson and Patricia Shields

Atlantis Group



Over the last few years we have been following the exploration and discoveries by Gavin Menzies who joined the Royal Navy in his youth and rose to become a submarine navigator and captain. His interest in medieval history, and in particular the maps and charts of early explorers, took him to a chart depicting parts of the globe which others had assumed was unknown to Europeans at the date recorded on this map. His investigation into the origin of this document led him to the existence of great Chinese fleets during the Ming dynasty. This discovery resulted in his books *1421 The Year China discovered the World* and *1434 The Year a Magnificent Chinese Fleet sailed to Italy*.

Anticipating Menzies' still unpublished book about Spanish/Portuguese exploration, our group next read about the history of the Iberian Peninsula. We found the *Cultural Atlas of Spain & Portugal*, by Mary Vincent and R Astirling, a comprehensive and very interesting mixture of geography and history.



In the meantime Gavin Menzies 'changed tack', as it were, and published *The Lost Empire of Atlantis*. According to his introduction, this book is about the Minoan fleets that travelled the oceans of the world before their civilisation was wiped out by the ghastly explosion on Thera in 1,450 BC. We are now reading the section called *Exploration - Voyages to the Near East*. But this book will also take us far west into the Atlantic and even the Great Lakes of North America!

Now that the latest book by Gavin Menzies *Who Discovered America?* has been published, we may move on to that.

Our group is relaxed and in no hurry. Reading the book is interrupted by observations and discussions. Joan Lawrence, our hostess, spoils us with wonderful coffee and eats.

Maria Manning

President's report to 2014 AGM



It gives me pleasure to present the 15th annual report of U3A Bay of Islands. I'm pleased to report another successful year, with more groups active, greater attendance at our open meetings, and a significant increase in membership.

Groups

Our main activities take place in small groups that meet monthly, usually in members' homes. During the year we initiated nine new groups following six areas of interest: Greek Odyssey, Local History, Sketching for Beginners, Victorians and Oscar Wilde, Art House Films and Do It Yourself. Two groups finished in July 2013: the second C19th New Zealand History group and one of the Art History groups. After all these changes, we now have 27 groups covering 20 areas of interest.

Throughout the year, our other long-standing groups were still meeting happily each month, sharing interests and enjoying intellectual stimulation and interesting discussions.

I would like to thank the facilitators of all the groups; it is your enthusiasm and energy that make our U3A such a great success. You provide us with so many opportunities to meet and make friends, to enjoy shared interests and to learn together. Thanks also to the members who host meetings, write newsletter reports or contribute in other ways to the success of their groups.

We owe special thanks to Margaret Rasmussen for the fantastic job she's done as Group Convenor, organising new groups and supporting all group facilitators.

General Meetings

Our general meetings have also been very successful, providing a variety of interesting speakers, some local and others from further afield.

At our last AGM Dr Jamie Wood of the Landcare Research Institute, told us about moas and the research techniques used to learn about them. In August Valerie and Rex Hunton talked about their experiences working in the Pacific, Rex training indigenous doctors and Valerie working with local weavers. In October Dr Paul Buchanan spoke about the Evolving Nature of Intelligence Operations and New Zealand's role in those operations. In February this year Dr Matt McGlone, also from Landcare, talked about the prehistoric transformation of New Zealand by the Polynesian settlers and explained how modern science eventually revealed when these settlers came here. At our last meeting Liz Bigwood, Manager of the Kerikeri Mission Station, entertained us with stories about the early missionaries and their wives.

Many thanks to our Meeting Coordinator, Liz Berry, and to all members who helped make these meetings such a success.

With such excellent speakers, attendance at our meetings started to exceed the number of chairs available in the St John Ambulance Hall. Liz investigated alternative places but none were as suitable as this venue, with its bright pleasant hall, good facilities, convenient parking and modest hire charge. So our solution was to buy 20 plastic chairs, which are stored here and can be used by St Johns. We were happy to lend the chairs to Hospice Mid Northland for a fund-raising event in March.

Publicity

While our general meetings are primarily a service for our existing members, the meetings and the publicity for them also help to raise public awareness of U3A and attract new members.

Our website was launched in February to provide information about our activities for U3A members and the general public. Anyone can download our newsletters, our latest calendar and an up-dated brochure form that includes a membership application form. Margaret Rasmussen and I enjoyed creating this website and will continue maintaining it. Margaret also created a webpage for us on the Focus Paihia website.

Our ongoing membership drive also included participation in the Senior Expo at the Kerikeri Retirement Village in March, followed by a display in the Proctor Library window. Many thanks to all who helped with these events and especially to our Publicity Officer, Pam Jenkins, who organised both displays and gave a talk at the Expo. She also produced information packs, for distribution at our displays and meetings and sent packs to other people who showed interest in U3A.

Membership

Our multi-pronged publicity efforts produced a steady trickle of new members; so that, by the end of April, we'd gained 29 new members. These new members bring their varied ideas, knowledge and skills into U3A, adding to its vitality. One of the new members, Don Jansen, is the facilitator of our new Local History group based in Paihia and three of the new members have accepted nomination to the 2014-15 committee.

I would like to thank our Treasurer, Maebeth Hart, for the great work she has done, sending each new member a welcoming letter, name tag and information about U3A, as well as processing subs and passing on changes of contact details for all members. Maebeth has kept such meticulous membership and financial records that I was not surprised to hear our auditor had commented, "*if only everybody presented their accounts like you!*"

Thanks are also due to Grainger Brown, who designed our logo and has produced our nametags for many years. I have also appreciated his advice.

Newsletter

The last activity I need to mention is our monthly newsletter. It is primarily a resource for members but it is also useful for potential members and speakers who want to know more about how we operate and the variety of activities we provide.

We've had several newsletter editors this year. I'd like to thank Ngaire Bates and Iris Steensma for taking on the job after the death of our long-standing and dedicated editor, Marilyn Lescher. They introduced changes designed to reduce the length of the newsletter and the work of the editors and stimulated a useful discussion about the newsletter. After their interim editorship, Margaret Rasmussen and I took over in December, adding this to our other roles. In April we conducted a survey asking members what kind of newsletter they wanted. The committee concluded that the current format, with about four reports depending on space, suits most of our members. I thank the 73 members who completed the survey; we especially appreciated the many useful comments.

At the time when Margaret and I took on the newsletter, Pam Jenkins became our Secretary. I would like to thank her for adding this to her other roles and doing so much to ensure the happy and efficient functioning of our committee.

Conclusion

The committee member I haven't mentioned yet is our Vice President, Stuart Leitch. He has taken on a variety of tasks as he learnt how the organisation functions. I am confident I am leaving U3A Bay of Islands in capable and skilled hands and that our organisation will continue to enrich the lives of its members.

I've enjoyed my term as President of U3A, working with a great committee and getting to know so many of our members. Thank you all for your support.

Lesley McNaughton

Postscript: At the AGM, Maebeth thanked Dugald Macdonald for auditing the accounts again this year and we appointed him as our auditor for the 2014-15 year. Thank you Dugald, we appreciate your help.

 Editors: Margaret Rasmussen tel: 09 402 8949 email: ras1@clear.net.nz
 Lesley McNaughton tel: 09 407 6936 email: Lesley@mcaughty.com
 Moira Warnock tel: 09 407 6389 email: warnock2@btinternet.com
