



NELSON

“Learning for Life”

Volume 3, Issue 5, September/October 2012

U3A Nelson, P.O. Box 1690, Nelson, 7040

www.u3anelson.org.nz

21st Birthday Celebrations – 2pm Wednesday 28 November Tahuna Events Centre, Tahunanui

A limited number of tickets for the event can be acquired from any member of the Committee.
Or contact Lois 5442440; Liz 5478 461; or Carl 5391108. \$20 p.p.

Music & Gold Melodrama Life Members Light Meal

Please note that this event replaces the scheduled general meeting on 28th November. The event starts at 2pm and the organising committee would appreciate all seated by 1.55 pm. The event will continue throughout the afternoon and conclude with a light meal. Tables and seating for all. There will be the usual help with parking provided for those who require it.

Special General Meeting – 26 Sept

The meeting accepted the motion proposed by the Committee that changes Clause 9 of the U3A Nelson Constitution to read: - ‘On the winding up of the organisation, the assets of U3A Nelson shall be used to further a charitable purpose or purposes as defined in section 5(1) of the Charities Act 2005. No members shall derive any personal pecuniary gain from such a winding up action.’ This change has allowed U3A Nelson to be

accepted as a Charitable Institution.

General Meeting – 26 September

Our thanks to Alan Mathew’s for his excellent talk about William Smith and his map that changed the world. If you are interested in further pursuing the life of this early cartographer and geologist, the book that Alan focused much of his talk on is ‘The Map that Changed the World: William Smith and the Birth of Modern Geology,’ Simon Winchester (2001).

Help for your computer use

While U3A Nelson has a website group looking at our website needs, the Committee agrees that we won’t encourage groups in U3A Nelson that are already provided for by other similar groups in the Nelson community. If you have a need for some computer tuition, whether you use Windows, Apple Mac, I-Pad or Android Tablet, keep SeniorNet in mind. You are welcome to join the 900 members of SeniorNet Nelson or Motueka for support. Ph 035 489 401 www.seniornetnelson.org

We acknowledge with sadness the passing of founding member, Lois Morgan and recent member, Jane Stevenson. Write Your Life 2 prepared this obituary for Jane.

Jane Stevenson – 1929-2012

Our friend Jane had been a member of several U3A study groups, but during her time with write Your Life 2, we got to know and respect her greatly. Jane's positive and encouraging comments inspired me to write more and gave me the thought that "Yes I can do this". I will really miss her. Jane embraced and enjoyed everyone's participation on all matters, and was a most refreshing and cherished member of our group. Jane and I became friends when we found we had things in common – patchwork, arts and crafts, and writing, and I always waited for Jane's story, so concisely written, just Jane. I enjoyed Jane's sympathetic understanding of human nature, reflected in her wonderful stories which set the gold standard for our group. Jane wrote so well, and listening to her read her stories helped me with my own. She always had an encouraging word for me, and I will miss this truly lovely lady. Jane read widely and particularly enjoyed exercising her intellect on witty and penetrating social studies that provide a pungent commentary on human foibles as found in the satirical novels of Jane Austen and E.F Benson. Jane's wheels were her independence. "I drive to the law but I drive fast". Those who travelled with her will smile. Jane always had thoughtful and clear-sighted comments to make about people's stories often enabling the writer to see their story from another perspective. We have all profited from knowing her. Each and every one in our group will miss our friend Jane.

U3A Groups There are now 384 places filled in the forty-one U3A Nelson study groups. Here's a list of the groups. The number accompanying each group is the number of vacancies in the group.

Ancient Civilisations (0)	Opera at the Met (0)
A to Z of Art History (0)	Our Living Language (0)
Aspects of World History (0)	Political Science (0)
Astronomy (1)	Preserving Family History on DVD (3)
Ballet 1 (0)	Reading group (0)
Ballet 2 (1)	Scrabble (6)
Classical Music (0)	Shakespeare (1)
Current Clippings (3)	The Ascent of Man 1 (0)
Even More Social and Political 'Isms' (1)	The Ascent of Man 2 (1)
Exploring Music and Why it Moves Us (0)	Theatre and Film (2)
Famous and Infamous (0)	The Great Discontinuity level 1 (1)
Flat Earth Walking Group (0)	The Great Discontinuity level 2 (0)
Forum (1)	The Normans / History of Venice (0)
Geology Level 1 (0)	The Search for Health (1)
Geology Level 2 (0)	The Website group (0)
History of Jazz (0)	Travel (0)
How We Built Britain (0)	Up the Garden Path (0)
Irish Writers (0)	Visual Arts (0)
Luncheon (1)	Write Your Life groups 1,2,3,4 (1)

There is also growing interest in groups that will explore the topics: - Mosses and Lichens of Nelson (or another botanical interest group). Science as Culture. WEA book discussion group. The Media. For details, contact study@u3anelson.org.nz or ring 539 1108. **And if you are interested in any group, please let Sue know. New groups cannot start unless members register their interest and others can be informed.**

Competition

The U3A Nelson Website Group invites appropriate photos for consideration for the front page of the U3A Nelson Website.

The prize photo will become **the front page photo on our updated website**. Other chosen photos will be displayed on the website.

The photograph could be of **Nelson scenery, a U3A group meeting, a photo of an art work that focuses on the activities of U3A Nelson**. Use your imagination to come up with a photo that illustrates that U3A Nelson is a vibrant and interesting organisation.

Required ratio: 4 times as wide as it is high, e.g. 20 x 5 cm.

The digital photo must be the work of the person submitting it and the participant must be a member of U3A Nelson.

Please send your digital photos to competition@u3anelson.org.nz

To be received before the AGM in February or March 2013 (date to be notified).

For further information, contact Roger competition@u3anelson.org.nz

The Website Group looks forward to some stunning photos. Help us to make our website the very best U3A website out there! You have 5 summer months to produce your best ever!

Shakespeare

'Boring' 'I hate Shakespeare – had a gutsful of him at school' 'I find him almost impossible to understand' 'But wait a minute: there must be a reason why over 400 years after they were first written his plays are still produced all over the world; why Shakespeare is the most popular dramatist the Western world has ever known; why he is translated into every written language; and why a group of Nelson seniors meets monthly for the express purpose of studying his plays.

Homer told of adventure and men at war; Sophocles and Tolstoy told of tragedy and of people in trouble; Terence and Mark Twain told stories of comedy and humour; Dickens told melodramatic ones; Plutarch told histories; and Hans Christian Andersen told fairy tales. But Shakespeare took the lot - every kind of story - comedy, tragedy, history, melodrama, adventure, love stories and fairy tales and told or retold each of them so well that they have become immortal.

If I say Romeo you instantly complete with Juliet. This story of the star-crossed lovers who are tragically forced apart because of their families' feud is not only still acted on countless stages all over the modern world but has also been adapted into versions using opera, musical, novel, song with even an improvised Twitter version.

Consider the compelling characters that people Shakespeare's plays. His great characters remain popular because of their complexity; for example, gentle Hamlet, forced against his better nature to seek murderous revenge.

Story and characterisation are only two of the many aspects of Shakespeare's plays worthy of study - consider the historical setting in which he wrote, the transmission of his plays and poems through four centuries, the notion that there was no Shakespeare, or the many productions of his work. The list of topics for study is endless but for me the reason that Shakespeare is a worthy focus for time and study is his effect on the English language and the sublime nature of the language he used.

Shakespeare wrote for an audience over 400 years ago. Early Modern English was less than 100 years old and most documents were still written in Latin. At this time, there was no real standardization in English; no correct spelling or even accepted grammatical conventions. Formal dictionaries and grammar textbooks simply did not exist, and "proper" education focused much more on classical Latin than on colloquial English. Shakespeare wrote with a vocabulary of approximately 17,000 words, four times larger than the vocabulary of the average educated person of the time. He is famously responsible for

contributing over 3000 words to the English language because he was the first author to write them down. Of this number more than one tenth or 1700 were used by him for the first time. With his genius for poetic and prose technique, he vastly expanded the stylistic range of the English language.

Many of the common expressions, now thought to be clichés, were Shakespeare's creations. Except for the writers of the Bible, Shakespeare is the most frequently quoted writer in English. Bernard Levin said it best in the following quote:

'If you cannot understand my argument, and declare "It's Greek to me", you are quoting Shakespeare; if you claim to be more sinned against than sinning, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you recall your salad days, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you act more in sorrow than in anger, if your wish is father to the thought, if your lost property has vanished into thin air, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you have ever refused to budge an inch or suffered from green-eyed jealousy, if you have played fast and loose, if you have been tongue-tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked or in a pickle, if you have knitted your brows, made a virtue of necessity, insisted on fair play, slept not one wink, stood on ceremony, danced attendance (on your lord and master), laughed yourself into stitches, had short shrift, cold comfort or too much of a good thing, if you have seen better days or lived in a fool's paradise - why, be that as it may, the more fool you, for it is a foregone conclusion that you are (as good luck would have it) quoting Shakespeare; even if you bid me good riddance and send me packing, if you wish I were dead as a door-nail, if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then - by Jove! O Lord! Tut, tut! for goodness' sake! what the dickens! but me no buts - it is all one to me, for you are quoting Shakespeare.' (The Story of English).

Liz Chinnery-Jack – read this to the General Meeting, 26 September

Market Folk For seven years I had a stall at the Nelson Market selling my art work and subsequently Antiques and Collectibles. It was rather like being on a busy railway station being behind a stall and watching the world go by. Early in the morning there would be the serious food shoppers who rarely cast a glance at the other stalls. They usually carried baskets or bags and their purpose was to gather fresh veges, bread etc and then depart. At a more leisurely pace were the visitors who were out to view the crafts. On occasions we would get the 'Auckland Ladies' who came down for a Nelson weekend. They were always recognisable as they dressed in very smart clothes and generally wore a lot of costume jewellery. They would walk along the front of my stall gathering up any small pieces of antique cutlery for their dinner parties. Money seemed no object. At my stall I sometimes had a customer who thought that because you had antiques the price was negotiable. I remember a young chap who was trying to impress his girlfriend. She had taken to a vase on which I had \$30. He glanced at her, swaggered a little and asked, "And what's the best price you can do for that vase?" "For you sir," I replied \$29.95." he left and didn't seem to have quite the same swagger in his step. On the other hand I would drop the price for people who seemed genuinely interested in something but obviously were short of money. It's all a matter of the way you approach the stall holder I expect. When the day was slow there was more time to view the customers. Sometimes an American Indian in full headdress would stroll through the crowd or somebody in theatrical costumes. There was the lady with the parrot on her shoulder who was a close friend of one of the men on the mustard stall. There was the man with the gravelly voice who called out to attract people to his stall and old George who grew many varied vegetables and fruit and sold them from his covered-in truck. He was in his eighties and had been a resistance fighter during the Second World War and had a hole in his foot where he had been shot. In fact the stallholders themselves came from all walks of life. One man had been a psychiatrist in NZ and Australia in his previous life. A group of people I vividly remember as being regular visitors to the market could have come out of a movie from the 1940s. The family would move through the market enjoying the stalls but rarely buying anything. The father was tall and thin and wore a full length gabardine raincoat. He generally held two small boys by the hand who were serious and well behaved. The mother who was dressed in a coat and felt hat in winter wheeled a 1940's deep pram in which was a toddler who was dressed in hand knitted garments of the same period. They

seemed to be of another generation or perhaps nationality. From August through until about April there are all the overseas visitors who added a welcome boost of income for the stallholders. They all brought varied experiences to the market. I remember having a few visitors who were sailing around the world and who purchased things for their boats. One lady bought an old boxed cutlery set which she measured to make sure it would fit into the small space that she had to spare. Another bought attractive chased drinking glasses and yet another, a ship's decanter. I can imagine these objects sailing off to other ports. The Nelson Market is a unique experience where diverse groups of people gather every Saturday. Many stall holders often leave on a Saturday with a small amount of money for many hours of hard work often in extreme weather conditions. I think many of them stay because of the shared experiences and companionship, certainly not the monetary gain.

Beryl Yeoman – Write Your Life 4. *This story was read by Beryl to the General Meeting.*

Two condensed stories

When I was five my Mother had a new baby. She named him Kenneth. If he had been a girl he would have been called Susan. Dad walked me over to see him at the Maternity Hospital in Market Street. The Maternity Hospital was a big wooden villa and children were not allowed in. Dad held my hand and we waited on the footpath outside until Mum lifted the baby up for me to see. He didn't really look like anything, just a bundle of white clothes with a red face. There were white curtains covering part of the window and I could only see half of my Mother. When the baby came home it was rolled up like a cocoon and put in a canvas bassinet in Mum and Dad's bedroom. I peeped in. The red face had red hair. The baby's nappies flapped daily on the clotheslines that stretched all around our backyard. They were held on the line by wooden pegs. When the baby was a bit bigger my Father put up a rotary clothesline. He made a seat and tied it to the line and put my brother in it and spun it around. The baby laughed and laughed and I stood and watched. I wanted a turn but I was too big. Mum came out and went mad and said the baby could fall out and hit its head on the concrete. Dad took it down after that and the baby had no more rides.

Early one sunny evening while Mum was preparing tea, I went to the TAB with Dad. We walked the six blocks to the top of the street, side by side, without saying a word. The toe on Dad's short leg only just touched the ground as he walked. His big boot rocked him forward. There were no cars about, so we crossed the roads without looking. When we got there, Dad told me to wait outside. "Children aren't allowed in betting establishments", he said, as he opened the door and disappeared in through a smoky haze. The street was empty. I sat on the footpath to wait and leaned my back against the wooden wall. It was painted cream and the paint was beginning to peel. The bitumen on the path felt warm on my legs. After a while I got bored and went to the gutter to burst tar bubbles. Half an hour later Dad came out with a cigarette in one hand and a bunch of tickets in the other. He had a smile on his face. "Come on Sis," he said, "let's go home."

Geraldine Barrett – Write Your Life 4.

From the President

My thanks to those who have contributed to this newsletter. The newsletter is such a mechanism for spreading the message about the vast array of learning that goes on through U3A Nelson – in the Natural Sciences, the Arts, History, Humanities and the variety of social events we enjoy together. If you would like to contribute, I'd love to hear from you. Our next get-together is our celebration of 21 years of U3A Nelson and the programme the sub-committee plans offers something special for everyone. I hope to see you there. My very best wishes. **Kay Hunter**