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Learning for Life

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Our next Members' Meeting will be on Wednesday 25th August from 10 am till 12 noon at Elim Church, 625 Main Road, Stoke, Nelson. The speaker is Sandy Stephens.

Forty Years in Developing Countries: stories of a working life in Africa, Asia and the South Pacific

Sandy grew up on an orchard in Stoke, and after completing her education, spent 35 years living and working to improve food security in developing countries of Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Starting as a volunteer with New Zealand's Volunteer Service Abroad she taught nutrition at Fiji's School of Medicine for two years before working with New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Colombo Plan in Malaysia and 25 years with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation in over 30 developing countries.

Sandy will share tales of working with rural communities in some of the poorest countries of the world; challenges, failures and some notable success.

Topics covered in this Newsletter:

- Speaker bio for next meeting
 - Speaker report from last meeting
 - President's report
 - List of U3A DVD resources
 - Group reports—Alternative systems of governing; Military History; Creative writing.
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Our last speaker

What a brilliant talk we had at the General Meeting. Duncan Steel may have called the Bingo when a student, but now his voice carries clearly and he speaks in a way we all understand. His topic would confound lesser speakers but he brought order to the confusion of satellites presently orbiting our blue planet.

One thing which I found amazing was how he had slides taken by satellites which passed over NZ or Nelson earlier that morning – WOW!, how incredible was that? We learned things too, like how different zones of the spectrum can tell us different things about the view. The pictures taken of: Teapot Valley fire in February 2019 when viewed in the certain parts of the spectrum allowed the exact location of the main blazes to be pinpointed; Duncan showed us how ordinary photos just showed smoke!

He told us of Navstar <https://www.space.com/19794-navstar.html> and the Cawthron Eye <https://www.cawthron.org.nz/uncategorized/cawthron-eye/> in our own backyard. If you visit these sites [just put the title into Google to get there quickly] you can marvel at what information is being gathered from satellites.

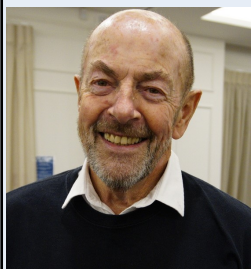
Duncan gave us an insight into some of the uses which are helping farmers, horticulturalists, viticulturists and others in planning their future work. Also Councils, government agencies and planners can see the effects on the environment of farms, factories and natural events.

But it was not all good news – Duncan said in passing it was inevitable to have space wars!

Quite brilliant and totally fascinating – thankyou Duncan.

Paul Lunberg

President's Report



Continuing "*We Don't Know How Lucky We Are*"

Recently I shared with you an excerpt of an email from a colleague, John Stoddard, living in South Africa, about how difficult life is there at present both with Covid 19 restrictions and the riots over ex-President Zuma's imprisonment. Another email from John states that the virus rages on but 200,000 a day are now being vaccinated. As in Pandora's box there's always hope! My son works as Director of Services for the House of Commons in London. He says that the British Government is planning for an emergency recall of Parliament mid-August should the need arise to pass more emergency legislation to lockdown again but no-one knows at what point. Already there are about 50,000 new cases daily and the expectations are up to 500K each day. He has to undergo a daily Covid 19 saliva test at his work.

I am sure that many of you have similar stories from friends and family around the world and like me you realise that we are so fortunate here in New Zealand even though some media and some politicians would have us believe otherwise.

Keep safe!

David Turner

President U3A Nelson

U3A resources

The following DVDs are held by Paul and available for any convenor to borrow as course material:

The Story of Science BBC	-	BBC Mike Mosley 4 episodes, 3 discs
Planet Earth BBC	-	BBC David Attenborough 5 discs, 14 episodes
Ancient Voices BBC	-	4 DVDs but #2 missing. Each episode has excellent booklet with it.
Ancient Civilisations UK	-	A 27 DVD set, each with notes - excellent!
A to Z of the Ancient World	-	Huge set of notes [A to Z of Ancient World].
Appo Hocton of Nelson	-	1 Disc

Contact Paul: lunberg@orcon.net.nz or phone 548 7889

As I sat, strapped in my seat waiting during the countdown, one thought kept crossing my mind....every part of this rocket was supplied by the lowest bidder. — John Glenn

Kill one man and you're a murderer, kill a million and you're a conqueror. -- Jean Rostand.

REPORTS FROM GROUPS:-

ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS OF GOVERNING

This group has evolved from an original idea of forming a group to watch and discuss Alistair Cooke's 1972 thirteen-part series "America". With that very informative and enjoyable mission accomplished, and with the 2020 USA election looming, some of the original group were joined by others to study recent American politics and the system and events that culminated in the election of President Biden in November. The election of 2020 provided wonderful study material in what turned out to be a year of controversies, heated debates, and sometimes bizarre events.

This year, the group has further developed into a mission to explore alternative systems of governing in the world today. Each of the fortnightly sessions is prepared by a different member who presents a specific system of government and leads discussion. For each country we examine the social and political landscape and the system for electing political leaders. This is an opportunity to look at each country in the present day and the impacts of the most recent elections on the people.

In the past months the group has studied the systems of governing in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Netherlands, and most recently, India. In looking at India, which now has a population of almost 1.4 billion, we focused on religious and social factors, the Westminster Parliamentary System and how it has worked since 1947, the conduct of elections, and setbacks to democracy, especially under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi since 2014. Below are some of the amazing statistics that show the extent of the challenges of conducting an election in the world's largest democracy where Indian law says no one should have to travel more than 2 kilometres to vote: -

1 million: Polling stations set up across India.

11 million: Government employees deployed to oversee Indian voting.

3.9 million: Electronic voting machines (introduced in 1991) in use. The table-top machine looks like a miniature piano keyboard, with buttons next to a list of political parties and, also, symbols for those voters who might not be able to read. The machines fit into small suitcases which are carried by electoral officials to even the most remote areas.

At least \$345 million: Value of cash, drugs, alcohol and goods confiscated in the last election from politicians attempting to bribe voters with gifts.

15,256: Feet in elevation above sea level of India's highest-altitude polling station in Tashigang, a Buddhist settlement near the Chinese border.

66 percent: Voter turnout for the last Indian election.

\$5 billion: Cost of last election.

Diane Thomsen (for Kay Hunter, Convenor)

Military History

Here you see us at our recent meeting where we start by socialising over a cuppa and the obligatory sausage rolls and other excellent goodies members bring, before embarking on the serious stuff, learning about and discussing today's topic. This time we watched part 2 of an excellent documentary, "The Art of War", an ancient treatise written by a Chinese military strategist in the 5th century BC. His methods are still taught in military colleges to this day. Following this, Carl presented a fascinating topic; the use of gyroscopes for guiding rockets, a technique developed by the Germans and used successfully in the V2 guided missile. Oh and in case you wondered, no we don't condone war, we just "Preseeeent coffee cups!"

Trevor Lewis (for David Turner, Convenor)



Creative Writing Group Celebrates Judy Heiner's 90th Birthday

The Nelson U3A Creative Writing Group met at the house of Les and Sue Cook at Richmond for a pot luck lunch to celebrate Judy Heiner's 90th birthday. During the morning Les interviewed Judy about her early life in Southern Africa which was of interest to the group; as any personal history reflects the social history of the time, a written record of the interview is currently underway.

Judy has been convenor and now a mentor, for the group which meets at her home every fortnight to share writing on allotted topics. The "homework" is read to the group and subjected to comment and encouragement. During the meeting aspects of writing or language are explored. Les has taken on the role of convenor and coordinator and has set a program for the year. The group works diligently on topics to expand their skillset. Eighteen months ago, the group published a booklet of twenty – seven short stories titled "Words She Cannot See" as a tribute to Judy's leadership and a keepsake for members.



Brian Brasell for Creative Writing Group

I have kleptomania, but when it gets bad, I take something for it. - Robert Benchley

The weather person is the only person that I know, that can be wrong 99.9 % of the time, and still have a job the next day. - Johnny Carson

Having more money doesn't make you happier. I have 50 million dollars, but I'm just as happy as when I had 48 million. - Arnold Schwarzenegger.

And finally, some puns:

1. Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson.
2. What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled.
3. Writing my name in cursive is my signature move.
4. Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm.
5. If you're bad at haggling, you'll end up paying the price.
6. Just so everyone's clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.

From the Editor

Thank you to those who submitted articles. We welcome reports from study groups, especially if your group has vacancies, as this is a good way to showcase what you do. Photographs are also great to make the newsletter more interesting and colourful. **Deadline for articles for the next newsletter is Monday the 11th October.**

Trevor Lewis