



U3A WARKWORTH - *Learning is forever*

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Newsletter August - September 2006, #4

From the President:

After a somewhat bleak and cold early winter it is something of a relief to see the sunshine again especially when at the same time we have reports of snow to low levels and storms in the south of the country. On Saturday the garden centre at Silverdale was just abuzz with shoppers pushing cartloads of colourful plants, convinced perhaps that the winter is over. Well, it looked like it on Saturday.

I hope that you are all looking forward to the mid-winter lunch on the 14th August and I apologise in advance for my absence. (How come I always miss out on the free lunches?) The Committee has put a lot of time and thought into the organisation of this function and the wicked thought occurred to me when it

was being discussed in Committee, that it was perhaps easier to arrange the traditional Christmas lunch!

I can quite see that this year, like so many others, is going to fly by once the spring really does appear and that brings me to the subject of the Committee for next year. Three long-serving committee members, including myself, are retiring at the AGM in February and their places will have to be filled if the club is to continue. Please give this some thought and if you think you could help, tell me or any member of the present committee. We would love to hear from you.

Iris Mee
President

Editor's Desk:

Thanks again to the three group members who have sent in very informative items on their Group's past and future activities. Many members have commented to me how much they enjoy reading these pieces.

If you were at the last General Meeting you will recall that Veronica Harris talked briefly about the issue of poor Public Radio reception in many local areas. Of particular concern was Concert FM reception which is very important to many of our music-loving members both

during the day and often in the wee hours of the morning.

Veronica and I have done quite a bit of research on the problem and happily can now report various solutions.

The basic problem is that FM radio transmission is best when there is a direct line-of-sight between transmitter and receiver (your radio). The transmitter serving this area is sited on Sky Tower, broadcasting on the following frequencies: Concert FM: 92.6 (FM) and National Radio: 101.4(FM) or 756(AM)

That means if you can see Sky Tower (Leigh area) you will get great radio reception, but if you live in an area with hills blocking the radio signal, your reception will be anywhere between very poor to mediocre. Weather conditions can also affect the signal. In an ideal world we would have a local transmitter

situated on a high point to serve the 'shadow areas' between the Whangarei transmitter and Auckland...dream on! AM transmission (National Radio AM 756) may be better in some areas, as this mode of transmission is not so badly affected by intervening obstructions, but the clarity is not as good as ideal FM.

Suggested solutions:

- If you subscribe to Sky TV, Concert FM and National Radio are available as a sound channel through your TV. This of course has the disadvantage of only being available through your TV set and of costs \$? per month.
- TVNZ will be introducing free-to-air Digital Satellite broadcasts at the end of this year. I am reliably informed that the radio channels may not be available initially, but should follow. You will need a satellite dish installed and to purchase a 'set-top box' to connect to this option (like Sky). You will be able to use a Sky dish if you have one. The required equipment will be about \$300, but unlike Sky there will be no on-going monthly subscriptions. So if you are considering a new Sky installation, it may be worth waiting a few months.
- Option three is to connect a "TV Signal Splitter" to your TV aerial. (This is the option we have chosen for our house. We now have excellent FM reception, which was previously very poor.)
 - **Self-install as follows (for handymen/women):**
 - Buy a 2-way "TV Signal Splitter" (1 signal in and 2 signals out-75 ohm)" from Dick Smith (or others) for about \$12 to \$15.
 - Connect the single "In" plug on the "splitter" via a standard TV aerial cable to the TV wall socket.
 - Connect one of the 2 "Out" plugs on the "splitter" to your TV with a standard TV cable.
 - Connect the other "Out" plug on the "splitter" to the 75 ohm FM aerial connection on your radio. The connection on your radio may vary.
 - **Professional Installer for the not-so-handymen/women:** Gavin Brough of Aerial services Warkworth. Ph: 425-5495. (He did ours at a very reasonable price).
- For a True Kiwi 'Number 8 Wire Solution' try connecting your radio aerial socket with a length of insulated wire (not number 8) to a nearby aluminium window frame. This often works well (particularly with AM stations).
- The final solution, (if you have a broadband internet connection with an adequate monthly data allocation) is to "Stream" the stations on your computer. Refer to the following web site: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/listen> for more information.

If you are not interested in this issue, I'm sorry that I have been so long winded, but hopefully the information will help resolve radio reception problems of many members who can now look forward to experiencing clear, static-free, stereo radio. I will be away in September, so if you have any items for the next newsletter, please send them to Ken Diprose (Ph: 422-0533 – email: ks.diprose@xtra.co.nz) who has kindly offered to stand in for me.

Alan Spicer. editor@u3a.co.nz

AUGUST LUNCH MEETING



Monday 14th August, 11:30 am at the New Masonic Hall

DUTY GROUP– Current Affairs Group
CONVENOR: - Elaine Ellison-Smith Ph: 425-9138

Our August meeting will be entirely a social affair, when we can enjoy the company of fellow members over a delicious - and free - lunch.

There will be mulled wine and juice available from 11.30am, and a finger food lunch will follow soon after noon with tea and coffee to round off the meal.

There are a few spaces still available, so if you wish to attend and haven't already 'signed up', please contact Lorna Laxon Phone 4227840 or Elaine Ellison-Smith phone 4259138 as soon as possible.

Because of the parking shortage in town you may like to arrange a 'car pool' with other members in your area and start the party as soon as you leave home!

The programme will be as follows:-

10:45 a.m.	Duty Group arrives to set up
11:30 a.m.	Meet, Mix and Mulled Wine
12 noon	Lunch, followed by tea and coffee

Enjoy!

See you there!

GROUP NEWS

Note from Linda Moore - Groups Co-ordinator:

Please, Please, Please contact your hostess/host if you cannot attend a regular Study Group meeting. People get justifiably upset at over-catering!
I will be away in September, so will ring in mid-August asking for the October-November meeting details.

Reminder about Group News submissions for future newsletters:

September Newsletter: Film Appreciation, Jazz Listening.

November Newsletter: Writing Stories of your life group. Food For Thought.

Play Reading Group:

This is the third year that the Play Reading group has been operational and membership has changed very little except that we have welcomed three new readers in the past few months.

Our usual format is for the leader to present to the group the selected playwright and his/her times and then for the group to read a play with members taking pre-selected roles.

Advance notice, giving the readers a chance to get into their roles and read them aloud, improves greatly the quality of the reading at the meetings.

We began the year in February by reading David Williamson's *Face to Face* and were so delighted with the in-depth look at the restorative justice process that we determined to read another of his plays on the same subject involving a

completely different set of people and circumstances. Both *Face to Face* and *Charitable Intent* were thought-provoking plays and at one meeting, we were extremely fortunate to have as our guest Chris Rowe, a locally-based professional mediator who was able to confirm the authenticity of the process described in the play and expand on it.

Between the David Williamson plays we had some light relief reading some one act comedies which everyone welcomed. *Twelfth Night* came alive for us at the June and July readings and it seems that reading the plays aloud with different people taking different roles is so much better than reading to oneself. It runs a close second to actually attending a performance in the theatre!

Submitted by Iris Mee

U3A N.Z. Art Appreciation Group:

On June 14th, 16 members of the U3A NZ Art Appreciation group travelled to the Auckland Museum, to view part of the Museum's Pacific Art Collection, and in particular early Maori art forms. After inspecting the Museum's café and reviving on coffee, we were met by Dr. Roger Neich. Dr Neich is Curator of

Ethnology at the Museum and Professor of Anthology at the University of Auckland. He has written several books on Maori Figurative painting and Pacific Tapa designs, was a research fellow at Berkeley (USA) and was co-curator of the Maori exhibition at the British Museum in 1996. As well as being an

expert in his field he also proved to be a friendly, approachable person who identified with his audience as well as his subject.

He pointed out the diverse styles of Maori carvings from different areas and different times. Of particular interest was the Kaitaia carving, a lintel, which was found buried in Lake Tangonge near Kaitaia in 1920 but was carbon dated to about 1300 AD, (an earlier date than many believed Maori had colonised New Zealand). Though the central figure was similar to many in later carvings, the carving generally was more like those seen in tropical Polynesian works.

The Te Kaha Carvings, one of the finest of known stone tool carvings, was also selected as being of special interest. The carving had decorated a large storehouse which was built about 1780 at Maraenui

in the eastern Bay of Plenty. However, about 1820 it had been dismantled and the carved lintel was hidden in a sea cave near Te Kaha to protect it from the musket raids of Northern Ngapuhi.

At the end of Dr Neich's tour we were left to our own devices at the Museum for a couple of hours. Most fitted in lunch as well as taking the opportunity to look at various other exhibits. There was large group of children visiting the museum with teachers and parent supervisors and at one stage while I was looking at the Egyptian mummy exhibit a teacher accompanied by two little girls, approximately 6 years old, came along. "Have you ever seen a mummy?" he asked them. They looked uncertainly at me and then hesitantly said, "I think so"!!

Submitted by Gloria Swanson

Mediaeval History Group:

Originally we had one History Group but when it became too large we separated into Ancient History and Mediaeval History. For some years past the latter group has been studying the life and times of mediaeval England, and also in France. Feeling we had covered it well we decided to move on to the Tudor era which followed. It is a fascinating age to study, with so many remarkable people living then.

Rosemary Shankland told us much that was interesting of life under the Tudors and how they lived and behaved. When Henry VIII ascended the throne he was accounted the most handsome and accomplished prince of his time, both in learning and athletics and England was a wealthy country. If you were rich then you flaunted your wealth in every way possible. Palaces and great houses were built and lavishly furnished and

hung with exquisite tapestries, but it was a different life if you were poor.

Anne Todd told us about Sir Walter Raleigh, fondly loved by Queen Elizabeth, adventurer and writer of poetry – Anne read one of his poems to us. But favoured as he was by his Queen, he yet deceived her, and was sent to the Tower. He was eventually released and ordered to lead an expedition to South America to find treasure. Sadly it failed and on his return he met the fate of many others of his time, and was executed.

Chris Hoogerwerf told us about "The Batavia", a merchant ship, one of the greatest vessels of that time, and we learnt of the appalling hardships in which the crew had to survive. On her maiden voyage in 1629, with 341 passengers and crew on board, she perished off the coast of Western Australia. In 1985 reconstruction of the vessel was begun

and one can visit the building site to see a fascinating view of traditional Dutch shipbuilding of the time and can visit rigging and wood-carving workshops.

Helen Phibbs dipped into the beginning of the Stewart period to tell us much of interest about James I, who seems to have had a rather bad press through the ages. He believed in the divine right of kings and was therefore above the law. He had a rather troubled reign during which Mr Guy Fawkes and Co. tried to blow up Parliament, and the discontented Pilgrim Fathers sailed to America in "Mayflower". James wrote a treatise on the evils of smoking, which he hated, so in that respect was a man before his time!

My choice of Tudors was Queen Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, who was a devout Catholic. England had become a Protestant state after the Reformation so when Mary ascended the throne it was her fervent desire to bring back Catholicism. To aid her cause she married Phillip, heir to the Spanish crown, but in less than two years he returned to Spain. In the succeeding years, as hundreds and hundreds of people were burnt at the stake for refusing to become Catholic, she earned the unhappy title of "Bloody Mary". She died, aged 42, after a life which had been for her just one long tragedy.

Submitted by Joan Earl-Daniels

Why not visit a new Group? – You may become a convert.

Diary notes:

1. **Next General Meeting 9th October**
2. **Deadline for items in the October Newsletter is 20th September.**

If you would like your next newsletter sent by email please send a blank message to:
yes@u3a.co.nz

Visit your Web Site: www.u3a.co.nz

AUGUST LUNCH MEETING



Monday 14th August, 11:30 am at the New Masonic Hall

U3A WARKWORTH STUDY GROUP MEETINGS

STUDY GROUP	Convenor	Phone	Time	Date	Aug-06	Date	Sep-06
Ancient History	Jim McKinlay	422-9063	9:30 a.m.	4th	"The Vikings" - Jim McKinlay 57 Willjames Ave, Algies Bay	1st	Auckland War Memorial Museum Visit "Vikings"
Book Talk	Lorraine Edwards	422-7071	10:00 a.m.	1st	209 Sharp Rd	5th	133 Mahurangi East Rd, Snells Beach
Current Affairs	Elaine Ellison-Smith	425-9138	2:00 p.m.	17th	6 Amanda Lane, Snells Beach	21st	Details TBA
Film Appreciation	Beulah Heaven	425-6545	Varies	28th	Please phone Beulah for informatiom - 425 6545	25th	Please phone Beulah for informatiom - 425 6545
Food For Thought	Anthea McKergow	422-6219	1:30 p.m.	23rd	"Rice" - Colleen Kangwai 1 Hibiscus Ave, Snells Beach	27th	"The best & worst of English Cooking" Daphne&Monica 16b Waimana Place, Point Wells
Jazz Listening	Graham Ryburn	425-0536	2:00 p.m.	17th	DVD presentation "Michail Buble in Concert" at Val Couling's: 25 Gordon Craig Place, Algies	21st	"History of Jazz from Dixieland to Swing" - Ted Hatton 8 Torea Rd, Matakana. Ph: 422-7808
Mediaeval History	Chris Hoogerwerf	425-5022	9:30 a.m.	18th	"Lucretia Borgia" - Rita R. 57 Victoria St, Warkworth	15th	"Rembrandt" - Chris Hoogerwerf 1 Rivendell Place, Warkworth
Music Appreciation	Valma Gidman	425-9869	1:30 p.m.	3rd	"In the Orchestra Pit" 14 Coquet St, Warkworth	7th	"Crispin Caldicott, his musical career" 14 Coquet St, Warkworth
NZ Art Appreciation	Berris Spicer	422-2685	10:00 a.m.	2nd	"Black and White" 8 Harbour View Rd, Point Wells	6th	Hellensville Art Studios Tour Organisers - Colleen Kangwai & Kay Cunningham
Play Reading	Iris Mee & Lorna Laxton	425-7934 422-7840	9:30 a.m.	8th	"The Barretts of Wimpole St" - Anne Todd 9 Hexham St, Warkworth	12th	"The Barretts of Wimpole St" 19 Panui Place, Snells Beach
Poetry Reading	Yolande Carter	425-5988	1:30 p.m.	16th	"Byron's House" - BYO Byron peoms: Joan E-D 19 Panui Place, Snells Beach	20th	BYO Spring Poems Venue TBA
Writing Stories of Your Life	Joan Romano	425-5517	1:30 p.m.	14th	35 Alnwick St, Warkworth	11th	Venue TBA