



U3A WARKWORTH ~

Learning is forever

P O Box 520 Warkworth 0910

NEWSLETTER

The Godwits Return Oct ~ Nov 2011

Greetings from our President – Beulah Heaven

How long is it now, that I've been telling myself and anyone who'd listen, that it's Spring? Certainly it seems to have been a very long time. This year I went away in April before the northern summer had got started so I missed out there, and from May it seems to have been far too dark and wintry here for too jolly long. I'm no longer of an age where I look forward to the social scene of the winter months - in fact the most exciting thing that's happened to me this winter is that I've been introduced to Codecracker. That, and of course the arrival of Paddle who seems to double her size overnight, every night.

Having a new puppy at my age seems slightly insane, but such a joy. Very similar to what I recall about new babies being introduced to the house. There's that same feeling of incredulity at having been entrusted to look after something so precious. Is she hungry, tired, unhappy? Certainly there is the same concentration on the bladder and bowels. And I did tell myself that I was looking forward to all the exercise it would entail. And I had definitely underestimated the broken nights. This afternoon after I fed my three hens, I put three superb eggs on the floor just inside the door while I dried Paddle's feet. When I went to pick up my eggs there were only two. Oops!! I followed Paddle and sure enough she had one of my Minorca's eggs in her mouth. But, blessings on her Labrador mum, Paddle released the egg without a crack!

But now that I'm accustomed to Spring not having arrived, I realize that Nature knows its stuff. There are big fat buds on the wisteria and the roses, and the snails are holding their rallies by the light of the moon. The frequent rains are now genuine spring showers and daylight saving will be here in a week. Yay!!!

One thing to look forward to this summer is the commencement of our new Petanque Group. Watch this space. When daylight saving starts we'll arrange a time that will suit the Salty Dog Hosts and also give our members the opportunity to have a coffee or a glass of something. Register your interest with Iris Mee. Previous experience is not essential.

We have an interesting programme lined up for you at our general meeting on the 10th October - I look forward to seeing you there.

All good wishes

Beulah

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### **SPEAKERS AT OUR LAST**

### **MEETING**

Barry Ferguson now lives in Warkworth after living 35 years in New York where he was a floral designer. He designed the Christmas decorations for the New York Botanical Gardens, was involved in the Newport Flower Show, created banners for the New York library and spent over 20 years doing flowers for the Winter Antique Show as well as creating flower arrangements for six film sets and numerous weddings.

Barry presented a sophisticated slide show about his travels from New Zealand to New York. His interest in flowers, design, colour, music and literature were all emphasized in the selection of places and items he shared with the members of U3A. His eye for detail was enjoyed by all as we saw the biggest carpet made in the world for the Shah of Persia's palace in Iran, the detailed sculptures and three dimensional carvings on the sides of temples and the tiled reliefs on many tombs. In Dubrovnik, a hand rail on a medieval building was supported by the actual shape of hands, and in Prague there were bronze sculptures of a boy sitting on a rail and in another area a mother with her child at her feet.

Looking at these countries through Barry's eyes added to the pleasure of the talk because people were able to gain an insight not only into the beauty of different cultures but to enjoy the plants and flowers that grow in the different regions. Barry's love of flowers added to the pleasure of the journey.

Mona Townson

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Frances Sullivan gave an informative and heartfelt speech on the Oxfam Walk which was held earlier this year.

In March teams from all over the world descended on Lake Taupo to attempt to walk 100 km in 36 hours, without any breaks. Frances was there for the first time to help support two of her daughters and their partners and to help raise money for Oxfam.

Each team entered was required to raise \$2,000 and Frances told us how she was so proud when one of her daughters managed to walk the whole way.

Over 1,000, mostly young women, entered the walk, backed up by pain killers, drinks and food - dished out along the route.

We all felt very proud, along with Frances, when she told us that New Zealand had the most volunteers participating in the walk.

Marilyn Convery

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### TRAVELLERS' TALES

*Wherever you go take happiness with you ~ Sri Chinmoy*

why Africa?

**W**e were booked into six luxury game lodges in Kenya and Tanzania in the World Heritage Parks of the Serengeti, Ambosili and Meru, with flights between. This would surely be the most comfortable and interesting way to see these areas.



**O**ur first lodge was perched on top of a spectacular kopje (rock) where you could view the vastness of the landscape and marvel at the great scene – a vista of rolling countryside sprinkled with African thorn bushes with no fences or man-made barriers.

**K**enya has the most extraordinary wildlife that you see nowhere else - the remarkable reticulated giraffe, grevy zebra, long-necked gerenuk, black-maned lion, great herds of elephant, cheetah and, best of all, the elusive leopard. And yes, the leopard was up a tree eating meat!

In Tanzania we were hoping to see Africa's annual migration when thousands of wildebeest, zebra and other herbivores cross the Grumeti River, risking their lives from the waiting crocodiles. Here we camped under the crest of the Kuke Hills. Below, the lions lived around the kopjes with other predators. Here there are huge red termite mounds, beautiful baobab trees and acacia trees below. This is a photographer's paradise!

Our early morning drives with breakfasts cooked in the open, and the evening drives with sundowners were just magical. We were privileged to have a very smart guide who found the pied colobus monkeys (found nowhere else in the world) but horrified to witness a poor wildebeest killed by those frightening crocodiles. We saw a lion "kill" - the mother kills, father gorges himself and the mother and babies have what is left. Then in come the vultures.

Another lodge was on the banks of the Grumeti River. At night we heard the vulgar noises from the nearby hippos and the smashing of trees by the elephants and had the occasional visit of a hyrax into our tent. BUT when we OPENED our tent in the morning, there before us and only yards away, a great hippo stood!

Rose Sheat

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Christmas at the Chateau



We all know that Christmas in New Zealand is all about families and children, beaches and swimming, and loads and loads of presents.

Last Christmas with others who have never heard the patter of little feet and don't quite know what to do with unwanted gifts apart from popping them discreetly into the op shop box, I went down to the centre of the North Island to what is now known as the Bayview Chateau Tongariro.

I have known this hotel practically all my life and while it has aged, it has done so graciously while still managing to keep up to date with technology and the expectations of today's sophisticated travellers. Christmas Eve was fine but crispy cold and only the brave ventured out wrapped warmly in scarves and hats. But for those less bold, a great log fire was lit in the old library and sitting in front of it with a book and a cappuccino presented no problem at all. That night we had carols in the lounge before dinner lending a very traditional tone to the Festive Season.

And Christmas dinner? Well, it would be vulgar to talk about it, but it was superb

Iris Mee

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## GROUP REPORTS

### Music Appreciation



"Music should reveal as simply as possible the emotions of the heart"  
Rachmaninov.

Our group has had a wide variety of musical experiences this year, each member contributing something of his/her own experience and enthusiasm. We began the year with Mary Miller presenting a session on John Tavener's life and work, including his choral settings of William Blake's poems and his Song for Athene which was performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Valma Gidman gave us a most informative Brief History of Opera with particular emphasis on early opera and its subsequent development. "Air on a G String" by Val Strachan took us through a variety concert of composers, a soloist and a song title beginning with G, and music in the key of G. We began with Air on a G String by Bach and the concert included Gilbert and Sullivan and modern composers.

The life and music of Berlioz was presented by David Cross with some fascinating personal details about the composer and a memorable DVD of his music.

A personal experience of attending the Metropolitan Opera House in New York was given by Lorna Laxon. She had visited the Big Apple at Easter time especially to attend an opera there – Il Trovatore was her choice, and she described the history of both the Met and this opera in her presentation. The letter S was the theme for Colleen Kangwai's afternoon which included a number of composers with the initial S and also the opportunity to examine and try some musical instruments beginning with S – the Sansa or thumb piano and a shaker - and to listen to steel drums and saxophone music.

A BBC documentary on Rachmaninov presented by Ernie Gidman was a moving learning experience with Rachmaninov's music accompanying film clips of great European events of the time as well as short movies giving us an insight into the composer's personal family life.

Mary Miller

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History of Medicine



We have decided to have a wide view of developments and changes in medicine. So far we have heard about changes in anaesthetics and GP work, nursing during the war, the devastating effects of the waves of plague, social consequences for leprosy sufferers and the development of penicillin. Our last meeting was watching a DVD on the history of brain surgery. Not everyone in the group has experience in medical matters which is great, as they bring their own views to the discussions.

Sue Stevenson

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So far this year we have had 6 topics - half of these were on NZ Poetry. The first was Maori poetry, covering a wide range from early waiata and chants to translated poems, and poems written in English by Maori poets on modern topics. Next was Vincent O'Sullivan, who has won two Montana Awards. The third topic was NZ Landscape poetry; these poems were printed alongside beautiful photos of NZ scenery. The book is called "The Nature of Things" with photos by Craig Potton and is available from the library.

Other topics were Robert Lowell's thoughtful poetry set in the USA.

A Nobel Prize winner from Chile, Gabriela Mistral, was especially interesting, as she reflected her life experiences in her poems.

A topic called Answering Back were a set of "linked poems" - with contemporary poets writing a poem in response to a well-known poem - this produced some really interesting discussion.

Several of us attended the NZ Poetry Day at the Mahurangi Library where we could participate or just listen to people's favourite poems.

Our group is small in number and during the year one of our members left to join another group. (Thank you for hosting a meeting before you left Linda) and we welcomed a new member, Maggie Power. We do need new members so if you want an opportunity to have poetry "explained" by a delightful group of people, please come along and see how you can benefit by group discussion.

Colleen Kangwai

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BOOKS REVIEWED

Mennonite in a Little Black Dress by Rhoda Janzen is a witty, heartwarming story which Rhoda tells of going home to mum and the Mennonite community, after her beloved husband of 26 years has left her for a guy called Bob that he met on 'gay.com'.

They warmly welcome her home with offbeat advice, their traditional ways, different foods and much love despite her lapse into atheism. The Mennonite ways and habits are woven throughout

the story and told with wry good humour and wit. She sees the irony of her situation and uses anecdote and incidents to portray their ideas on food, thrift, their pragmatism, but always told with love and understanding. She writes beautifully.

Initially I picked the book because my daughter in Canada is married to a Mennonite, and yes, it did sound familiar, but mostly it made me smile.

Of a more serious nature, but well worth reading and very interesting, is *The Brain that Changes Itself* by Norman Doidge M.D, published 2008 revised 2010.

This book gives an in depth look at recent research and the successful treatments through exercise which are currently being tested and put into practice. The exercises both physical and mental are being used to heal or help people who have had strokes, Parkinsons and most other forms of brain damage and even old age!. This is a very positive insightful book which must give hope to brain impaired people.

Ina Shaw

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## HAPPENINGS

**The Warkworth Music Society** Concert at Mahurangi College Hall.  
Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October at 4.30pm - Auckland Youth Orchestra playing "Arabian Nights".

**Daylight Saving** commences on the 25<sup>th</sup> September – clocks leap forward one hour.

**Warkworth Drama Group** production "The Verdict" by Bruce Mason in November – watch for advertising.

**The Electoral Office Community Liaison Officer** Lorraine Curel will present an informative talk on the issues surrounding MMP prior to the Referendum on the 26<sup>th</sup> November. This is a free presentation to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30am in the Betty Paxton Room, Mahurangi Community Centre, Snells Beach.

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STUDY GROUP	Convenor	Phone	Time	Date	October	Date	November
Ancient History	Jim McKinlay	422-9063	9:30 a.m.	7 th	Bits and Pieces 8 Bennett St Warkworth	4 th	More Bits and Pieces 15 Walton St Warkworth
Book Talk	Hilary Weymouth	422-6683	10:00 a.m.	4 th	209 Sharp Rd Matakana	1 st	1001 Sands Sandspit
Current Affairs	Val Strachan	425-9497	2:00 p.m.	20 th	32A Rivendell Pl Warkworth	17 th	14 Coquet St Warkworth
Food For Thought	Diane Parton	422-0166	1:30 p.m.	26 th	Visit to the Puhoi Cheese Factory (to be confirmed)	23 rd	Themed Luncheon TBA
Jazz Listening	Val Couling	425-5766	2:00 p.m.	17 th	Bring a CD of your choice 1001 Sandspit Rd Sandspit	28 th	Note Date! Dinner 199 Omaha Rd (enter from left)
Local History	Anthea McKergow	422-6219	10:00 a.m.	25 th	Education in Warkworth area Warkworth Museum	22 nd	TBA TBA
History	Chris Hoogerwerf	425-5022	9:30 a.m.	21 st	Martin Luther 59 McCallum Drive Sandspit	18 th	Trivia 38 Kawau V Beach
Music Appreciation	Mary Miller	425-6301	1:30 p.m.	6 th	The Music of Prague 40 Willjames Ave Algies Bay	3 rd	Faithfully Me 4 Mariners C Algies Bay
Art Appreciation	Iris Mee	425-7934	10:00 a.m.	5 th	Printing v Photocopying Kowhai Arts Centre A & P Showground	2 nd	Abstract Art Tatham Rd Leigh
Play Reading	Margaret Krey	422-6407	9:30 a.m.	11 th	Pygmalion 3 Shipwright Pl Warkworth	8 th	Pygmalion 3 mason Hg Warkworth
Poetry Reading	Colleen Kangwai	425-4333	1:30 p.m.	19 th	Environmental Poems Whangateau Rugby Pavilion	16 th	Scottish Po 609 Woodco warkworth
History of Medicine	Sue Stevenson	422-0585	2pm	13 th	Medicine of Ancient Egypt	10 th	History of M Fiji

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