



U3A Tawa Incorporated

ON COURSE Newsletter

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U3A Tawa

HALF YEAR MEETING

When: Thursday 8 June 2017 from 12 Noon

Where: Tawa Bowling Club, Davies St, Tawa.

Members are invited to bring along the usual tasty finger food for lunch.

Prospective members and visitors are most welcome.

Programme of the meeting will be:

12 noon: Lunch

12.45pm: Chairman and others will speak about current U3A issues.

1pm: Introduction of the new U3A courses for the second half of 2017

Notes from the May Committee meeting



Left to Right: Digby Gudsell, John Burke, Michael Holland, Jasmine Thompson, Alison Bayly, Jancis Potter, Dave Smith, John Baldwin.

(Absent: Carole Naylor)

New initiatives to improve public awareness of U3A Tawa – new colourful handout designs now being costed and their likely usefulness evaluated. U3A Tawa will purchase a retractable banner that can be used in setting up ‘recruiting’ stalls at local events such as Spring into Tawa.

Legal liability insurance for U3A Tawa – some concern had been raised about our legal liability in the event that third-party property, such as the community hall or a church hall, is damaged in the course of session activity. One local U3A has insured against this kind of contingency. The Committee has considered the implications at length and decided that, in the light of the special circumstances of U3A, the expense of insurance is not warranted.

Non-financial members – the mid-year course booklet will not be sent out to those who have not paid their current sub at that time.

Unexpected Donation – Tawa Arts and Crafts Society has ceased operations and has donated to U3A Tawa from its accrued funds. We are immensely grateful for their thoughtfulness and generosity.

The Eyes Have It!



Maureen Johnston's Art Group continues to recruit ever more members persuaded that, although they suspect they have scant artistic leanings, with some informed tuition they can produce some excellent work.

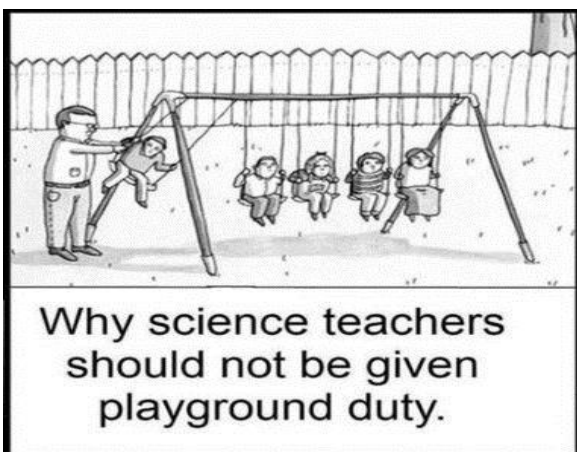
The group (up to 13 members of late) is splendidly accommodated in the Tawa Community Centre and members bring along their own drawing and painting media as the class progresses. The two-hour sessions seem to fly by.

Maureen herself is a mathematics graduate of Aberdeen University, but her lifelong love of drawing and painting has moved her to undertake short but intensive art courses over the years.

"With just a few minutes of encouragement and coaching new class members are staggered at what they can achieve in a very short time. Their reserve they start with very quickly falls away and they go from strength to strength as they learn the new techniques".

The great painter Rembrandt observed that the eyes are "the windows of the soul" and dominate portrait art as the key element that draws the viewer into a picture and holds them.

Great attention is given to that aspect. Class members will often spend the full session on one or two eyes as they absorb the learnable techniques needed to convey that extra special feature of the human face. Their results are hugely impressive.



Member Profile – Margaret Bryson

Titahi Bay resident and new member Margaret Bryson brings a number of professional skills and personal accomplishments to U3A, and has joined the Art Group, the Current Affairs Group and the U3A gym class.



Margaret grew up in Plimmerton where her parents (both of whom trained at St Andrews University in Scotland) were the two resident general practitioners for many years. One of a family of four, Margaret went into law in the 1960s and became the second woman president of the VUW Students Association. After admission she started out as legal adviser in the Justice Department in the days when Martin Findlay was the Minister and she shared an office with the young Ruth Richardson.

Instead of gravitating into a legal firm Margaret tangented off into the Probation Service at Lower Hutt before heading off overseas to Scotland. There she did social work with teenagers, as part of a team running evening and weekend activity centres for teens in trouble. She married a Scot, but the marriage failed and she returned to New Zealand to give birth to their son.

With no part-time work available in law when her son was very young, Margaret requalified as a primary teacher and taught for a few years before returning to law. After working in the Office of the Ombudsman, the short-lived Parent Advocacy Council and the Ministry of Education, she worked for many years for the New Zealand Law Society in Wellington, eventually becoming its General Manager Law Reform. During the 1990s she was afflicted with successive serious health issues but continued to work and to give a fine account of herself in many forums.

Now retired, Margaret busies herself with her two young granddaughters while being a regular volunteer driver for the NZ Cancer Society. Margaret finds that “having been there” is something she can share with people who are fearful for the future and need quiet re-assurance.

Game, set and matchless

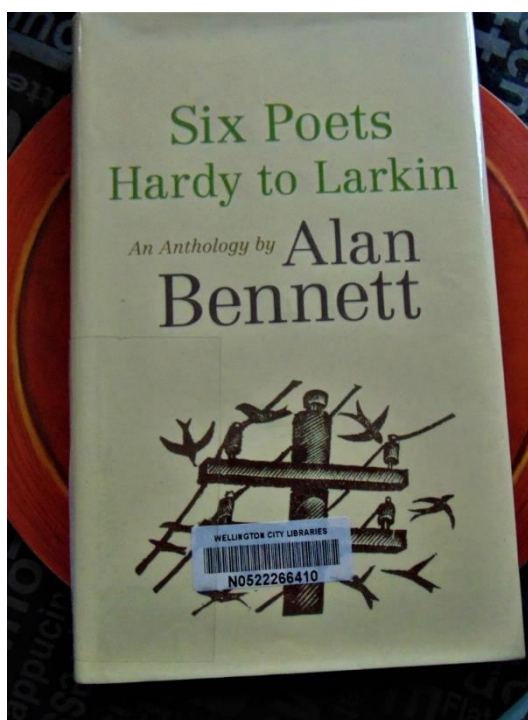


We learn that even Peter Snell has now taken up table tennis. It is fast becoming the game of choice for ‘persons of a certain age’. U3A offers wonderful table tennis facilities in the Community hall with three state-of-the art tables each Thursday.

Leader Virginia Ng is at pains to point out that there is no competitive element whatever and all are welcome in the time-honored tradition. It’s all for fun, enjoyment and lightness of foot; and coffee is served.



Feel free to drop in any time, even to just have a look and a chat – Virginia would love to see you.



Poetry in the rain

Carolyn Marshall's first-semester Literature course has been a resounding success. It focused on the poems of Hardy, Houseman, Betjeman, Larkin and Auden. "*I was wondering what to do for this year*" recalls Carolyn. "*I have always been a huge fan of Alan Bennett and when I spotted his succinct book on the subject of these late 19th and 20th century poets my attention was aroused*".

These poetic works are a treasure store of social commentary that spans the rather phony highs and assured tranquility of the British imperial past (Hardy and Houseman) through to the doubts and despair of the World Wars plus the tawdry political and economic twilight of the imperial day (Auden and Larkin).

Bennet's dead-eyed skewering of these poets' lives and foibles detracts little from his undisguised admiration of their perceptive and, possibly underrated, works. Carolyn gave her own shrewd views and added other poems (not in the Bennett book) while the class contributed their own thoughts and personal memories.

Sessions invariably ended with heartfelt applause. There were over 30 people in the class - no mean achievement in the poetry-averse 21st century. No less than 28 rolled up on the day Cyclone Debbie hit Wellington. Rain does not stop play when Bennett and Carolyn are up the front!

Two of the New Courses coming up



Michael Holland talks about growing up in NZ in the '40s, '50's and '60's.



Of the many new courses coming up in the second half of the year – Michael Holland will talk about his childhood growing up in New Zealand in the 40s-60s; and a practical course will show that rumours of the death of Meccano have been grossly exaggerated.

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Disclaimer: This newsletter is created for the interest of Tawa U3A Inc's members only. The writer and the executive make every effort to ensure that the information it contains is correct but take no responsibility for any inadvertent errors that might appear.