Hamilton *Newsletter*

November 2024

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November Meeting

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

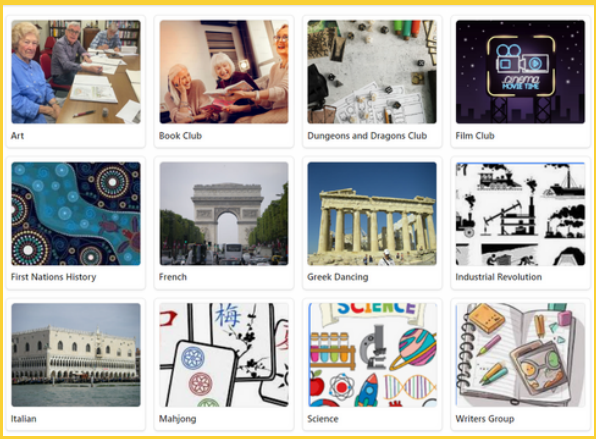
Guest speaker

Beth Tonnissen

Beth will be speaking about vision impairment and how she negotiates this problem.

U3A Hamilton Course Calendar

Click here to view the course calendar.



Current Short Course

The Industrial Revolution
Explore the development of industry, and how it changed our lives forever. .
Runs: 4 October to 13 Dec 2024
Registration and Enquiries to
Alex Pederick 0411758405

Read on for...

- Photos from last month's meeting
- Book of the month: A Month of Sundays
- Film of the month: Romulus, My Father
- From the Writers Group: They should have realised that... By Alex Pederick

Photos from last month's meeting

Thanks to Alex Pederick

Guest speaker, Adrian Dickens, spoke about Liz Taylor and her jewels. Adrian was a most entertaining speaker and one of the pix is of Betty Lacy modelling a replica of one of Liz Taylor's diamond rings, which weighed 33 carats, and sold at auction for over USD8 million .

Quote of the Month

Meeting Minutes

October 2024

There was no meeting in October due to the special seniors week meeting.

Secretary

May Ferguson

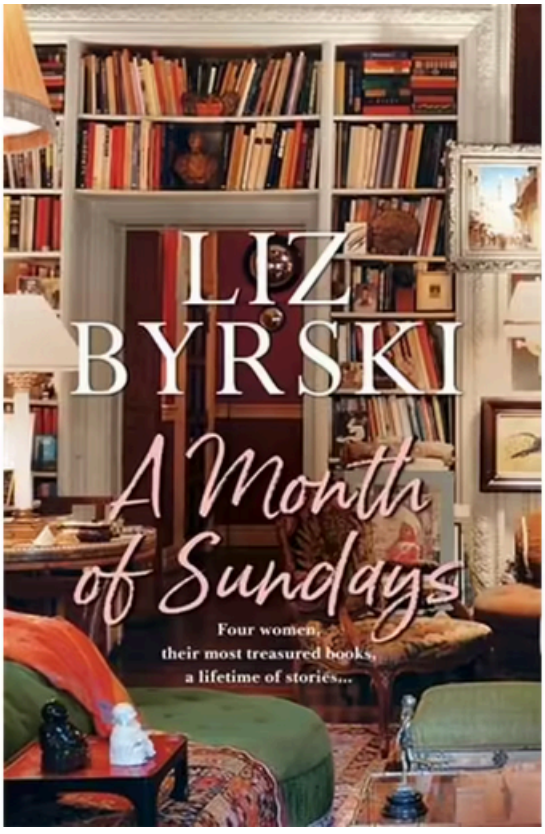
Film Club Film of the Month

Wednesday 13 November 4pm - 6pm
Hamilton Senior Citizens Rooms,
Lonsdale St, Hamilton

ROMULUS, MY FATHER

The tale of a boy trying to balance a universe described by his deeply moral father ,against the experience of heartbreaking absence and neglect from his mother. It is a story of impossible love that celebrates the unbreakable bond between father and son.

Contact May Ferguson 0429914471 for more information



Book Club Book of the Month

A Month of Sundays

by Liz Byrski

The main characters are four mature women who are the remaining members of an online book club. They only meet online and only have a superficial knowledge of each other. Each of these women are experiencing some significant issues in their lives and one of them suggests that they all meet for a month in a house in the Blue Mountains. They are to bring a book for discussion that will tell the others something about themselves.

Liz's journalistic style makes this an easy read and the issues and concerns faced by the women and their journeys are relatable.

Liz Byrski is a novelist, a non-fiction writer, a former journalist and ABC broadcaster with more than 50 years of experience in the British and Australian media. She has written 10 novels and 12 non-fiction books.

They should have realised that…

By Alex Pederick

It started out being a quiet party, just a few friends. Drinks flowed in abundance, and there were the usual nibbles to take, on the end of a sharp toothpick, which then left you with a useless piece of wood to somehow dispose of, or hide. We were enjoying each other's company until 'the crowd' arrived en masse. Somewhere along the way, more and more people had crowded into Mum's small living room, until there were no spare chairs, nowhere to put a drink, and too much noise to hear oneself think!

Conversations eddied around like swirls of smoke – as I moved through the ever-diminishing space towards one of the exits I could discern snippets of political skirmishes underway, usually conducted in low, passionately intense voices until a point of outrage was reached and one of the participants would yell loudly "Rubbish!" or "Bulldust!" or some other juicier epithet, before looking furtively around – had anyone heard his or her outburst? They should have realised that there could never be any agreement between them, and saved themselves the angst.

In another arena, usually the smokiest, darkest corner of the room, smouldering arguments, liberally laced with the noisy inhalations of a spliff being shared, would fulminate and explode with debates about the best in the latest music or the new 'talent' on the block, or obsess about how 'the oldies were really the goodies and this modern stuff's rubbish!' The offended party was likely to depart in high dudgeon, but laughingly a very moderate to low exit was all one could achieve, given the horde that had assembled…

Either way, these discussions were nothing compared to the hopeful local Don Juan who, obviously believing he was God's gift to all nubile young things, had stationed himself strategically near the bathroom, drooling over and attempting to paw the giggling gaggle of kohl-eyed, Kabuki-masked clones as they tittered their way past him to the 'loo. They had deduced that there was safety in numbers, although how a crowd of schoolgirls, strangers to us, were ever going to fit into Mum's modest bathroom, was a mystery. I gave him the 'dead eye' as I evaded his wandering hands.

The weather, as always, was a hot topic of conversation in another part of the room – especially the disputes that erupt everywhere when climate change is mentioned. The generation gap was never wider – a car could have fallen into the abyss of contention – as a group of millennials vociferously blamed the 'boomers' for the world's woes, and the so-named 'boomers' hotly defended their ways of life, bleating about all the innovations they had created in order to make the world a 'better place for you youngsters!' Shaking my head in sad disillusionment, I passed that little group by, also.

Escaping the second-hand smoke and alcohol-fuelled disputes, I headed into the kitchen for some light refreshment, and hopefully some cleaner air. There, propped up against the sink, and completely blocking my way to the cold-water tap was a very earnest young French teenage exchange student (and therefore the arbiter of all knowledge of things Australian), who was holding forth of the immorality of zoos and fauna parks.

It was his contention, he stated, that all animals deserved to be free, and no argument would convince him otherwise. Foolishly, someone tried to convince him otherwise. It was pointed out that the fauna parks and zoos perform valuable work with their captive breeding programs, so that some endangered species can later be returned to the wild, but he would not be budged.

By now, I was thoroughly bored, and began wishing they would all leave. As I elbowed my way past the contenders to the fridge, I happened to glance through the window towards the back yard where the dog runs were kept. To my utter amazement, a polar bear in a red fez strolled up to the gate, unlatched it and then whistled to some unseen companions.
All thoughts of a cleansing ale were forgotten as I beheld this incredible sight. My hand clutched the open fridge door as I watched, mesmerised.
There appeared to be an entire zoo in my back garden! Through the gate came a lion resplendent in a feather boa, followed by a brown bear walking on hind legs and wearing a party hat, several dancing deer tricked out in shimmering fairy lights, a tiger chatting up an antelope and a waddle of formally attired penguins! Competently marshalled by the polar bear, they all marched through Mum's garden bed and down to the side gate. I cautiously opened the back door to watch them leave, slipped outside and flattened myself along the side of the house. No one else had seemed to have noticed this weird phenomenon, and I was all alone. It hadn't occurred to me that my actions were nothing if not a little foolish, or that someone had, perhaps, slipped something nasty into my earlier drink, but the feeling of unworldliness persisted. As I crept around the corner of the house, the polar bear, who had stopped to usher his companions through the gate, turned and looked directly at me. I froze in fear.
"Child" he said gently in a deep rumbling tone, lifting his fez politely "go back to sleep. You're just dreaming!"
I woke to the grumbling growl of the garbage truck and the answering barking of the dogs. I leapt from my bed, the dream still so vivid on my tongue I could taste it! Sunshine streamed remorselessly through the shutters; outside, a sunny day smiled benignly on a completely normal landscape – not a sign of a polar bear anywhere, except for the cartoon logo on an empty 'Bundy' rum can on the floor next to the couch where I had obviously passed out.
So much for a quiet party! Wild animals on the loose would have been an utter nightmare!