Hamilton *Newsletter*

September 2024

Contacts

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September Meeting

Tuesday 10 September 10am - 12 noon
Senior Citizens Centre, 104 Lonsdale St, Hamilton.

Guest Speaker

Heather Casey - International Floral Art Design judge and demonstrator

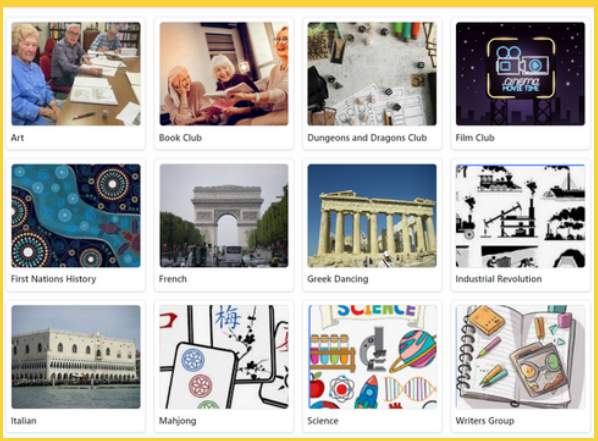
September Excursion

Tuesday 24 September

Wildflower Experience
BYO Picnic on Marlene and Roger Hallam's farm in the Cavendish area. Car pooling will be arranged. Tea and coffee provided. Enquiries and bookings, please call 0428 240 830.

U3A Hamilton Course Calendar

Check out our new updated course calendar here.



Next Short Course

The Industrial Revolution
Explore the development of industry, and how it changed our lives forever. .
Start Date 4 October
Registration and Enquiries to
Alex Pederick 0411758405

Read on for...

- Meeting Minutes
- Book of the month: The Labyrinth
- Film of the month: Fisherman's Friends
- From the Writers Group: "It was definitely worth a try. " by Helen Christie

Meeting Minutes

August 2024

Denise Stevens opened meeting
Apologies: B Lacey ,E and K Haines, A Hornby, W and D Davies, Geoff and Jenny Sanderson, H Ward, R Brader, B Thomson, J Howell
Visitors
Heather Casey, Margaret Duffy, Heather Heard, Liz Fenton, Jane Irvine
Minutes of previous meeting as circulated
Business arising
Many thanks to our volunteers who keep our club viable in hall set up and M T duties.
Our Heartstart machine is to be installed by our local council.
On 23rd July we travelled by car pool to Kwinotti in Casterton and enjoyed a set menu and lovely garden,28 people attended and weather kind.
Correspondence
ATO self reporting letter to be handled by B Cadden and E McLean
Treasurers Report
Total $9,123.98 Accept E McLean seconded C Simpson
Reports from our interest groups given
General Business
Planned bus trips combined with Probus
On Sunday 25 th August we car pool to Pub in the Scrub at Dergholm
On 24th November we combine with Probus to Roger Hallums place at Mooralla.
First Nations short course run by H Ward for 2 months each Friday at 1.30pm at Senior Citizens centre. Further information contact Alex Pederick
Today's speaker is Ian Johnson on demonstration of Heartstart
Quiz conducted by our hardworking Bob Cadden
Meeting closed 10.45am

Secretary
May Ferguson

FILM CLUB FILM OF THE MONTH:
11 SEPTEMBER 2024

'Our movie in September will be 'Fisherman's Friends' a 2019 British comedy-drama inspired by a true story about Fisherman's Friends, a group of Cornish fishermen from Port Isaac who were signed by Universal Records and achieved a top 10 hit with their debut album of traditional sea shanties.

Contact May Ferguson 0429914471 for more information

Book Club Book of the Month

The Labyrinth by Amanda Lohrey

The Labyrinth, Amanda's seventh novel, won the 2021 Miles Franklin Award, the 2021 Voss Literary Award and the Prime Minister's Literary Award for Fiction.

The main character is a woman who leaves her life and friends in the city and buys a rundown shack in a tiny coastal hamlet
near the prison where her son is imprisoned for homicidal negligence.
While trying to deal with her life and her grief over her relationship with her son, she decides to build a labyrinth in her backyard.

Our group in general found this novel very slow moving and struggled to be engaged with the characters. A number ran out of
patience and didn't finish the book. It may well be one of those novels that works at certain times in your life. But it might be the story for you!

U3A 2024 Annual State Conference

Hamilton Base Hospital Auxiliary High Tea Grange Burn Bowling Club Thursday 19 Sept

Bookings: 0418 945 925

It was definitely worth a try.

By Helen Christie

Here I am once again confronted by my captors, but this time I cannot ignore the intensity of their anger, the rigidity of their bodies, their eyes telling me they were attempting to get some order into their thoughts as to what they intended to do to this person who had the temerity to attempt escaping. If they really were processing the situation properly they should be celebrating that I had repeatedly failed, something I certainly wasn't for all my belligerence and defiance.

It had all begun when I foolishly thought that Byron was my future, the great love of my life – yes all the cliches, and particularly ironical considering the connotations associated with his namesake. My parents and most of my friends were horrified, pontificating about his waywardness, his risk taking, his truly unconventional upbringing or lack of it. It didn't matter to me as I was hooked, lined and sinker-ed.

My ordinary life of suburbia with parents who cared, siblings to argue with, progression from school to university with all its aspirations, and all the continual mundanity came crashing down when I met Byron. He wasn't by any stretch a social media influencer type, no super toned body, no drop-dead handsome face, nothing appealing except that he didn't care what people thought of him. And somewhere deep down in my psyche I realised I needed someone like that to show me a wider world, a different set of values and certainly a more questioning view.

I was addicted but didn't perceive then that Byron had a far more addictive personality. If you are going to dive into life then you might as well do it off the 10m platform rather than the 3m springboard and definitely not from the edge.

After a childhood where every holiday was planned to the nth degree with no deviations allowed, except for one memorable holiday along the coast when our car broke down and the meticulous planning was on hold for a week while waiting for parts. We kids then had an unexpected freedom to explore along the coast, not designated by a pre-ordained schedule but one based on our own natural rhythms and desires.

So when I made the decision to thumb my nose at my upbringing I did it with relish, cut my hair (badly), dyed it neon pink and green, invested in some very painful piercings and wore some truly awful clothes from the Op shop (they were so bad that I was given them for free). But even when Byron insisted I should get tattooed, that was too permanent for me and I continually refused. Defiant and pragmatic simultaneously.

Now strangely, as I was planning how to successfully escape I wasn't blaming Byron for my predicament, and I didn't make any promises to myself that if I succeeded I would do the sobbing and dramatic returning prodigal, but I would apologise to my parents for the anguish caused, at the same time acknowledging I was no longer and probably never was that person they wanted me to be.

We had made our way along the coast mostly heading north, frequently hitching rides with truckies who although they were not meant to, enjoyed having someone to talk to and give tips as to where work could be found. We picked vegetables and seasonal fruits along with backpackers, we slaved for next to nothing in pub kitchens often just for a bed instead of cash, we heaved boxes into trucks, we worked on farms, once and only for one shift in a revolting abattoir, but always restless and moving on when we had enough money.

We had reached Cannes and were squatting in an abandoned and derelict shack, sharing with others who I would once naively have considered were searching for meaning, but in truth many were just alcohol and drug-fuelled dropouts that were more than happy for us to pay for everything. I wanted to move on but Byron said we should stay as he sensed something was happening, not sure what but that we should stick around for the action.

This supposed action I was to discover was Byron abandoning me and taking off with a stash of cash he had discovered behind a loose brick in the chimney waiting for a delivery. So this love of my life had left me asleep, woken by very angry people demanding where he was, threatening me with unimaginable consequences and locking me in a room which they assumed was secure. The first time I escaped I just pushed on the door but the noise was my undoing. The second time I did much the same but more quietly, then making the error of deciding to get my backpack. In other words I was as stupid as them. So I was back to my original and disastrous dilemma except they were angrier.

Their anger was nothing compared to mine. I began to think of what I had learnt from my experiences in this ‘great university of life’, inventiveness, resilience, assuredness of my own abilities and also rat-cunning.

My next escape plan although simple was definitely one that was worth a try. I faced my captors and told them not where Byron had gone, because I didn’t know, but I did tell them where the drugs from the other, now vanished squatters were hidden, and waited until they were so high that I just forced the rotting window open, climbed out, carefully walked away and headed back south.