



U3A BROWNS BAY.

NEWSLETTER November 2009

Fundamental to U3A is the active participation in interest groups

General Meeting for Members: Tuesday 3rd November, 2009

Main Speaker - Dr Richard Fisher, FRCOG, FRNZCOG, CREI, Fertility Associates.



Dr Fisher graduated from Otago University, followed by postgraduate training in New Zealand, London, Poole and Oxford in Britain. He returned to New Zealand as a specialist obstetrician and gynecologist at National Women's Hospital where he joined Freddie Graham practicing In Vitro Fertilization (IVF). Since co-founding Fertility Associates (9000 babies in 20 years), Richard has become the foremost spokesperson on infertility issues in the country, and is the first New Zealander to be President of the Fertility Society of Australia. He is a member of the NZ Advisory Committee on Assisted

Reproductive Technologies.

Mini Speaker: Robin Brown – Travel.

Morning Tea: Anthropology

Hall seating: World Religions (*People not in groups please give a hand*)

Next Meeting 1st December.

Speaker: Geoff Chapple from the Te Araroa Trust – NZ Walkway: “The Longest Walk”

Party Time. Christmas singing and Pot luck lunch.

Hall seating – Ancient Civilizations. Morning tea: Music – Mainly Classical

President's Report

A big welcome to our three new committee members – Peter, Ruth and Mary - who complete our energetic & effective team. Committee names & responsibilities are on the back of the newsletter. A big thank you to Scott and Bob who retire this year but join the ex-officio team so we'll continue to benefit from their many talents. Thank you to all.

Dr John Buckleton's sensitive and educational presentation last month brought us up to date on Forensic Science techniques the scientists use to solve crime. The case studies were most interesting in the way initial thoughts prove to be incorrect as the jig saw is put together. There is strong competition to gain a position in this field, a career which John, understandably, has found very upsetting at times - but also very satisfying as the hard facts emerge and lead to the right decision.

Remember to collect your white name tag from Shirley, Membership Manager, on Tuesday.

There is 'One Haircut' to Christmas and a bit of time to exercise to provide space for a Christmas pot luck lunch at our December meeting!

Maureen, President

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Ancient Civilisations:

(2nd & 4th Tuesdays 10 am)

Under the Pharaohs of the new kingdom, ancient Egypt reached the zenith of its influence, riches and cultural achievements. A century of alien domination by the Hyksos was thrown off by a series of strong rulers. This would also extend Egyptian territory into Nubia and the near east by conquest, and challenge the other super powers of both the Mitanni and the Hittites. The kingdom of Mitanni, of Hurrian descent, were known as masters of chariot warfare. The initial Suez canal was constructed about 400 years before the Christian era, between the Nile delta and the Red Sea. A new programme due to commence will investigate Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt.

Anthropology:
(1st Friday 10am)

We heard of the Tower of London, from its building begun by William 1st, after the Battle of Hastings in 1066, to the visit by the United States Navy Ship Halyburton in July 2009, when they took part in the Ceremony of Constables. Dues started in the 14th century. They gave a cask of wine. We ended with the Ceremony of the Keys, started in 1322 and still carried out every night at 10 pm. We mentioned in passing the menagerie, crown jewels, museum and various prisoners. Patricia then read some interesting letters written by the CLIFT family from Bodmin, Cornwall, England, in the 1700's, dealing with family, naval and wartime affairs. We then found out about Aztec schooling, clothing, medicine and their complicated Calendar.

Archaeology:
(3rd Monday 1.00pm)

Garry spoke and showed us a video he had put together about 'The Lord of Sipan'. Sipan was one of the capital cities of the Moche culture, a South American society, existing between 100 and 800 AD. Its sites were located along the arid coast of what is now Peru, wedged between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes mountains. Excavation of the Lord's tomb, in 1987, revealed treasures in gold, silver and copper which had lain undiscovered for more than 1200 years. Thank you, Garry for a great talk.

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

Our group enjoyed the guided tour of Rita Angus: Life & Vision at the New Gallery. Our excellent guide helped us focus on certain aspects of Angus' work. It was intriguing to view the many watercolours which were painted in preparation for the composite oil paintings of South Island landscapes, including the well known painting of 'Cass, 1936'. The many self-portraits in watercolour and oil reflected her strong determination to be an artist as well as her considerable skill. Her watercolours are delicate yet crisp and concise employing both soft and strong colour. Time spent reflecting on the stories behind some of the work, as well as the personal symbols used, added to our appreciation. At the end of the tour we had plenty of time to revisit and savour those works that appealed most.

Asian studies:
(1st & 3rd Thursdays 10am)

December 2009 will mark the conclusion of this program which began on 20th February 2003, seven years ago. However we wish to continue as a group but move on to the theme of historical change due to events, inventions, people and any unforeseen consequences. The new name will be 'MAKING HISTORY'. We would also welcome new members when we begin on 10th February 2010.

Computers:
(2nd Tuesday 9.45am)

When we've done work on our computer, we need to be able to find it easily whenever we want it. At our last meeting, Dennis Robb came to talk to us about organising our work into files and folders – a system which takes a while to set up, but which is invaluable if we're to avoid having to search for items whenever we want to access them. He also had some helpful information for those of us who want to download music. An interesting and useful morning. At our next meeting, Tuesday 10th November, bring any unwanted computer bits and pieces, also anything you don't know how to use.

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

Amazing stories again from a murder to bat species. The November meeting will be a shared Xmas afternoon tea. Subject for our story is 'The Inheritance'.

Creative Audio-Visual

Next DVD showing Thursday 3rd December, 1pm, with a potluck.

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

Our merry team were amazed at both the size of the collection and variety of styles in the Rita Angus exhibition at the Art Gallery. The guide's knowledge was extensive and brought Rita's complex life and talents 'to life' for us. Highly recommended but be quick as it finishes 1st November. Get together a group and book a guide – even better! Thank you to the two Margarets for organising it.

Family Memoirs – Writing group:
(2nd Monday 1.30pm)

Our first topic was 'Hairstyles', which took us from the 1930's through to present day, with photos relevant to each decade. The younger sister who delighted in seeing her father appear with his big strong, heavy clippers, ready to cut her brothers' hair, while she taunted them. Little girls enduring sleep-less nights with rags entwined in their long hair, to be brushed out into ringlets next morning. Family photos of children and grandchildren with, short and curly hair or plaits. Boys and men were shown with everything from short back and sides to long flowing locks. Two members wrote on different subjects. The first was about a trek to the Dacre colonial cottage where they stayed for a short period, experiencing living with few amenities. The second recalled an exciting euro rail trip through Germany and meeting up with friends and a neighbour.

Film appreciation:**(3rd Friday 10am)**

Thanks to Jennifer for organising dining out at Gengis Khan. It was decided to visit Film Archives to view 'The Mighty Civic', on 20th November followed by lunch at K Road, which Ruth offered to organise. Jennifer spoke on the film, 'The Freak', which a few members attended and enjoyed. Jasmine spoke on the movie 'Coco Chanel'. Pat showed a video on early cinema. This was 19th century British Movietone News as shown in cinemas till 1940s by Fox, which illustrated the progress of black and white movies through the century. It was decided to have a film outing in January before starting in February.

Français pour rire:**(4th Monday 10am)**

We started by asking each other about our health in French, encouraged by Bill who gave us further vocabulary on this topic. This month's question was "Quel cardinal devint ministre du roi Louis XIII?" Answer: "Cardinal de Richelieu". The homework was checked and we read out Dialogue 3 in pairs. Bill also read us an extract from the creation story in French we replied to some comprehension questions. Homework, to practise reading aloud Dialogue 4, P 65. Homework also for next time, "Où Jeanne d'Arc fut-elle brûlée?" Jasmine read a firsthand account of preparing "charcuterie", French cuisine involving the preparation of brawn, sausages and other delicacies from a whole pig..

Geology:**(1st and 3rd Wednesdays 1-30 pm)**

The group meets in a different member's home each month. November's meetings will be at Carol Wade's home. There will be no meeting in December and the breakup has yet to be organised. Classes recommence in February at a date yet to be decided. The group is going on a Field Trip to Southland departing on 10th February for about 10-14 days.

Literature group:**(2nd Friday 10am)**

Among the books reviewed this month was "The Professor and The Madman" by Simon Winchester about the compilation of the Oxford Dictionary in 1857, recommended by Shona. Highly recommended by Betty was "The Man Who Loved China" by Simon Winchester about the remarkable life of Joseph Needham, a Fellow of Caius College Cambridge who with his wife specialised in Biochemistry. He was greatly interested in China because he was a socialist and his lover was a biochemist from China who came to Cambridge. Needham learnt Mandarin before they visited China. In 1943 the British Government sent him to Chungking for 3 years to study with the many academics who had fled there from Japanese occupied China. Dr. Needham wrote 17 volumes of a history of China. Thelma reviewed "Safe Passage" by Ida Cooke. This true story of how Ida and her sister Louise saved the lives of many

Jewish musicians from Europe. It was through their great love of opera that they met and became aware of the plight of these people. 29 families were helped by the sisters. An inspiring story.

Local History:**(2nd Monday 10am)**

This meeting was very ably led by Des and Jinnty who told us some of the history of the Franklin District and the Awhitu area. We learnt about the early settlement, the successful vegetable growing industry; the wreck of the Orpheus which led to the establishment of the first lighthouse, its later destruction, rebuilding, decommissioning, neglect and restoration in 1999. Schools were established in the area whose pupils came mainly from the lighthouse and signal station. We heard about the area encompassed by the Hunua Ranges which became an important supplementary water supply for the Auckland area. Gold and other minerals were mined from this area and the first native tree nursery was established to re-forest areas denuded by these ventures. Our next meeting will be held at the home of Flora Robb, on Nov.9th at 10am. Please bring a plate for a shared lunch and a "snippet" to share as this will be our final meeting for the year.

Modern History:**(3rd Wednesday 10am)**

At our October Meeting Ruth spoke in a thought-provoking way on 'Rewriting History' and gave us many examples of how History is re-written e.g. Government and private papers being continuously released, new research and interpretations, new perspectives made over time, changes in education, rewriting of textbooks etc. The Group gave many examples from their own experiences. Well done Ruth. Frank then gave us an interesting talk on 'The Black Forest' - A mountain region in South Western Germany extending 160 km along the eastern bank of the Upper Rhine River. It is famed for its beauty and the charm of its villages and in parts is thickly forested in fir and pine. The Germans are careful and thorough as always in the selection and felling of the trees required and in the cleaning up of the area afterwards. Thank you for your personal experiences in the Forest. Well done. Next meeting: Friends of Scott & Maureen, Jenny & Johan van der Baan, survivors of a cruise ship sinking in Antarctica, will speak along with Shirley Brown relaying her Modern History experiences from a recent cruise - which stayed afloat!

Music Appreciation and History:**(3rd Tuesday 10.00am)**

Each member of the group brought a piece or item to share which created a varied and interesting session. This included: songs from Mario Lanza and Pavarotti; a German René Kollo singing from Lehar and Paganini; Neil Diamond singing from Jonathan Livingston Seagull; a DVD clip from 1936 'Showtime' with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire; classical arrangements of Lennon and McCarthy's music;

selections from Strauss's Die Fledermaus; Mozart's 'Bassoon Concerto' and finishing with a selection from the Last Night of the Proms 2009 at the Bruce Mason. Next meeting:- entertainment and shared lunch at Jennifer Lees' home

Music – Mainly Classical:

(1st Monday 2-4 pm)

'Some favourite music for various instruments' was Terry's title for a presentation covering 11 composers and 12 instruments. We heard some well known classical favourites, for example Ashkenazy playing Chopin's 'Fantaisie-Impromptu' and Wynton Marsalis playing the allegro movement from 'Concerto for trumpet and orchestra' by Haydn. We heard some of Terry's jazz favourites including the popular style clarinettist Acker Bilk playing 'Cavatina' and a Dizzy Gillespie number, 'You go to my Head', played by Paul Desmond on Sax. The near to full bass resonance of the pipe organ from a Bose system 'woofer' demonstrated modern hi-fi technology in booming out 'Tocatta and Fugue in D minor' by Bach.

Play reading

(4th Tuesday 2.00pm)

Our October meeting opened with a discussion on the best venue for our Christmas function. It was decided that Knightsbridge would be the most suitable, and it would be held on the 24th November which is our usual meeting day. We had a fun afternoon as usual, reading "The Slippers of Cinderella" by W. Graham Robertson with a totally bewildered and confused Fairy Godmother. "A Husband For Breakfast" by R. E. Mitchell was also a humorous choice featuring a little Welsh chicanery.

The Story of Art:

(2nd Tuesday 2.00-4.00 pm) Community centre.

Georgie gave us a fascinating insight into the life and works of Rosa Bonheur 1822-1899, widely considered to have been the most famous animal painter of the 19th century. Her two chief works 'Ploughing in the Nivernais' and 'The Horse Fair' established Rosa's international fame throughout

Europe and America and as far away as Australia. She garnered many prestigious accolades usually reserved only for men. Susan is to tell and show her many experiences overseas next time. Come and join us.

Travel:

(4th Wednesday 10 am)

Group had not met by time of printing.

Walking:

(2nd & 4th Fridays 9.30am)

25 Sept. We met at the shopping mall and explored parks and walkways in the Glenfield area.

9th Oct. On a stormy day Brenda led us from the Pumphouse along Takapuna walkways. We enjoyed freshly baked muffins at Alison's, and then returned along Takapuna beach.

World Religions:

(2nd Wednesday 1.30pm)

Mary Ford spoke about Methodism established by John Wesley (1703-1791). He was born into a family of 17 children at the Epworth vicarage. John was forced to preach in the open air throughout England, being excluded from the churches because of his radical ideas on education and social justice. He said the world was his parish, and attracted the lower classes. He stressed that every member was a minister, not just the clergy, and organised training for its members. He did not set out to establish a new denomination and remained an Anglican minister until his death.

A letter from his mother on building character in children indicates the need to conquer self-will e.g. strict patterns for eating and sleeping, obedience and punishment for disobedience, self-control, praise for effort, truthfulness, the importance of learning to read for girls and boys, etc.

Methodism puts strong emphasis on its members, and the prime decisions for the whole Church including appointments of ministers are made at an annual conference of representatives of each parish.

U3A Browns Bay website: <http://www.u3abb.net.nz> Email address on website Address: PO Box 35-851, Browns Bay.

Note this is an edited version of our Newsletter for the website with names, phone numbers, and personal information removed.