



*Learning is forever*

**WARKWORTH**

**Bi-monthly Bulletin — September 2020**

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

U3A is about lifelong learning and this year has certainly been an opportunity for learning a great deal. The two meetings we have managed to hold have been very valuable. The one on Macular Degeneration encouraged us to keep up with our optometry appointments and possibly saved the vision of some. The scientific presentation on Climate Change: a Sustainable Future gave us important up-to-the-minute information and prompted us to give serious consideration to the future of our world and the part we must play. It is great to have Emeritus Professor Ralph Cooney in our membership and as convener of a new interest group. Unfortunately two of our planned meetings had to be postponed, but we look forward to those in the future.

There have been other learning experiences during this pandemic. We have had to learn to live with uncertainty and to adapt to restrictions to travel and other activities. Many have had to face loss of a business or a reduction in income. Patience has been needed as the numbers of new Covid-19 cases occurring is monitored and we look forward to returning to 'normal'. We have been reminded about what is important in life – you don't need to think about what to wear or buy if you are not leaving your home. You care about family and friends, and our thoughts are especially with those who have family members who are in care or sick but cannot be visited. Many of us have family members overseas and are uncertain when we can be together again. Books become very important and sometimes re-reading an old book brings new insights and ideas. We have learned to use new technology, including means of communication and the government tracing app.

We have been horrified to learn of the way social media spread bullying, misinformation and conspiracy theories. Most people have behaved responsibly and depended on official information for the facts. Others have maliciously spread rumours and abusive comments about individuals.

I am reminded of the quotation attributed to Albert Einstein, "The difference between genius and stupidity is that there is a limit to genius".

May we all learn valuable lessons during this time, keep in touch with others and appreciate anew the beauty of our part of New Zealand.

Best wishes to all,  
Mary

### **DUTY GROUP ROSTER 2020**

**October 12th** Local History,  
Play Reading

The duty groups for the general meetings at the Totara Park venue should be there by 9.30am.

### **2020 GENERAL MEETING PLANNER**

December 14 A Christmas surprise!

The meeting will be held in both halls at Totara Park.

### **AUGUST MEETING TALK**

Here is a link to the talk by Ralph Clooney at the last meeting

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/122364272/with-new-tech-the-world-can-limit-warming-to-2c>

**GENERAL MEETING  
12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 10am**

**Dr Jonathan L. Lee FRAS, FBIPS**

‘Afghanistan, a cultural and historical journey’

Dr Lee is a British-born scholar and a New Zealand citizen. He is an authority on the history and cultures of Afghanistan and the surrounding region and Islam. He has published many academic works and for a wider reading public. William Dalrymple writes of Lee’s latest book “Afghanistan: A History from 1260 to the Present” (Reaktion Books, London, 2018) as “an epic achievement . . . which deserves to become the standard English-language history of Afghanistan”.

Dr Lee spent over 40 years living or travelling in Afghanistan, Northern Pakistan and Central Asia. He studied Persian in Kabul and was Fellow of the British Institute of Afghan Studies. During his time in Afghanistan (1975-1981) he and his family experienced coups and the Soviet invasion. After leaving Afghanistan in 1981 he did short term assignments in Pakistan and Central Asia, taught English part time and continued his research. From 1994 to 2001 he undertook numerous missions in Afghanistan and from 2003–2006 he and his wife, Kathy, lived in Afghanistan.

Jonathan has also done numerous consultancies for Aid and Development Agencies including Tear Fund New Zealand.

Jonathan has a doctorate from the University of Leeds in Religious Studies; is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, and a Fellow of the British Institute of Persian Studies.

Jonathan has 3 children by his first wife. In 2000 he married Kathy, a New Zealand midwife and aid worker. They moved to New Zealand in 2007 and live in Snells

Beach. Jonathan continues his research while Kathy is one of the local midwives.

**NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to our new members

Gwenda Cruickshank  
Michael and Lorraine Izzard  
Christine Jackson  
Stella Quinn  
James and Carol Ramage  
Colleen Soar  
Bruce and Sally Wilson  
Roger Williams  
Susie Kasza  
Jefferson Chapple  
Graham Campbell

who have joined since 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

**INTEREST GROUPS**

**Play Reading**

Have you thought of joining our Play Reading group? You would be very welcome. 2nd Tuesday of the month in member's homes. We really enjoy our meetings and read a variety of plays old and new. Don't be shy, we are very friendly and welcoming and have a lot of fun. Come along for a visit to see what we are all about.

Phone Pam 4222493

**Science and Climate Change**

We expect to cover Climate Change and also Environmental Science and Management, Ecology, New Technologies and New Science etc.

New members with an interest in the group will be welcome.

Ralph Cooney



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