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Hawkesbury Incorporated

News from the Office –September 2021

Class News

BIRDS OF THE HAWKESBURY REPORT. Alan Conradi

As our wonderful Tutor abandoned our group for the tropical sun of the Northern Territory and left Annette Hayes and me in charge, we have called upon the resources in the group and beyond to fill Ken's rather large shoes.

A big shout out to Jean for her talk on the conservation of the woodhens of Lord Howe Island.

Mac for his insight into the world of breeding budgies.

Roger who introduced us to the birds and bees (you're never too old to learn).

Julie shared her knowledge of bird photography.

Debbie from Bird Life ran a session on raptor identification.

You have all made the class richer for your contributions, I thank you all.

Now that we are back in lockdown and can't get together in the classroom or in the field, it's back to zoom.

We are currently enjoying a weekly cuppa, birds and relaxation sessions on zoom to share stories and stay in contact.

As I write this, it is Science Week, so Ian Bailey from the Hawkesbury Woodlands Key Biodiversity survey group told us about how important data is in the preservation of our woodlands.

Another very special guest this week was Michael Campbell from the U3A Meditation and Relaxation group.

Michael led us in a 20min relaxation session and we are now the most chilled out birding group in Australia!

Many thanks Michael.

As the lockdown continues, we keep looking for new ways to maintain connections and support each other all the way to the other side.

MEDITATION AND RELAXATION: Michael Campbell

I was invited by Alan Conradi to present a Meditation/Relaxation session for class members of Birds of the Hawkesbury this past week.

Following the success of this, Alan suggested that Zoom sessions be introduced for any interested U3A member who may be having difficulty coping with the Covid crisis or who may just wish to have the meditative experience.

I am happy to offer this at the regular time, 2nd and 4th Wednesday, between 10-12.

The first session will begin on the 8th September.

If you are interested in joining a Zoom session to assist you during this unprecedented time, please email me on mountain2753@iinet.net.au.

My best wishes, Michael Campbell

LOOKING AT LITERATURE 1. Jan Brown

Challenging times indeed, but, as Laurie pointed out in the last Newsletter, the surviving species have always been the adaptable ones. And so we have adapted. For July we just managed to garner enough books by Christopher Koch (as scheduled) with the help of one 'imported' from restriction-free Tasmania. August was to be Edith Wharton, for which we needed to draw on the library's resources, so instead we delved into our collective bookshelves to revisit Jane Austen. In lieu of reading some of the works of Alan Bennett during September (also requiring library access) we will be enjoying (hopefully) various works by

Han Suyin. Fortunately I had been previously supplied with a selection of these, so anyone living within walking distance of my place can receive a contactless delivery to their doorstep. Others can be collected, contactless of course, from the 'Brown's Bosworth Street library.' November's agenda has been brought forward to October when, if I can achieve my aim, I should be able to email as attachments three essays by different authors but linked by a common theme for discussion. And finally, October's author of choice, A.J. Cronin, is now scheduled for November. By pooling our resources I think we will have enough to go around. Emailing and phoning is not as satisfying as sitting around a table together, but it's the best we can do. And just think what delights await us next year when we can read those authors we were unable to source for this year's programme.

Am I being pessimistic in re-organising for this amount of time, or just realistic? History will tell.

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One member has kept herself occupied during this Lockdown, in two interesting ways. (Thank you Betty)

Hi all. I kept busy with a mosaic project and have a few glass things to make terrariums. Anyway, about the mosaicking, I went overseas with my daughter over 10 years ago and went to Spain (Barcelona) among other countries. The Mosaics (Gaudi's ideas) were so inspiring that I bought all the stuff to start and then never did. (But had saved it all with blue and white saucers, tiles from kitchen and bathroom renovations etc. and then I decided with all the madness going on at present I'd smash all those mugs I had with the maps of the world on them (also blue and white of course.) I had always planned to mosaic those water pipes some plumber had left behind and then put blue or white pots on them to add height in the garden. My daughter suggested I do the short one first (1 meter) and am glad she did as they get quite heavy with the stuff on it. But am now waiting till it gets warmer so that I can do it all in my conservatory. Husband (Albert) had to carry this smaller one in and out of the house until it got warmer in the conservatory, but I have 2 longer pipes (2 metres) which might get to be too much. And anyway, what if didn't work properly and the tiles all fall off?? Lockdown may have to last a lot longer.

Cheers, Betty Noordhuis

2021 PHOTOGRAPHY FOR FUN: Julie Wilson

Well, here we are in Lockdown again!

It hasn't been an easy year for anyone but thank goodness we can still participate in our class via Zoom. It's not the same as being all together, but at least it's something.

As well as sharing our personal photography pursuits, we are enjoying our informal discussions about "life" in general. We continue to *focus* on improving our understanding of specific photographic topics as a group and then endeavour to retain the knowledge and practice the skills. It's challenging at times, but we're giving it our best shot.

We were very fortunate to have an outing to Cockatoo Island in June, just before our "stay at home" time began. What a lovely day we had! Gorgeous winter sunshine, albeit a bit breezy and cool! We travelled

by train to Parramatta, River Cat from there to the island and Shanks' pony in between the different forms of public transport and all around the island. "Variety is the spice of life."

Cockatoo Island is such an interesting place. We all agreed that we would need to return at some stage to do some more exploring.



METAPHYSICS By ZOOM: Written on behalf of Roger Packham by Donna.

At Wednesday's Zoom meeting, we tackled the (very metaphysical) subject of Philosophy of Mind. The material presented by Roger provoked the usual engaging discussion. Metaphysics deals with issues beyond 'Physics', that is, the issues that Science cannot fully explain.

The topic was 'The Philosophy of Mind', which looks at issues such as 'Who are you? Are you an animated body, or is there something about a human being that is beyond the physical? If so, does this survive after death?'

Unfortunately, not everyone enrolled has access to online services, but all received Roger's notes. Sometimes I'm gobsmacked that I'm married to this brain (or is it Mind?).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY

President Geoff and I send our best wishes to all members. With the Lockdown now extended to the end of September, there really is no doubt that we will not be resuming face to face activities before 2022.

Some thoughts from Laurie Forth – *"This morning I found a spoon rest in my cupboard with the inscription-"Today I choose Joy." You don't hear that word very often now. And I thought that what this world needs now, besides love, food and shelter, is **Hope** with a capital **H**. I discovered that Nelson Mandela wrote to his wife during his almost 10,000 days of confinement. "Remember that hope is a powerful weapon even when all else is lost." I thought that if Nelson could hold on to hope during 10,000 days of uncomfortable confinement, then couldn't we stay warm and happy in our own homes for 30 or 40 or 50? We can choose Joy and Hope, while we all do our bit to beat this virus, to save lives. "*

Ian Biddle continues to work with his **Ethics** class by sending out material for discussion and one of the August issues to discuss was "Covid and the feelings of loss and Grief". The questions - Why have Lockdowns caused negativity? The role of kindness, **hope** and gratitude? The notes are very interesting but too long to include in this Newsletter. Benjamin Disraeli, on hope, said *"I am always prepared for the worst, but will hope for, and do all I can to bring about the best."*

Covid as an example: We can hope that our society survives the Covid epidemic and that we and our family and friends are not adversely affected. Solving the Covid epidemic is not something that an individual can achieve alone, but by obeying the health directives, being vaccinated and continuing to engage with family and friends we can help achieve hope.

Joy for the Spring, Kindness to each other, Hope for the future and Gratitude for what we have.

***President Geoff Hatch and
Secretary Jeanette Hatch***

Name: _____

Date: _____

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SYDNEY
MOUNT KOSCIUSZKO
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PERTH

PLATYPUS
MELBOURNE
FOOTBALL
BONDI BEACH
PACIFIC OCEAN
KANGAROO

GOLD COAST
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
ADELAIDE
CANBERRA
BRISBANE
LAMINGTON

INDIAN OCEAN
OUTBACK
TASMANIA
VEGETITE
EUCALYPTUS TREES
KOALA

N.B. This may be a challenge for many as I was unable to darken it as it is a copy of one that is meant to be done online.