



Learning for Life

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P.O. Box 1690, Nelson, 7040

Our next Members' Meeting will be on February 24th, 2021 from 10 am till 12 noon, in the new venue at Elim Church, Main Road Stoke. The speaker will be advised in the next newsletter.

Topics covered in this Newsletter:

- Speaker report from last meeting
- President's Report
- Group Co-Ordinator's Report
- The Bee card
- Girton College at University of Cambridge, online Winter school

From the meeting on 25th November:

Where do you start trying to precis the fantastic speaker we had at the November general meeting? Nathan Fa'avae, 6 times Adventure Racing World Champion, would have to be on the list of one of the best speakers we have heard – thanks Gordon for organising this.



A very relaxed Nathan addressing the meeting. We were amazed and enthralled.

Nathan explained what Adventure Racing is, using the last race he competed in as an example – “Eco Challenge Fiji – World’s Toughest Race” held in 2019. Competing were 66 gender-balanced teams, the event was filmed for Amazon with Bear Grylls in attendance, interviewing along the way. Nathan’s team, with himself as leader, along with Stu Lynch, Chris Forne and Nelson GP Sophie Hart, won (second team 2 hours behind). Their team has been together since 2014 and is helped by Mark Raymond, crew co-ordinator, who sees that they have food, gear, dry clothing, and have 90 min breaks at 4 separate camps along the way. Meals are taken during these 90 min stops, rest of time is snacking along the way. Race rules are that the team of 4 must be no more than 50 metres apart during the whole race and must show race organisers at the finish line, that they have slept/rested/stopped a total of 15 hours along the way. And if one team member gets injured and can’t carry on, the team is out of the race. No sponsors are allowed for this race as it is funded by Amazon. They take their own mountain bikes, ropes, trekking gear and paddles – all the rest provided. Maps and route given out night before the race, (sometimes out of date, as in Brazil, where the map showed a bush trail, which ended up being a 4 lane highway)! There were 55 check points in Fiji, which must be crossed in numerical order. Teams have a map and compass, but no GPS. Miss a check point – out of the race, also 5 medallions must be collected along the way.



Nathan's final slide says it all—the summary of his team race statistics.

The 2019 challenge consisted of these stages:

Stage 1 – 55km ocean canoe – paddle or sail

Stage 2 – 25km Island trek
Stage 3 – 49km ocean canoe
Stage 4 - 22km – Stand up paddle board. Learnt new skills, Nathan had never done this before
Stage 5 – 67km Mountain bike on Fiji back roads
Stage 6 – 36km Canyon trek
Stage 7 – 45km Bilibili – hand build a bamboo raft from 13 lengths of bamboo using a machete, then travel down a river in a raft not built for racing
Stage 8 – 44km Mountain bike again, after monsoon rain, slippery and clay clogging the bikes gears and wheels
Stage 9 – 5km trek – linking stage
Stage 10 – 25km white water rafting
Stage 11 – 34km jungle trek – Nathan’s team chose to do this at night, with head lamps for night racing
Stage 12 – 47km ropes and treks stage, scaling a very high waterfall
Stage 13 – 22km stand up paddle boarding
Stage 14 – 48km trek, which is where Bear Grylls and TV crew ran with them for the Adventure Race TV show
Stage 15 – 78km Mountain bike
Stage 16 – 19km stand up paddle board
Stage 17 – 50km outrigger paddling to finish on Yasawa Island group
Total: 671km – 141 hours and 23 minutes. Prize – a kava bowl and US\$100K. Nathan said he took 6 weeks to recover from the race!

A great question and answer session followed, with members asking Nathan about his life. He is 48 years old and lives in Tasman Bay with wife Jodie and their 3 children, where they run their own Adventure Racing business, coaching and training in multisports, kayaking, mountain biking, road cycling and mountain trail running, but nothing as challenging as the world’s toughest challenges.

None of our members were convinced to take up Adventure Racing, as their new hobby!!

Wendy Cornish

President’s Report

Greetings U3A Members

It was good to see many of you at our recent Public Meeting. What an excellent speaker Nathan Fa'avae was, being accomplished in his sporting field and well versed in the art of public speaking! At the same meeting I discussed with those present the Committee's thoughts about shifting venues and in particular the choice of Elim Church on Stoke Main Road as our meeting point for 2021. I outlined our reasons for the move such as the venue being on a direct bus route, no stairs to climb, disabled parking within the church grounds, comfortable seating, an excellent sound system plus modern audio-visual projection etc. I asked for audience comment, (AKA a "straw poll") and was pleased with positive replies. Many of the members present had been to Elim Church on other occasions and remarked on the favourability of facilities there. The Committee will serve tea and coffee with Stoke Bakery delivering the "goodies" for our morning tea. There will be no increase in membership charges with the move to Elim Church.

With Christmas only a few days away, on behalf of the Committee, I wish you a joyous and peaceful festive season.

David Turner, President U3A

“Old age is of no importance, unless you are a wine or cheese”.

“A clear conscience is a sign of a bad memory”.

Group Co-Ordinator's Report

Just a quick correction and reminder of the groups situation for 2021.

I'm afraid I rather jumped the gun with Liz Chinnery-Jack-Bowyer's Literati group, which I said was disbanding at the end of this year. I was completely wrong about that, as they will definitely be continuing in the new year. No details yet about exactly when, but I'll keep you all informed.

However, another group that has definitely wound up is the Flat Earth Walking group, and since we now have only one walking group (fully subscribed) perhaps someone would consider forming a new one in 2021.

Of the new groups proposed for next year, several have already attracted considerable interest as follows:

Serious Discussions 7

French 8

Bird-watching 3

Geology 3

So if you also want to join any of these or the others mentioned in the previous newsletter, let me know and I'll pass on your name to the appropriate convenor.

Best wishes for 2021

Steven Shaw, Group Co-Ordinator

The Bee Card

Some of our members may not yet know about the Bee card (Yes – another blessed card!). You can no longer use your Gold Card to travel free between 9am and 3pm on our buses. In our region you now need to have a Bee card which you can get from a bus driver or via the net by going to <https://beecard.co.nz/>

Once you have your Bee card you touch it to a device on entering the bus AND when you leave the bus; this allows the system to calculate how much your fare was and to charge your Bee card accordingly. This means you need to have credit on the card if you use the bus outside the free hours. You can put credit on your card either via the internet or by going to the bus station.

I think if I am made to carry one more card I will have to get a new wallet! It is almost as bad as the number of remotes one has in the lounge!

Paul Lunberg

Girton College at University of Cambridge have for some years held a live-in summer school for U3A. The 2020 summer school was cancelled due to Covid 19. A 2021 winter school on-line is to be held 11-22 Jan 2021. The Topic is 'The Lives of Winston Churchill'. Cost is £150. For more information or to register <https://www.girton.cam.ac.uk/lifelong-learning-online>



Best wishes for the festive season and stay safe. I look forward to being back in touch in 2021.
Trevor Lewis, Editor