



Nelson

Learning for Life

Volume 7, Issue 3, June 2015

The next General Meeting will be on 26th August at 10-12 noon. We begin at 10am so please arrive in plenty of time. You will receive advice on who the speaker will be.

U3A Nelson welcomes new members: Joy Bradley, Margaret Robertson, Deborah Willis and Gill Campbell.

FROM THE JUNE GENERAL MEETING

WW1 American Cargo Ships

On 24th June, we had a fascinating talk from **Neil Bruce Miller** on a little known topic.

By the time USA reluctantly joined WW1 in April 1917, U-boats were sinking Atlantic shipping at a rate that was choking off supplies to Britain. There were insufficient ships to keep up the delivery of vital food and materials.

America responded to the shortage of shipping in a number of ways. This included the diversion of ships working coastal routes (that were capable of crossing the Atlantic), to that duty.

To fill the shortfall of ships on American coastal routes, a scheme was devised to build wooden ships of up to 350 feet length, and 3,500 tons displacement, as replacements. This was because steel was fully committed to war armaments of all sorts, and extra steel for shipping was just not available -- but wood, supplies, manpower, training etc. was available. In an astoundingly short time, a complete programme was implemented, from felling trees and milling, through to new shipyards in diverse locations, (with up to 6 building slips), design of a new vessel type, and so on up to commissioning of the ships.

282 ships were built. It was claimed that

the record for one was 27 days from keel laying to launch, complete with engines and boilers!

The whole effort was immediately terminated at the Armistice, so a huge effort came to little real result. However, if the war had continued, it would have been yet another of the myriad elements that make up the final success of the Allies. It certainly shows where they got the idea of the Liberty ships in a re-run of the Atlantic situation in WW2.

A sad footnote was that the effort was hardly necessary, because by the time the ships were ready, the Allies had very much the upper hand in the U-boat war, and the threat was considerably diminished. The ships had no commercial value, and were scuttled soon after.

As we have seen at various times, America faced a problem, and rapidly found a way to overcome it. The breadth and depth of the organisation necessary was of gigantic proportions. An awesome effort in very straightened times.

Thank you Neil for such an enlightening talk. Diagrams and information can be seen at www.cocatrez.net/Water/FerrisShips/FerrisShips.html (Type in the whole address or it will not work!).

Barry Davis, reviewer

The 1956 Trans Antarctic Expedition

In 1956, Sally Warren's fiancé, Guyon, (eventually her husband), was part of the 1956 Trans Antarctic Expedition (TAE) to the South Pole.

Most of us will remember the newsworthy occasion when Sir Edmund Hillary's team, using Massey Ferguson tractors, reached the pole ahead of Sir Vivian Fuchs' party - to the consternation of some.

Guyon, a geologist, was part of the scientific arm of that party, and kept a detailed and comprehensive account of his time on the ice, including wintering over. Sally and her daughter-in-law, have published his diary.

Sally entertained us with very interesting anecdotes of the preparation for, and of the journey itself, which only she would know. As she remarked later, most of the scientists and others on that expedition have now died, so she has, by publishing his diary left us with an invaluable historical record.

So we must thank Sally, and Guyon, who has since died, for their foresight in making this record available in book form, for us to read, learn from, and enjoy.

For your further interest and enjoyment, Sally suggests you go to:

<http://antarctica.recollect.co.nz>

Heather Clendon, reviewer

There is still time to register for the **Red Cross Save-A-Life course**. Learn the most up to date techniques to save a life.

Be grateful when there is someone in your group taking the course!

8.30 - 12.30 Saturday 11 July, at the Red Cross Centre, 59 Parkers Road. \$60 pp.

Ph 035477274 study@u3anelson.org.nz

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The Irish Group

The Irish Group has been meeting in various guises for four years. Of interest to members who "enjoy things Irish," we have explored the turbulent history of Ireland and tried to reach a consensus in understanding of what it means to be Irish. We have wrestled with the question of why Ireland has so many gifted writers and why Celtic music is heard in many parts of the world.

Our 2015 programme got off to a flying start with a presentation by new members Sally Mason and Don Kelly about their recent trip to southern Ireland. Their beautiful photography and insightful words transported us to the magic and mystery of Ireland.

This year we have adopted a different meeting procedure. Group members take it in turn to choose a topic and chair the learning session eliciting contributions from other people. Shirley Early presented a thoughtful and thorough dissertation on Women in Irish Society; the discussion ranged from pre-Christian to modern day political leaders. Noeline Lawson led an engaging session on the historical and geographical nature of the vibrant city, Dublin and why the city resonates with so many.

Whatever the topic, there is plenty of laughter and *craic*. The members of the Irish group have the gift of eloquence and are happy to share their knowledge with good humour.

Fay Eades, group convenor

Visual Arts

Our group is now into its fourth year and it continues to be a pleasure to share our knowledge, learn more and appreciate the world of often maligned Modern Art. Originally we indicated that our study would be of painters and sculptors working between 1900c and 1945, but this has now broadened to include artists who significantly influenced

the modernist school to those whose work goes well beyond the post post modernists. Our main emphasis has been on the group of artists - who gathered together in Paris between World Wars 1 and 11. Our studies have ranged from Cezanne to Rothko and across many countries in both hemispheres. Along with the artists' particular styles we discuss the times they lived through, the people with whom they mixed and the effect and the influence on their work. Our presenters make their own choice of artists and how they do their presentations. Often this includes a synopsis of the artists life, a discussion by the whole group on the paintings or sculptures and a documentary or short film from You Tube, the Arts Channel or a DVD to emphasise the points the presenter wishes to make.

Lois Davis, convenor

PLEASE!

Always let your convenor or host know if you intend being absent! Convenors / hosts need to know who is coming so they can comfortably prepare such things as catering and arranging the room.

If you wish to join a group, do talk to the convenor to find out about the group. But please register through the Study Group Coordinator as this is the only way that equity can be assured for everyone in U3A Nelson.

Looking for a new activity? I try to keep our website up to date, so consult www.u3anelson.org.nz to find out what is available.

Kay Hunter, Study Group Coordinator

STUDY GROUPS THAT HAVE VACANCIES

Ph 03 5477274 study@u3anelson.org.nz for information or to join the following groups.

Discovering our local bird life

A group for amateur bird lovers.

Dunnock? Or house sparrow? NZ falcon or harrier hawk? Marsh crake? What's that and where would I see one? Red poll? Greenfinch? Where might I see cattle egrets? Cormorants or shags? Reef heron? If you have often wondered about our common (and not-so-common) bird species, but haven't ventured out to explore and discover, this group provides your opportunity.

Together we can help each other learn how to recognise our birds by their behaviour, call, flight, colour of plumage; looking at different habitats and discover what can be found there, noting seasonal changes, numbers, etc.

We meet fortnightly on Tuesday mornings at different locations, for a 2-3 hour bird-spotting ramble, taking our own morning tea, a notebook and pencil, binoculars if you have them, bird identification book you might have, and wearing appropriate outdoor clothing with sturdy footwear.

First meeting for this new group - August 4th, 8.30 a, at seaward end Boulder Bank Drive (next to the water pumping station) Nelson.

Please contact **Grace Sutherland / Brian Brasell** ph 547 7539
gracemsutherland@gmail.com

Register, study@u3anelson.org.nz

Tena Koutou! The **Exploring Te Reo and Tikanga Maori** group would love more members. We have fun learning through games, songs and activities using the TVNZ Toku Reo programme as our guide www.tokureo.maori.nz Learn a little reo and help conserve this wonderful language. You are welcome to investigate us by joining in a session.

Convenor, Anne Mitchell

The two **Exploring Nelson Walking Groups** have combined and now meet every week on Thursdays at 10am. This allows those who have other commitments to walk on the remaining Thursdays. If you would benefit from a walk of about an hour, an opportunity to get to know new parts and new cafes in Nelson and Richmond, and meet more members of U3A Nelson, join us.

Convenor, Stella Say

Hands in the Garden would welcome you! We meet monthly on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and each member takes a turn to organise an activity that increases our knowledge and enjoyment in the garden. Next session, we are utilising the knowledge and skills of new member, Soil Scientist, Warren Harris.

Convenor, Kay Hunter

TED 2 members take turns to select TED talks for viewing and discussion. All talks are excellent and globally meaningful. Some examples of issues we have explored are:

Many of the world's biggest problems require the input of scientists — but why should we believe what they say? Science Historian Naomi Oreskes thinks deeply and gives informed answers.

How much do you know about the world? Hans Rosling, with his famous charts of global population, health and income data demonstrates that you have a high statistical chance of being quite wrong about what you think!!

How do you view female genital circumcision? Khadija Gbla grew up caught between two definitions of what it means to be an "empowered woman." While her Sierra Leonean mother thought that circumcising her and thus stifling her sexual urges — was the ultimate form of empowerment; but her culture as a teenager in Australia told her that what had happened to her was "female genital mutilation."

Which country does the most good for the world? Simon Anholt dreamed up an unusual scale to get governments thinking outwardly: 'The Good Country Index.' In a riveting and funny talk, he answers the question, "Which country does the most good?"

These are just some of the issues we have discussed but our numbers are low and we would love more input. Do join **TED2 NOW!** **Paul Lunberg, participant**

Classical Music Appreciation Over the years we have studied different composers and their compositions including the structure of symphonies, concertos and sonatas. We have also looked at the history of classical music from its beginning until the present day. Musical instruments and orchestras have also been amongst our topics. One meeting a month is devoted to the study item and the other meeting to a member's personal choice of music. I have a library of classical music and access to the internet for other items. We have space for other people to join the group.

Brian Say, convenor

OTHER GROUPS THAT HAVE VACANCIES

Astronomy

Children's Literature

Scrabble

Write Your Life groups 2 and 5

And we are ALWAYS on the lookout for new groups.

Recording Your History Digitally

We are now in that age group where we wonder what to do about our history. Collected over many years, in photographs, letters, colour slides and other memorabilia. But also in our memory. Who is going to tell the story that goes with the picture? What will our children do with it all? We have a pretty good idea, have we not? Will they regret it later when they find they don't know their family history? I suppose this is why "Write your life" is such a popular a subject. But there are other ways of telling your life's story then writing it.

We have a small group of people who want to tell it in photos and narration, shown on a TV or laptop, tablet, smart phone or whatever the future will bring. Somewhat like a movie. We have to digitalise our records and then it can always be transferred to the next generation of gadgets that no doubt will come but our story will live on. This is what our group is going to do.

We want to first learn how to transfer our photos, videos, colour slides etc. to our computer memory. Then with the help of a Video Editing programme place these in a suitable sequence, add narration, adjust, crop and generally manipulate to make it into an interesting story. A story that will live on for ever. Then it does not matter what happens to all those photos and such.

What do you need? A computer and some knowledge of using it. That is about it.

Are you interested?

Contact study@u3anelson.org.nz or get in touch with me, Gerard

Hueting,
5464453



From ----- To



AN OFFER FROM NELSON CITY LIBRARY

Dear members,

U3A offers a range of study opportunities for members, and I understand that most of these groups operate in people's homes. If you find that is a limiting factor, we may well be able to provide a room or facility in the library for the group to meet. Please contact me if you think there would be interest in this.

Kind regards

Nicola Harwood

Community Engagement Librarian -
Nelson Public Libraries

Nelson City Council / *Te Kaunihera o Whakatū*

03 546 0406

www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz

FROM NORFOLK ISLAND U3A

"Although we are a relatively small community of about 1600 people, there has been a huge interest shown in U3A. Most people do not have superannuation or access to the aged pension and means that committing to a series of classes on a particular topic is often a problem for them. We live on a unique island which we like to share with the rest of the world, being an isolated community we really do enjoy the interaction from visiting U3A-ers and the new "brain food" they bring!

Kind Regards

Barbara Kelly, U3A NI Chairperson

president@norfolkisland.u3anet.org.au
Post Office Box 254, Norfolk Island,
South Pacific, 2899

We send out mailings to those who have supplied stamped addressed envelopes.

The Member's Meeting information is published a fortnight prior to the bi-monthly meeting; in the Nelson Weekly, The Leader and The Waimea.

Oops!

A group of seniors were sitting around at the Coffee Club talking about all their ailments.

"My arms have got so weak I can hardly lift this cup of coffee," said one.

"My cataracts are so bad, I can't even see my coffee."

"What? Speak up! What? I can't hear you," said one elderly lady.

"I can't turn my head because of the arthritis in my neck," said one, to which several nodded weakly in agreement.

"My blood pressure pills make me so dizzy!" exclaimed another.

"I forget where I am, and where I'm going," said another.

"I guess that's the price we pay for getting old," winced an old man as he slowly shook his head.

The others nodded in agreement.

"Well, count your blessings," said a woman cheerfully ...

"Thank God we can all still drive."

Barbara Mason, member