



NELSON

Learning for Life

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Next General Meeting will be on 25th February 2015 at 10-12 noon at the Nelson Golf Club at 38 Bolt Road, Stoke. The Speaker will be ...TBA

NOTES FROM THE GENERAL MEETING



Sir Geoffrey Palmer – A brilliant address

Well done Carl in getting Sir Geoff to talk to us. He was entertaining, but more than that he was a beacon of common sense to us all. We could feel his frustration at some issues, both present and past. We recognised how he sees the depth of many problems which most of us fail to analyse.

I was very impressed at how he could think so clearly on his feet, answering quite obtuse and difficult questions from the floor with concise and logical thinking. He started by saying that being a politician is one of the best ways to learn about our society – it is one of the greatest forms of education. He conjured up some

magnificent memories; imagine 400 people spending 13 hours in old Nelson trying to form a rudimentary way of governance – and now our lazy populace can only get about two thirds out to vote in our hard earned democracy. You could feel his disappointment!

I urge you to visit

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nelson_Province to read a little more about Nelson Provincial Council and their fine buildings which Sir Geoff remembered with some sadness. How could such delightful buildings be allowed to just rot away?

He described how we in NZ tend to lurch from periods of quiet to radical change. In particular he mentioned the two Labour governments of 1935 and 1984 and many of us remember the fiscal crisis created by the Muldoon years and the harsh radical changes of the Lange/Douglas years.

Questions were numerous –

- The Resource Management Act, it turned out Sir Geoffrey had been one of the architects of this Act.
- Boom and Bust cycles which he said seems to be the way we do it in NZ.

- What is poverty? Sir Geoffrey pointed out it has to be a relative measure.
- Should there not be constitutional approval for warfare? And how we are locked in by our history?
- Nicky Hager's Book? He said he agreed with lots in the scholarly book and worries about it. He thinks we have not heard the last of this yet.
- Is our present parliamentary and legal system too combative? Yes he feels it is and was hoping that MMP which he strove hard to bring into being would overcome some of the more glaring problems.

We all enjoyed his wit and intelligence. He made us all think a little more of the weight of responsibility which politicians carry. I imagine we will all be more compassionate in our judgement of them in future.

Paul Lunberg, Committee member

Kay McNabb, CEO of Nelson Airport also spoke to us. She was most knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the plans for extensions to the Terminal and planning for the future taking natural disasters into consideration. The situation around International Airport status was discussed and also the economics of servicing our regional centres. She is retiring soon and will leave the business in good heart.

Our first meeting in the Nelson Golf Club was well supported with a total of 118 people attending, this included 12 visitors. With plenty of space and wonderful views, the morning went very well with many compliments about the new venue.

Jill Dickinson, chairperson

<p>U3A NELSON WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS: Colin Bell & Barbara Groenwegen</p>
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‘CHOICE NOT CHANCE

DETERMINES YOUR DESTINY’

NEW GROUPS

Australia

Of all the many and varied aspects of Australia and Australian life we will begin with the tourism drawcards. The group will meet monthly on a Wednesday afternoon at 2pm. **Contact Jill, 5444679 or email study@u3anelson.org.nz**

Strong Women

We know about the great men in history but what about the greater and stronger women who stood behind them. They were often the power behind the throne. Who were they, what did they achieve and how did they do it? Join us exploring the world of unsung strong women who changed the course of history. **Contact Barbara, Ph 5449793 or email study@u3anelson.org.nz**

Ngairé Birch, announces that she will be replacing her current *How We Built Britain* and *Pictures of Britain*, with two new groups; *Shakespeare in Italy* and *Walking Through History* with Tony Robinson. *Shakespeare in Italy* starts on the 14th April. Enrol now! **5477274 or study@u3anelson.org.nz**

From the Study Group Coordinator

Would you like to share some of your skills or knowledge? Or do you have a hidden desire to learn something new? A language, science, a particular passion, an unusual skill; whatever! We need members to trigger new groups of like-minded members. Or you can offer a learning opportunity, perhaps just one or two sessions where you share your reflections, knowledge, or skills from your working life or from a lifelong interest.

I'll be sending out a message to all convenors asking for expectations for groups in the near future. So please ensure the convenor of your group(s) know your intentions. I would prefer to have these details in good time as the office will be closed over January!

Thanks for an invigorating year, Kay

Groups that have vacancies now

Astronomy
Australia
Classical Music Appreciation
Electrical Knitting
Exploring Nelson Walking Group 2
First Aid
Hands in the Garden
Irish Group
Scrabble
Shakespeare in Italy
Strong Women
Theatre and Film
Visual Arts
Walking Through History with Tony
Robinson
Write Your Life 5

There are details about these groups on our website u3anelson.org.nz

If you are interested in joining any of these groups, or would like to generate a new group or learning situation, please phone 03 5477274 or email study@u3anelson.org.nz

STORIES FROM THE GROUPS

Exploring Te Reo and Tikanga Maori Nga mihi o te whanau U3A.

New to U3A, I was apprehensive at joining this group, but needn't have worried. All relative beginners but with everyone contributing, it's a fun learning environment.

Our key homework resource is the free on-line series Toku Reo (My Language). This provides us with kōpu hou (new vocab), listening exercises, grammar etc. We consolidate our understanding at meetings using songs, cue cards, pictures, card games etc. There's a lot of interaction. After just three meetings we're becoming more fluent with vowel sounds and can make simple greetings, count, and sing the national anthem in te reo Maori. A great start!

Thanks to Ann Mitchell who convenes and hosts the group, as well as to Lynne Barron, Kay Hunter and all other members who have contributed resources.

Colin Bell, group participant

Electrical Knitting

As this is a new group without any formal plan, other than to make this fairly dry subject a bit more comprehensible, we have roamed freely over many areas, some with only a tenuous link to where we started but this has made it all the more interesting.

So, we have looked at the various bits of hardware, researched some of the technical vocabulary, done some diagrams of how are systems connect together and begun to understand how it all works. We learnt that with WiFi and Bluetooth physical connections are not always necessary which in turn lead us to looking at handheld devices and Apple TV. Members have invited us into their homes, and even on occasion, to peer behind their TVs, and perhaps the most important thing we have found is that every system is different.

Roger Haynes, group convenor

Exploring Music and Why it Moves Us

After three years of searching the answer to this mysterious question, we continue to enjoy the hunt! Recently we've been exploring the work of Howard Goodall - musician, composer, BBC TV presenter extraordinaire!

One of his TV series, '20th Century Greats' includes a session on the music of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. Goodall provides an erudite, compelling explanation of how their music changed the face of so-called pop music, by reclaiming music from the baroque period. Bypassing the avant-garde styles of the 20th Century composers, they instead utilised the techniques of great baroque composers such as Mozart and Haydn.

Adding their own blend of musical creativeness, Lennon & McCartney produced a new sound which proved fresh,

exciting and enduring. To quote Howard Goodall, “they changed the sound, the form, ambition, scale and the language of popular music.”

Several Lennon and McCartney numbers have hit the Top of Our Pops list – Imagine, Penny Lane, Yesterday, Eleanor Rigby, Hey Jude, Let it Be, Here Comes the Sun. But the undisputed highlight of the day was to learn that one in our midst, Frances, grew up in Liverpool, attended the same school as John Lennon, knew the fab four mop tops, heard and saw them perform at The Cavern Club. To quote John Lennon, “I’m Just a Jealous Guy!”

Kay Hunter, group convenor

Political Philosophy

This week we continued with our study of political philosophers some of whom Geoffrey Palmer reminded us of last meeting, e.g. Plato and Aristotle, and more recently with Locke and Hobbes of the Leviathan. Today we listened to a Yale lecture by Prof Schapiro on Jeremy Bentham of the 'beneficent calculus.' This is a theory that is still spoken of in our society and system, but still does not sufficiently address the minorities and indigent peoples around the Western world.

We enjoyed a spirited but thoughtful discussion on Bentham's words and meaning, and how that is understood today. Even concepts such as voting seemed to be largely unknown until the end of the 16th Century. We concluded that acceptance of the decision by the minority is as important as the triumph of the majority. It is one thing to understand the new theories of those earlier times. It will be another thing to understand how they gave effect to it.

Bentham was writing after the American Revolution, about the time of the excesses of the French Revolution, and before the majority of electoral reforms of 19th Century. By 1832, about one in ten adults could vote in England. New Zealand was

the first country to have universal voting, adult men and women by 1893.

Lindsay Hunter, group convenor

Up the Garden Path

The group visited **Fairholme** in Golden Bay on 19th November:

Thomas Baigent was a pioneer saw miller and farmer who became one of the largest district employers and a well known figure in local affairs. He established his mill in 1873 amidst the totara forests of East Takaka, built a house bordering Gorge Creek and overlooking the valley which he named “Fairholme”. East Takaka Road was the main coach road and Fairholme was a Cobb and Co stop off. The stables, bakery with brick oven intact, and stone buttery where meat was stored are still in place at the rear of the house, plus a remnant of the original East Takaka Post Office based in Fairholme between 1903 and 1916. This was operated by Ella and Eva Baigent, neither of whom ever married and lived their entire lives at Fairholme. Ella died at age 92 and Eve at 105 years. [Excerpt from Fairholme “A Short History”].

It is now Fairholme Gallery and runs exhibitions and workshops eg Photographs by Murray Hedwig till 5th December and 25 Women Artists from Golden Bay 13th December till 15th February 2014.

Murray 021 533136

Congratulations to our published author

Enkidu - by Jenefer Haig

"I began this book in the nineteen fifties, before I read the ancient Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh (translated from clay tablets inscribed about 3,000 years ago). I was captivated by the character of Enkidu, the wild man from the hills - how would he get on in our day?

To picture that, I changed the location of the book to Dartmoor in Devon, and made Poor Old Phil into Enkidu's first incarnation, whose descendants move from Canada to Croatia, and eventually to New Zealand, where the doomed line finishes, as the modern world doesn't suit them at all.

But something of their influence remains: reverence for Nature and care for all living creatures. these values persist in some people, and may enable them to survive the crash of the world's economic systems, and rediscover a saner way of living, and values other than money. It is with this hope that I, now eighty-two years old, and failing, made the effort to finish this book."

Jenefer Haig, Nelson - copies available
\$20 from the author
phone 548-7791

Jenefer is a member of the U3A Nelson
Political Science study group.

FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

1. **CONNECT** Talk and listen, be there, feel connected.
2. **GIVE** Your time, your words, your presence
3. **TAKE NOTICE** Remember the simple things that give your joy.
4. **KEEP LEARNING** Embrace new experiences, see opportunities, and surprise yourself.
5. **BE ACTIVE** Do what you can, enjoy what you do, move your mood.

MINUTES OF U3A COMMITTEE MEETING on 1st OCTOBER 2014 at 10 am at Paul Lunberg's home at 414 Wakefield Quay, Nelson.

PRESENT Jill Dickinson, Paul Lunberg, Heather Clendon, Jill Ford, Peter Sutton.

APOLOGIES were received from the other five members of the committee.

Jill Dickinson confirmed that the quorum for the committee were present.

MINUTES. Peter moved and Jill D seconded, that the Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 23rd July 2014 as read be confirmed. Carried.

Arising from Minutes:

Peter reported on the visits to the Westpac Bank by himself and Noeline and by himself and Kay. He said that new Government Regulations against Money Laundering required further details and that the change of account name to U3A Nelson and opening of a savings account should be confirmed by a visit of Kay, Noeline and himself to the bank on the 16th of Oct.

REPORTS. Finance. A report from Noeline showed the bank balance as at \$3755.37 after the payment of \$1230.50 for changes to the data base and normal receipts and payments. Moved by Paul, seconded by Peter, that a report be sought from Lindsay of the changes made and the further development required for the website and database. Carried.

Study Groups. Kay's report listed the existing study groups and reported on recent developments and closures of study groups. She requested a brief opportunity to report to the October General Meeting on this.

City Council Meeting. Jill D and Peter attended a meeting in the City Council Chambers on 26th September called to discuss the Council planned policy statement on "Older Citizens" for 2015 to 2025.

ITEMS.

Charities Alert. Jill stated that New Reporting Standards were being adopted for 2015 and that she would be attending a Seminar on 16 October in Nelson.

Letters from John Veitch and a group in Auckland proposing the setting-up of a national U3A website were discussed. It was decided to seek a report and guidance on this topic from Lindsay for the next meeting.

Membership: Kay proposed, Jill D seconded, that the following be decided by the committee for this year and ratification sought at the 2015 AGM: "Annual subscriptions are due by the 30th April each year. If a new member becomes financial between 1st January and

30th April in any year, they are deemed paid until the end of the following financial year”
Carried.

Voting decisions: Jill D proposed, Paul seconded, that if any motion at a General or Annual Meeting results in a split vote (ie a tie), the status quo shall prevail. Carried by the committee and to be ratified by the 2015 AGM.

Venue Change. The committee ratified the decision of the sub-committee investigating change of venue that the October and February General Meetings be held in the Nelson Golf Club rooms and a decision on future venues be taken by the committee after that. It was agreed that help would be organised to assist members to and into the new venue.

Health Seminar. It was agreed that Jill D and Peter should attend this in the Elma Turner library on Friday afternoon to offer U3A as an avenue for lifelong learning to senior citizens.

General Meetings title? Barbara had expressed the view that this title was very prosaic and unattractive, she suggested several alternatives. The matter was discussed but the committee could not agree on a suitable alternative.

U3A Website Name: In view of the forthcoming change in website names, it was agreed that Lindsay be asked to ensure that the website name is safeguarded.

Microsoft and U3A. Paul explained that in the past Microsoft had offered discounts to educational bodies and suggested that this be investigated. It was agreed that he discuss the matter with Lindsay.

Westpac Accounts. The new regulations require someone to be named as “the owner” of the accounts. After discussion it was agreed that the treasurer of U3A Nelson be named the “owner”.

Council’s Stoke Consultation. Peter reported that he attended one of the report-back meetings in Stoke. U3A’s suggestion of the development of a community centre in Stoke with suitable facilities of small and large meetings with appropriate facilities was central to the recommendations of the consultations and was strongly supported by the Council’s Chief Executive.

Jill D Requested – group contributions to the newsletter are required; -that committee members replying to questions on the email, do so to the person concerned, rather than the whole committee.

AOB

Paul moved, Peter seconded *pro forma*, that the next time changes are made to the database, provision be made to download spreadsheet compatible files because the present text files are useless for this purpose. Carried.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEEETING – 26th November at Jill D’s home.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING – 25th February 2015 in the Nelson Golf Club rooms in Bolt Road, Stoke

Peter Sutton, secretary