



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All!

Retirement

*Wife to Husband:
'What are you doing?'*

*Husband:
'Nothing'*

Wife: 'You did that yesterday'

Husband: 'I wasn't finished'

(Thanks to Jim Wilkinson for this little gem!)

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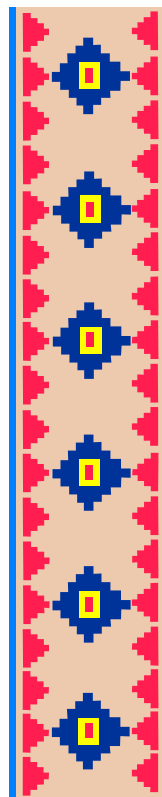
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Christmas Breakup

The U3A Granite Belt Christmas breakup will be held again this year at the Bramble Patch Berry Farm, in the form of a morning tea (cost about \$8.00) commencing at 10am on Thursday 8th December.

Cars will meet at Weeroona Park Stanthorpe at 9.30am, so if you need a lift, please be at the Park by that time.

After the morning tea, we intend to go down the road a bit, to Irene and Ian Grevis James's place in Townsend Road, wander through their garden, as we did last year.



Identifying Products from Overseas by Barcode

If you try to ensure you purchase food products processed in hygienic conditions, you can do so by checking the barcode.

Barcodes starting with the numbers 69 (691 to 695) are made in China, which may not have the same food inspection standards as western countries.

- 00 to 13 USA and Canada
- 30 to 37 France
- 40 to 44 Germany
- 49 Japan
- 50 United Kingdom
- 57 Denmark
- 64 Finland
- 76 Switzerland and Liechtenstein
- 93 Australia
- 628 Saudi Arabia
- 629 United Arab Emirates
- 740 to 745 Central America
- 480 codes are the Philippines

Poetry - Water was the Theme

Waterfall by Seamus Heaney.

*The burn drains steadily in its own down-pour,
a helter-skelter of muslin and glass
that skids to a halt, crashing up suds.
Simultaneous acceleration
and sudden braking; water goes over
like villains dropped screaming to justice.
It appears an athletic glacier
has reared into reverse: is swallowed up
and regurgitated through this long throat.
My eye rides over and downwards, falls with
hurtling tons that slabber and spill,
falls, yet records the tumult thus standing still.*

This evocative poem, by Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney, was only one of many along the water theme, which kept us in awe and amazed at the November Poetry group gathering at Rosemary Duncan's home at Ballandean.

The group's next gathering, back home at the Learning Centre on Friday 2nd December, has as its theme 'Celebration', and promises to be another thought-provoking journey through the realms of literary gold.

You don't have to be a literary whizz to enjoy and appreciate poetry - come along and see what it does for you!



Food Investigation/ Garden Group Visit to Gilmour's

November has been a very busy month for the Garden Group. Joining with the Food Investigations group to visit Terry and Sue Ann Gilmour's garden at Donnelly's Castle was an extra outing for the Garden

Group, as well as the last outing for Food Investigations for the time being.

The visit was a real treat, because Terry and Sue Ann have identified many native species which are edible, and have created a virtual food bowl in an idyllic

bushland setting which obviously is relatively protected from our harshest frosts, as they are able to grow many citrus and other species which don't normally like the Stanthorpe environment.



The photo show Terry directing the group where to go, if they step on any of his rare species.

Thanks are expressed to Terry and Sue Ann, who capped off our visit with an A/V presentation - a great morning.



Bits and Pieces: Walking Group - General Meetings

Walking Group It's getting warm in the mornings, so the Walking Group have decided to go for an earlier time.

From this month (December) and starting on Wednesday Dec 7th, the walk will commence at **6.30am** instead of 8.30 as previous. We have lately been a very small (select) group, but we are very welcoming, so if you feel like an early

morning walk (of about a half hour) come down to Heritage Park, cnr Granite and Rose Streets, and join in.

General Meetings Next year's general meetings are starting to be arranged already.

The first general meeting of the year will on **Thursday 16th February**, and will be a welcome back, and a welcome to any new members. If you have a friend who

you think would benefit from membership of U3A, bring them along that day - we are planning a morning tea and open day.

The March general meeting, on **Thursday 15th March**, will have a speaker from the Anti Discrimination Commission, which will be a meeting advertised to other groups. We also may have some visitors from other U3As for this presentation.

Investment Group (by Leon and Steve)

The new group is now underway, with 12 members, and at our November meeting, we had \$1000 left after our initial investments, with which to play around.

The decision was made to purchase a further 59 shares @ \$16.23 in JB Hi-Fi as a short term buy, and sell in the New Year, after Christmas and New Year sales.

Treasurer Paul asked the meeting for authorisation to sell shares after a pre-determined percentage profit.

(It was moved Steve that Paul be authorised to sell shares after a 10% or more profit, seconded Maurie - Carried.)

Being Remembrance Day the meeting paused for one minute at precisely 11.00am - "Lest We Forget".

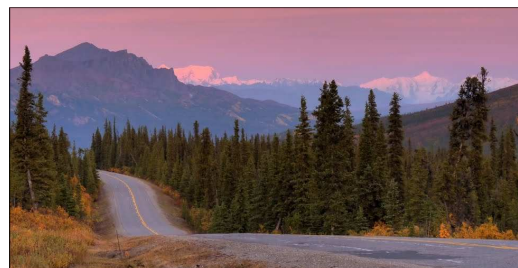
A reminder that our group is open to new members buying in if they wish, at the current value of our investments (but at a minimum investment of \$500 for a unit in the group.) For this small outlay, you will learn quite a bit about the stock market.

Christmas break up was discussed and it was resolved we have lunch at Vincenzo's at the Big Apple at 12.00noon after the meeting on Friday 9th December. Bring your partner, and those not at the meeting please advise JA by email (ja4951@halenet.com.au) by Monday 5th if you are attending.

Dromomaniac's Dream Trips (by Jan)

Dot Stewart's tour of Alaska, Canada and USA was the absolute envy of this scribe. Amongst many other 'must see' places, reports of her favourites of Denali NP, cruising the Inside Passage, Niagara Falls, Grand Canyon and Yosemite NP in autumn, left us once again checking our passports. Dot had the joy of combining wonderful sightseeing with family catchup – what travel could be better? A highlight was meeting Jeff King, a multiple winner of the Iditarod (arguably the greatest athletic achievement of all) and seeing white beluga whales, the only ones able to turn their heads. Mary Clarke is the first of our group

to regale us with an account of a trip to Africa. A contrast to many tours that feature cities and snowclad mountains, this African safari featured people and wild animals. The Masais (whose main diet is milk, blood and meat, and wealth is measured by the number in their cattle herd) enjoy entertaining tourists and have turned their uniqueness into \$\$\$. The vast landscape featuring the Rift Valley, Lake Manyara, Serengeti Plain, Ngora Ngora crater, Tarangiri and Mt. Kilimanjaro (though often mist-shrouded) presented many wonderful photo



Above: Denali National Park, Alaska

opportunities. Mary's beautifully composed shots of the incredible variety of wild animals she saw gave us an indication of how it's possible, if you're game, to get quite close to these animals in their natural habitat.

Other Dromomaniacs are asked to save their personal travel stories until we next meet on 24th February 2012.



Garden Group Breakup at Chiyoko and John's (by Leon and Kerrie)

The Garden Group Christmas breakup was held in the idyllic grounds overlooking the large expanse of water of John and Chiyoko Pietruszkiewicz's dam.

During morning tea John gave an interesting talk on his experience of apiculture explaining the design of the bee hive where the queen bee is in the brood box and is excluded from the honey super boxes above.

We then inspected John's new veggie garden which was terraced and fenced from the rab-



bits. He had heirloom tomatoes, peas, potatoes, water-melons, capsicums, sweet corn, cucumber, beans, etc. all mulched and growing very well. The weather was a little

inclement so we had lunch in John and Chiyoko's dining room in their beautiful home which was designed and built by John.

It was a lovely way to finish another successful year of fellowship and learning the many aspects of gardening.

Kerrie is forming a small planning committee to help organise next year's outings. There will be an outing on Wednesday 18th January, topic and venue to be advised.

Mystery Photo

The photo at right is this month's mystery photo - a mysterious spherical object capable of causing immense frustration, and wasting enormous amounts of time. If you can guess what it is, contact Steve by mid December and you could be the winner of the magnificent prize - of a self-funded trip to wherever you would like to go in the world.



Last month's photo was either too hard or too easy, as no entries were received. If you had entered and guessed it was Steve in the Old Parliament House, Canberra, sitting on the Government benches, you would have been right. (I'd do it now, if only they would ask, and solve all their problems for them.)



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Programme for December 2011

Weekly Activities -

- Every Mon - MahJong, Cribbage, Sewing (mornings) - at STEPS - from 9.30am to 12.30pm Contact: J A Dvorak
- “ “ - Art Group - Senior Citizens Room - 9.30am to 4pm - cost \$5 Contact: Laurie Astill
- “ “ - Jonola (cards) - at RSL - 1.30pm - Contact: Liz Drake
- Every Wed - Heart Foundation Walking Group - from Heritage Park - Note change of time! **6.30am** Contact: JA Dvorak

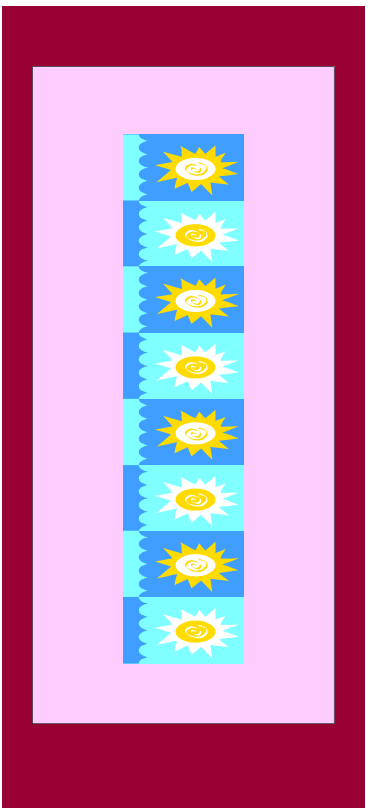
Monthly Activities -

- 1st Thur (1st) - Yarn Group - 10am at Learning Centre - Icebreaker topic: Don't they know it's Christmas? Convenors: Steve and Roy
- 1st Fri (2nd) - Poetry Group - 10am at Learning Centre - Theme: Celebration Contact: Lynda
- 1st Tues (6th) - German Language - STEPS at 10am - Convenor: Irene Grevis-James. **Last lesson for year.** Contact Irene to participate in 2012
- 2nd Thur (8th)- **Christmas Break up** - 10:00am - Morning tea at Bramble Patch Berry Garden **Christmas Break up gathering for this year** followed by visit to Grevis James's garden. Contact Jan or Mary
- 2nd Fri (9th) - Investment Group - 10am at Learning Centre - meeting then lunch at Vincenzo's Contact: J A Dvorak
- 2nd Tues (13th) - Music for Pleasure - 7pm at Chiyoko and John's - Christmas music Contact: Carol or Oriël

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This is the end of U3A Granite Belt's 2011 programme. Weekly activities will most likely continue on and after Mon 12th Dec 2011 and in January 2012 - contact group convenors for further details.

The 2012 Programme will start mid to late January 2012

Have a safe and happy Christmas and New Year break.




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