Hamilton Newsletter

October 2024

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October Meeting: Special Seniors Festival Meeting

Tuesday 8th October: 9:45am for 10am start
Hamilton Baptist Church
48 - 50 Gray St,
Hamilton 3300

Special guest speaker

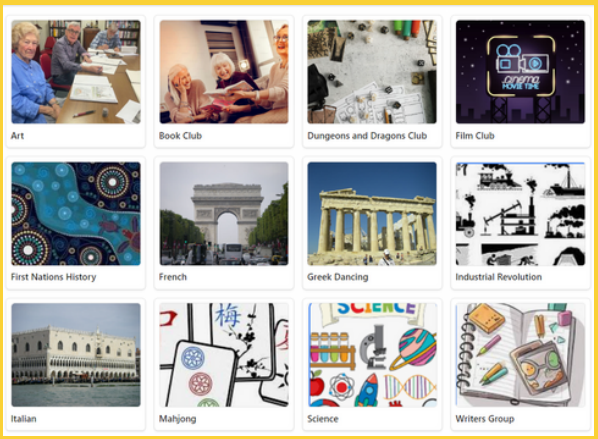
Adrian Dickens

Jewellery Historian and personal jeweller.

All seniors welcome.
Cost: $10.00
Bookings Essential
PH: 0428 240 830

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. .
Start Date 4 October
Registration and Enquiries to
Alex Pederick 0411758405

Read on for...

- Photos from last month's meeting
- Meeting Minutes
- Book of the month: Wifedom: Mrs Orwell's Invisible LIfe
- From the Writers Group: Alice in Confusion (Crying Uncontrollably) By Chris Simpson

Flower arranging demonstration

with new U3A member

Heather Casey, Flower arranging expert

Photos from last month's meeting

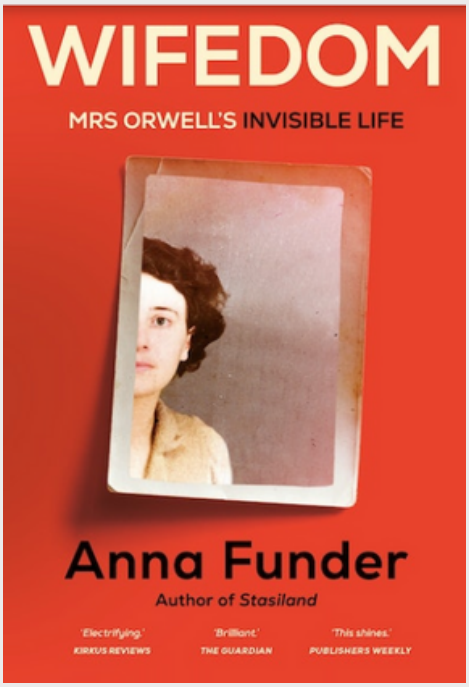
Thanks to Alex Pederick

Meeting Minutes

September 2024

Open and welcome Denise Stevens
Apologies: David and Wendy Davies, Geoff Sanderson, Brenda Thomson, Jeanette Storer, Anne Boland
Attendance 35
Visitors
Margaret Duffy,Heather Heard
Lunch today at Alexander House
Minutes of previous meeting as circulated
Business arising
Trip to Dergholm pub successful,car pooling 9 people and scenic drive with tasty pizzas.
Southern Grampians council contacted for installation of Heartstart defribillator in the club rooms.
Correspondence nil
Treasurers report
Deficit $1;231.40 this year Total $9,184.98
Accept E McLean seconded Jan Murrihy
General Business
Heather Casey is today's speaker on flower arrangement
Car pool trip to Marlene and Roger Hallam's property on Tuesday 24th September
October meeting is seniors week at Baptist church with catering to be organised by their ladies.Flyers will be distributed by Denise and Alex
Numbers needed for catering.
Meeting closed 9.45am
Secretary

May Ferguson



Book Club Book of the Month

George Orwell (Eric Blair) married Eileen O'Shaughnessy in 1936.
At that time he had written 3 books.
In 2017 Anna started rereading Orwell's material and realised that there were only vague mentions of his wife Eileen.
She investigated further and discovered another side to this famous writer and much more about his wife. The contribution made by Eileen to Orwell's work, particularly 1984, Animal Farm and Homage to Catalonia had been unacknowledged even by her husband.
This book, a 399 page mix of biography, essay and fiction, sets about rectifying this erasure.

Alice in Confusion (Crying Uncontrollably)

By Chris Simpson

Alice and her companions were walking on a track apparently half way up, and winding around, what appeared to be a complex of nearly vertical mountains. Occasionally, the way widened out to areas of steep grassy vegetation, but at times it was a narrow path with a cliff on the right and a sheer drop on the left. The whole system was in swirly white cloud. Alice asked herself: What was she doing? Where was she going? And how did she get here?.....

She vaguely remembered having been in a long tubular cabin with seats and an aisle down (or up) the middle. Attendants had just evicted a large caterpillar for smoking a hookah in the toilet, which made her seriously look around at her fellow travellers as the p.a. system started playing a song about mock turtle soup. Yes! There were some familiar characters near her: On her side in the row ahead she could see a white rabbit with a stop watch, a walrus and a carpenter. Screwing her neck around she could just see Humpty Dumpty, Tweedledum, and Tweedledee in the row behind her. It was easier to see on the other side of the Aisle: Just across was a white knight in his armour, with a Duchess and a pig sitting beside him. In the row ahead of them, there was a Hatter, a March Hare, and a comatose Dormouse. In the row behind them was a sheep knitting, a Cheshire Cat,... and was that Bill the Lizard? A Dodo had just opened an overhead locker and Alice could see it contained some flamingoes and rolled-up hedgehogs: Obviously they were going to a Croquet tournament. An attendant in uniform, with a folded newspaper as a cap, chivvied the Dodo to sit down A brief look through the curtain into first class had shown the King, Queen and Knave of Hearts, and the White and Black Kings and Queens from chess.

This memory faded. Here she was now, walking around mountains. The seven Royal Personages she had briefly seen were not with her now, but almost all of the rest of her old acquaintances were walking in single file behind her, as she trudged along this mostly-narrow track. In her adventure in Wonderland there were playing cards all around, including a bloodthirsty Queen. When she went through the Looking Glass it was chess pieces including the White Knight, who was clanking as he walked behind her: What games now? Were these slippery muddy slopes on the path and the occasional handrail and steps something to do with playing Snakes and Ladders in this adventure? But something was not quite right !

The path came to a rickety wooden bridge over a very deep gorge with a fast-flowing river at the bottom. A broken sign said “/CRE BRIDG/”. With trepidation, and well spread out to avoid overloading it, they crossed the bridge as, being just the one road, they had to continue: To return by the way they had come was unthinkable. And now the usable ground was getting wider and rather less steep. Now, smaller paths occasionally started to branch off on either side and disappear into forested areas.

Alice was increasingly getting the feeling that something was radically wrong. Despite the feeling that there was a more-or-less sheer drop, by now, some way to the left, and she could see high, steep, and jagged cliffs away to the right. Where she was, the ground was getting increasingly wide and less steep. Coming over a slight rise she found that they were entering what was either a large village or a very small town. To the left, at the top of the precipice, was an extremely small and decrepit castle with a single guard at the open gateway. To the right, the village, or perhaps town, straggled around an open area. On one side of this area an Inn was doing a certain amount of noisy trade, but the real noise was coming from a large cottage where a party of some sort was in progress. There was a large grey one-eyed cat, with very ragged ears, just outside; looking, and smelling, evil. Within, a loud but cracked voice was singing verses about the natural protection to a form of attack that is possessed by hedgehogs, but not by other animals.

Although Alice could hear every word, she did not understand all of them, and realised that these were probably lewd! This was obviously wrong for someone of her upbringing, and she was starting to feel seriously out of place: People were largely ignoring her and her companions as they passed by.

As Alice got to the space in front of the Castle, she saw that the small guard was clad in rusty chainmail that was about six sizes too large, and he had a breastplate and a helmet that were similarly ill-fitting and rusty. He was armed with a large and decrepit pike. Just then there was the sound of a trumpet from inside the castle causing a small turret to fall off. Several seconds later there was a splash!

From inside the castle a young, thin, flat-chested woman came into view. Her dress was covered with sigils and amulets, but mostly metallic bling. She had a mass of unruly hair which was only partly restrained by a crown on top, and a plethora of hatpins and wildflowers that were stuck in at random around the edges. She had such a squint that she appeared to be looking up her own nose. She was pushing a pram with a baby in it. As she came to the guard, he sprang to attention and nearly impaled himself with the pike trying to present arms; counting “Hup – two - three, Oof – two – three. Hggh – two – three” as he did it.

The woman said to the guard “Shawn! The King will be wanting the Royal cart in half an hour to go to Bad Ass to collect some vegetables.” “Yes Mmm” “You will be driving it.” “Yes Mmm” “So you can go and change your armour now.” “Yes Mmm. Thank you. Mmm!” He propped the pike against one side of the archway, started to turn to his left, paused, then about-turned to the right, and disappeared through the arch with a rattle of chainmail.

The crowned lady frowned, looking around the square, and finally spotted an old lady clothed in black with a pointed hat, who was hobbling in her direction: “Granny Weatherwax. What happened to you?” “Damned broomstick wouldn’t start, er your Maj,... er Magrat.”

The weather that had been clearing suddenly cleared, and everyone could see, in an opening gap in the clouds, the edge of the mountains and the plains beyond extending to the sea and a circular horizon beyond that. A brown cloud hovered over a place it concealed near the sea:

The lady with the crown said “Look it’s clearing. The cabbages on the Sto Plains are very green this year, and you can almost see where Ankh Morpork is. That brown is certainly its air pollution.”

The singing was still proceeding, and the lady and the witch had a brief colloquy “Which verse is Nanny Ogg on?” “I think number 23; something to do with a giraffe and a ladder.” “ Oh she’s nearly finished, then.” –- “Cooee Gytha! Coven time!!”

A voice suddenly hushed the hubbub in the house, and Alice got all the confirmation she didn’t want. The voice had shouted “ Pray Silence for her Graciousness, Her Majesty, Magrat, Queen of Lancre, on the sides of Ramtops, in Diskworld”.....

To mix metaffors* a bit; The penny had suddenly dropped from a great height onto Alice, hitting her like a sockful of wet porridge behind the ears. She burst into tears as she realised exactly what had happened. Crying uncontrollably, and forgetting all decorum, Alice turned to her companions and sobbed “This is Terry Pratchett, not Lewis Carroll !! - We’re in the wrong bloody book !!”

** metaffors = a useful combination of metaphors, similes, and double entendres.*