



U3A BROWNS BAY

NEWSLETTER February 2010

Fundamental to U3A is the active participation in interest groups

General Meeting for Members: Tuesday 2nd February, 2010, 10-12 am

Browns Bay Presbyterian Family Centre (St. Cuthbert's), 45 Anzac Road, Browns Bay – Name tags required.



Main Speaker – Dr Dan Cohen

“Crop Improvement – the basis of civilization”

Dr Dan Cohen graduated in horticultural science from Massey University, followed by a master's degree in plant physiology from the University of Adelaide and a PhD in plant biochemistry from Carleton University in Ottawa.

He joined DSIR, in Palmerston North in 1970 where he led research into agricultural and horticultural applications of plant tissue culture.

With the establishment of the Crown Research Institutes, Dan moved to Hort. Research at the Mt Albert Research Centre in Auckland to join a group involved in plant transformation research. He helped to assemble the Hort. Research submission to the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification and presented information on safety and environmental aspects of GM foods. He is currently a member of the Bioprotection Technologies group at Plant and Food Research, Mt Albert, studying plant viruses.

In his talk he will discuss the challenge of feeding the world's growing population without destroying the environment.

Mini Speaker: Art History and Appreciation. **Hall seating:** Archaeology.

Morning tea: Music – Mainly Classical

Next Meeting 2nd March, 2010

Speaker: Stuart Middleton – “Improving Education for young people”.

Mini Speaker: Ancient Civilizations. **Hall seating:** Computers.

Morning tea: “Asian Studies” – now “Making History”

President's report

Welcome back! What a gorgeous summer! The Christmas meeting feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Geoff Chapple inspired us to try out parts of *Te Araroa: The NZ Trail* and shortly after we saw him on TV at the official opening by the PM. John Cornish & Scott Whineray's energies resulted in us enjoying 'having a go' at singing, then Garry Clark put our rendition of *We wish you a Merry Christmas* & *Get some Kiwi in Ya* clip for all to see on U tube! Grandkids think we are famous! Want to hear and see yourselves? Google U3A Browns Bay then click on the links on the left of the Home Page. It is interesting to see the other U3As popping up alongside with their contributions. Our challenge is an Australian U3A orchestra! Positive, friendly end of year celebrations. Thank you for your generous shared lunch.

Ruth Penton, Speaker Manager, has more excellent speakers lined up for you for the year starting with Dan Cohen who represents NZ internationally also.

In response to many “*What is U3A?*” questions from friends, relations and prospective members, we have included an explanation of what we are all about on page 4; this includes the most important point of difference from other organisations, namely, active participation in special interest groups.

This time last year 26% of newsletters were emailed; this figure is now 40%. Thankyou – this saves much processing time and finance.

2010 marks the 10th year of our existence and our past Presidents (Shona Cooper, Rachel Irwin, Alf Fisher) & first Secretary (Mary Stiebel) are organizing an appropriate celebration.

I wish you all a happy & healthy New Year while seeking new frontiers and extending your knowledge!

Maureen Whineray

Newsletter March Deadline:23rd February 2010

(130 words maximum).

Email to u3abb@vodafone.co.nz**WELCOME**

A big welcome to our five new members

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS**Ancient Civilisations:****(2nd & 4th Tuesdays 10 am)**

An interesting power-point presentation was given by Ann and Geoff Haycock who had recently returned from travels in Egypt, Israel and Jordan.

Discussion then turned to Cyrus the Great of Persia. Although the conqueror of immense territories in ancient Mesopotamia he did not reach Egypt.

This was left to his unscrupulous son Cambyses 11, who, with a swift campaign in 525 BC, defeated the Egyptian army and captured the throne of the Pharaohs. His successor Darius 111 lost all including Egypt to the Macedonian, Alexander. The murder of Julius Caesar in Rome in 44BC had grave repercussions for Roman Egypt. Mark Antony and Cleopatra jointly conspired to consolidate their hold on the eastern part of the Roman world, only to lose it all at the Battle of Actium.

An enjoyable Christmas lunch was held at the RSA Browns Bay following the last meeting of the year.

Anthropology: (1st Friday 10am)

Firstly we had a talk on various Japanese customs. Then Patricia read some interesting letters from the TIMES newspaper dated 1904-1911-1919 and 1983. Fascinating opinions expressed. Then we had assorted interesting bits and pieces from everybody and a Christmas lunch.

Archaeology: (3rd Monday 1.00pm)

Our next meeting will be on Monday 15th February. Venue and speaker to be advised.

Art History & Appreciation: (3rd Monday 11am)

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 15th February. We will share and discuss any galleries and exhibitions we have visited over the summer holiday, as well as plan our activities for the rest of the year.

Computers: (2nd Tuesday 9.45am)

In December, we studied the Jaycar flyer, mentioning particularly the slide/film scanner and a USB turntable for playing old records on to the computer. Neil showed us an A4 print that he had made from a 1960s slide, using the scanner. Other topics discussed were Windows 7, e-sata drives, Facebook and webcams. We finished early and enjoyed a sumptuous morning tea with the "plates" members brought along. The first meeting in 2010 will be on 9th February, - the venue the same as 2009, the Rotheres Room at Browns Bay Community Centre.

Creative writing: (4th Thursday 1-30 pm)

Our Xmas meeting and special afternoon tea was delightful. The subject for stories was "The Inheritance" and certainly brought forth some surprises. The diversity of the stories produced is always amazing. Well done ladies. Next meeting is 28th January 2010. Happy new year to all members

Creative Audio-Visual

The Creative AV Group had the final meeting for the year in December which was combined with a Pot Luck Lunch. After lunch we were able to enjoy the new AVs some of the members had produced over the past 3 months. It is good to see the progress being made as we learn more from Roy and have the courage to experiment with our photos and the ProShow Gold programme. Our next meeting will be at 2 pm, 4 February at the Whineray's home.

Exploring Art for Fun: (3rd Thursday 10am)

After the 'practical mystery art experience' which ended up being Pictionary we enjoyed a great chat and BBQ at the Boston's home. We quickly learnt to sketch super fast!

Film appreciation: (3rd Friday 10 am)

Wednesday 13 January saw 8 members off to the Bridgeway to see a small Italian film *Mid August Lunch*, in which we shared the trials of a middle-aged Italian bachelor who becomes a somewhat unwilling host to three very unusual senior ladies, when their own family members coerce him into adding them to the household he shares with his elderly mother.

During the holiday season, *Julie and Julia* is well worth a visit, and *Sherlock Holmes* is OK if you can imagine the cerebral Sherlock transformed into an action hero. Not quite sure what Conan Doyle would have made of that one. Haven't heard if anybody made it to Avatar in 3-D but a bit of a struggle if you wear glasses I believe, and maybe also a leap into the new blue world of sci-fi! Maybe better to ask the grandchildren than yours truly.

Français pour rire: (4th Monday 10am)

Since our last report, we have had a most enjoyable Christmas lunch at 'Au Bon Coin Café et Patisserie' in Beachhaven. As usual, our host, Chris from Alsace, set up our table in the summer house behind the restaurant, and wrote our menu in French on the blackboard. French wine was available too. Assuredly, we all had "bon appétit". Eleven of us also met in January for a morning reading and role playing telephone dialogues, and working out the answers to puzzles based on direction finding. After a guessing activity, "en français" of course, trying to work out what could possibly be the tiny object in the matchbox, Barbara delighted us all with excerpts from Mireille Guiliano's "French Women Don't Get Fat". Thank you, Cecily for organising this meeting.

Geology:**(1st and 3rd Wednesdays 1-30 pm)****Literature group: (2nd Friday 10am)****Local History: (2nd Monday 10am)**

New Year greetings to everyone. Our first meeting for the year will be held on Monday, Feb. 8th at 10 am. At 32 Widdison Place, Albany. We are fortunate to have as our speaker Malcolm Ross who will speak to us about the re- instatement of the Denniston Incline and he will show a video prepared by the National Film Unit. A few small contributions towards morning tea would be appreciated.

Making History: (1st & 3rd Thursdays 10am) [replacing Asian Studies]

The theme for this group is the historical events, individuals and unforeseen circumstances, great and small, that shaped and changed history. We will welcome new members when we begin this study in February. Just Phone Georgie

Modern History: (3rd Wednesday 10am)

A successful year was celebrated with a lunch at the bay's Club with members and their spouses. Time to have a real chat!

Music Appreciation and History:**(3rd Tuesday 10.00am)****Music – Mainly Classical: (1st Monday 2-4 pm)**

Our final meeting of the year at Margaret and John's home commenced with a D.V.D. recording by the 'Leonari Trio' a chamber music group from Waikato University. The trio comprising Maria Mo [piano], Hillary Hayes [violin] and Edward King ['cello], recently won the Royal Overseas League's NZ chamber music contest. The chosen piece was Anton Arenski's well known Piano Trio in D minor. The Christmas spirit was captured in playing selected choruses and arias from Handel's Messiah and in lighter mood carols from the D.V.D 'The Three Tenors Christmas'. The musical hour was followed by social time together over a little vino and a shared lunch.

Play reading: (4th Tuesday 2.00pm)**The Story of Art:****(2nd Tuesday 2.00-4.00 pm) Community centre.****Travel: (4th Wednesday 10 am)**

Lynn gave us an inspiring tale about her recent trip to Egypt. Her photos were stunning and we all felt we had been there ourselves! She travelled alone after doing a vast amount of research beforehand. Cairo and its neighbours Memphis and Sakkarah and the Old Kingdom were followed by a flight to Abu Simbel and the glorious temples on Lake Nasser, then up to Aswan for a ride in a felucca, and a visit to Elephantine Island with its Nubian atmosphere. Temples abound at exotic sounding places such as Karnak, Edfu, Luxor, Aswan, and many others. Lynn

had some time in the Black and White Desserts and the area around St Catherine's Monastery before entering Jordan. We finished our morning with a lunch together at Knightsbridge Village. Thank you to Libby for being our leader this year.

Walking: (2nd & 4th Fridays 9.30am)**27 November:**

From Hinemoa St, Ann led us through Le Roy's Bush to Little Shoal Bay, where we wandered among the boats. Up Maritime Terrace and through Wakanui St, we walked to Birkenhead Wharf, then another bush walk to Palmerston Road and back to Hinemoa St for refreshments at 'Grace' Cafe.

11 December: We met at Freyberg Park and walked up the valley to East Coast Road, then returned to Browns Bay by a different route. Always a pleasant walk.

We resume on 12 February with a day trip to Tiri Tiri Matangi, departing from Gulf Harbour. Make your own bookings. For details contact Tina or Ann.

World Religions: (2nd Wednesday 1.30pm)

We were joined by our male friends when we celebrated the festive season with a lunch at The Bay's Club. Great fun for us all. We have some vacancies in our group for 2010. Happy holiday to other members.

What is U3A?

We live in a community where there are many groups to which we can belong.

- We can take opportunities for continuing education such as University or Evening Class courses.
- We can join a service group such as Rotary or Lions.
- We can join an interest group such as a gardening or bridge club.
- We can join a group which offers interesting speakers and social contact, such as Probus.

U3A is none of these. It does, however, contain elements of some of the above groups, namely:

A monthly meeting of all members:

- when we have an excellent outside speaker..
- when we have the opportunity to socialize
- when one/several of our members do present mini-talks.

This is of great interest and stimulation to us all. But it is only half the story.

Small interest groups within the organisation.

It is what happens in these groups that marks us out as different from other organisations

- groups are formed and close down as the need arises.
- each group member take responsibility for presenting information from their own background, experience or research to the rest of the group. We occasionally have outside speakers but, on the whole, we enjoy the opportunity to extend ourselves in this way.
- Members are supported within each group to present their contribution.
- The real socializing takes place in these small groups.
- By doing this we strive to fulfil the spirit of U3A as stated by Peter Laslett who founded U3A in the UK in 1981

“Those who teach shall also learn and those who learn shall also teach”.

The History of U3A

U3A began at the *University of Toulouse* in France 1972 and has now spread world-wide with hundreds of thousands of members. *U3A* was launched in New Zealand in 1989 and in Browns Bay in 2000. The *University of Toulouse academics* recognized the huge pool of brain power, knowledge and experiences in the retired group (third age) and ran lectures in various topics. *Cambridge University* in England then took up the idea but, instead of members *receiving* lectures, the members actively participated in selecting the topics, planning the programmes and presenting the information. We have adopted that style which we believe promotes increased personal learning, confidence & enjoyment by reading, *research, discussions and field trips*.

U3A is the abbreviation for *University of the Third Age*, the name originally given to the movement by the *University of Toulouse*. In New Zealand we refer to it in the abbreviated form, *U3A*, to differentiate it from the New Zealand degree granting Universities which we are not.

SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

1. Dare to dream about what and where you' like to be.
2. Write your goals down, carry them with you and refer to them often.
3. Use affirmations. "I'm fit, healthy and feel fabulous."
4. Be determined. Recall your dreams or vision when the going gets tough.
5. Put a time limit on feeling depressed, down or disappointed then look for the positive and appreciate whatever you have.
6. Take time out for yourself; walk in the garden or somewhere you love. Have coffee with a friend. Stay at a bed and breakfast by yourself or with a friend. Retreats are important.
7. Delegate. You don't have to be super man/woman.
8. Be open to learning. Read widely, listen to tapes, attend seminars.
9. Be open to seeing the good in others. Do random acts of kindness.