

Friends of the Nelson Library Inc.  
Private Bag 41  
Nelson  
September 2011 newsletter



Friends of the Nelson Library Committee  
2011 - 2012

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## BOOKCHAT

Bookchat is a get-together to talk, over tea or coffee, about books recently read. Come along and tell us about what you have been reading, or just come to hear what titles other people have enjoyed. No need to book, just roll up.

### Bookchat at Elma Turner Library

10.30am on the second Tuesday of every month:

September 13

October 11

November 8

December 13

### Bookchat at Stoke Library

10.30am on the first Thursday of every month:

September 8

October 6

November 3

December 8



## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

After my first year as chairperson I would like to thank my committee members who have all supported me in the role.

The most auspicious occasion this year was the celebration of our twenty year anniversary in March. The other major event was the launch of the *Nelson Photo News* website. This was the culmination of more than a year's hard work by individuals from various interested organisations. After seventeen years and with three major projects completed the Microfilm subcommittee has now been disbanded.

Our major fundraising activity was the book sales, two big ones in addition to the regular monthly ones. These enabled us to donate \$6,000 to the library and also pay \$3,000 towards the cost of a NZ Film Archives licence to have a portal in the library.

The Sunday winter talks were well attended. For NZ Book Month in March local author Lindy Kelly intrigued us with a talk entitled "Finding Fact in Fantasy". Anne Kolless, a very seasoned traveler, came along in April with tips and examples on how to travel lightly and stay safe. China was the topic of the next talk by Keith Marshall who enthralled us with his experiences and observations of life in China. In June, Carl Nixon, a Christchurch writer, gave us a glimpse into the world of a writer. Thanks to Ian Littleworth, the library manager, who delivered an excellent power-point presentation on the future of libraries and reassured us that they will still have a place in the modern technological world. Lastly in August, Hans Andersen, a local vet told us "How animals got me to where I am today". A very entertaining talk.

Next year marks the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Nelson Library. We will be celebrating it!

*Jeannie Woodhouse*

# BIG BOOK SALE

2011

Activity Room  
Elma Turner Library

Friday 4 November, 10am – 5.45pm

Saturday 5 November, 10am – 12.45pm

&

Sunday 6 November, 1pm – 3.45pm

Biography

History

Science

New Zealand

Plus many more  
subjects.

Some Fiction too!

**LOCAL NELSON  
PRINTS**

Hurrah for the  
Friends of the Nelson  
Library!!



Snippets from the Library Manager's 2010 - 2011 Report  
as presented at the Friends of the Nelson Library AGM  
August 17 2011

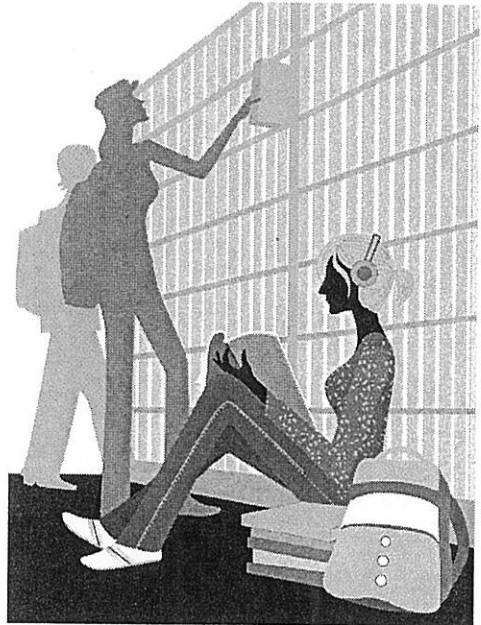
- Waitangi celebrations -a full week of events and displays were offered this year including workshops on koauau (flute) making, Treaty of Waitangi, and each morning at opening time welcoming customers in to the Library with a karanga. Maori Language Week also had similar workshops and a native plant exchange, performances from the Kohanga Reo
- Writers in Residence Programme – Joan Rosier Jones and Lloyd Jones talks at the Library and one-to-one tutorials
- New Children's Services Team Leader, Margot Collins, completed first year July 2010 - July 2011. New Children's & Young Adults' Librarian appointed November 2010
- Business as usual for ongoing programmes such as summer Reading Programme, Books for Babies, Storytime and Smalltime, all well supported. Starlight Stories also very popular. Holiday programmes enjoying increasing numbers, many visitors from Christchurch with Nelson grandparents.
- Groups continuing to use our resources well, and of course the Activity room, especially new immigrant groups. Launch in August 2010 of a new World Language Collection of materials in 10 locally-relevant languages. ESOL collection renewed April 2011
- New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards and Festival day at Founders Heritage Park
- Library Week – fun activities enjoyed by customers, eg 'Blind dates with books'
- Profile of Library kept raised through talks by authors and other guest speakers, most of these arranged by Friends of the Library. (Joanna Trollope's visit was a coup, arranged via a local bookseller)
- 'Stoke Library refurbishment project completed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August

Continued overleaf

Usage statistics show increase:

- The first 9 months of 2010/2011 financial year have seen an average of 1500 more people through the doors compared with the same time period last financial year
- March 2011 saw an increase of 10% in Elma Turner Library door count over March 2010
- The Tuesday after Easter, one of our two busiest days of the year, saw 2030 people through the doors at Elma Turner Library, with 4527 returns and 3774 issues.
- 1106 people came into Elma Turner Library in the three hours we were open on Saturday 18th April, the first day of the school holidays
- Membership has increased - from December 2010 to end of March 2011 the number of members joining per month has gone from an average of between 300 and 400, to an average of between 400 and 500
- Some of the busyness in March was due to large numbers of Christchurch 'refugees' staying in Nelson. Approx. 100 have joined, a significant number saying they expect to stay in Nelson for good.
- Medianet installed
- Launch of Photo News
- Increased number of Press Display Computers

Poetry week very successful with particularly animated performances



## Another profile from the Committee

I joined the friends by a sort of osmosis; I'd been asked to select from a wonderful lot of children's paintings - a few to embellish fund raising cards for the Friends - & I found myself incorporated.

My reading interests are eclectic, but to focus on one aspect, I see myself as a lapsed optimist, lapsed since reading in the same week, aged about 16, both *Brave New World* & *1984*.

Much of my literary diet since has been dystopian - even eschatological. Such jolly tomes as *Survival* (1960) had much to do with a decision to emigrate to safer shores in the Southern Hemisphere. Erlich's *The Population Bomb*, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, George Stewart's *Earth Abides*, Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* did nothing to allay my anxiety.

Things have not improved - recent offerings by Martin Rees (*Our Final Century*), James Lovelock & Tim Flannery among a host of others make the Book of Revelations seem a scenario for a vicar's garden party!

Of course some of us may pull through - bit of an anticlimax really!

Christopher Vine

### SUBS NOW DUE

Subscriptions (\$10) for the 2011-2012 year were due as from 1 July. You can pay by cheque (made out to Friends of the Nelson Library Inc.) by posting to Friends of the Nelson Library at Private Bag 41, Nelson 7042, or drop it off at the library.

If you wish to pay by cash please place it in an envelope and include your name, address and telephone number, and leave at the issues desk. (You can use the form at the back of this newsletter). Write "Friends of the Library subscription" on the envelope, please.

Note that subscriptions have been \$10 for the past twenty years. The money helps us in our work supporting the library. We now have more than ninety members.

## Profile of committee member, Jill Blechynden.

One of the founding members of the Friends of the Nelson Library

I was asked to become a member in 1993 as I had just sold my bookshop, ABC Bookshop (founded with Bob Anderson in 1964), then located in upper Trafalgar Street (now Hopgoods Restaurant), to Tim and Susi Blackmore. So my knowledge of books and authors after about 28 years was considered advantageous. In the ABC Bookshop I also featured children's books - the classics by Rudyard Kipling, Carroll, Tolkien, Milne, Grahame, Shepard, and Beatrix Potter were all heavily stocked. Their illustrations were superb, as they should be to inspire the young mind, and they were my trademark. However I was not popular with some publishers for refusing to stock children's classics that had been "Disneyized". A classic is a classic as presented in its original form, and I considered they were vandalized after coming out of 50 year copyright and being tweaked by Disney.

I was also events co-ordinator for the Nelson Institute (which founded in 1841 what, much later, became the Library and Museum.) In 1965 the then President of the Nelson Institute, Elma Turner, was responsible for instigating a crisis, resulting in a Declaratory Judgement being obtained that stated the Institute did indeed still exist, as long as there were still members, and the body continued to fulfil the aims of the founding documents. Further to this, the "Coffee and Books" series were started, events were arranged which provided a speaking platform for local authors, publishers etc. In addition other civic seminars and scientific events were held. As a result I have rubbed shoulders with many of the literary famous.

I tend to read histories and biographies, and some fiction with an authentic historical background - "Faction". Fiction, in my mind, is pure escapism which I do not need. I sleep well enough at the end of a day without this diversion that is so popular. However, in the past (many aeons ago) over breastfeeding, Mary Stewart novels, Essie Summers and the like were great favourites. I am sure my offspring were not disadvantaged because I was entertained and relaxed, although it was very much a no-no with Plunket!

Some highlights long gone have to be *The Evolution Man* (Lewis), Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, Ken Follett *The Pillars of the Earth*, and the Rutherford series *Sarum* etc. An exemption to this pattern was my addiction to the Mary Westley novels in the 1980's - so

delightfully zany, and her autobiography *Wild Mary* a winner!! Recently *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, and Helen Brown's *Cleo the Uppity Cat* have been un-put-downable.

Recently I have attended a lecture given by our Library Manager, Ian Littleworth, "Libraries in the Future". A profound survey of the vast changes available through modern technology. That said, at the risk of being dubbed a literary dinosaur, I choose to cuddle up cosily with a physical tome, and a magnifying glass if necessary, and enjoy the printed word in comfort. However, the quest for knowledge will never die, so good luck and my blessing to the modern age, but leave me being happily old-fashioned!

Jill Blechynden



Jill outside ABC Bookshop in 1987

## BOOK REVIEW

Ghost train to the Eastern Star by Paul Theroux. Penguin 2008

This account of a train journey from England to Japan earns the comment from the *Observer* that "Theroux's work remains the standard by which other travel writing must be judged".

Theroux first made this journey in 1973 when he was 33 years old. He wrote about it in *The Great Railway Bazaar* which established his reputation, and at twice that age in 2006, he repeated the journey. Incidentally, the earlier book had a helpful, if rather rough, map which this book lacks.

Train travellers have all experienced the unique sensation of sitting back in a railway carriage, looking out the window at the changing landscape, observing it either closely or abstractedly and meditating. Theroux carries a notebook in which he records his thoughts to be transcribed later into book form.

Leaving London in the rain the weather brings back memories - the street where his bike was stolen, "the butcher shops, the florist, the Chinese grocer's". The rain continues across springtime France, Germany, Austria and the Balkans to Istanbul, finally ceasing in Ankara. On he goes, through Turkestan and the other "stan" countries to India, Sri Lanka, South East Asia and Japan, recording changes, small and great, which have occurred since his previous visit. The result is a large book, 496 pages, but with interesting observations, opinions and impressions, very easy to read.

Brian Prendergast



Friends of the Nelson Library Inc  
Membership Form

Yes, I'd like to join/renew

\$10 p.a.

Please make Cheque payable to *Friends of the Nelson Library Inc.* Please mail with form to: The Treasurer, Friends of the Nelson Library Inc, Private Bag 41, Nelson, or leave in envelope, marked as above, with a Library staff member.

Name (please print) : .....

Address : .....

.....

Phone ..... Date .....

Email

(optional) .....

Members receive

- \* \$6 of Library vouchers each year that can be used for reserving books, CD's etc.
- \* 10% discount on non-sale items at Page & Blackmore Booksellers, Trafalgar St, Nelson.
- \* Quarterly newsletter

Optional : please indicate if you are interested in being involved with any of the following

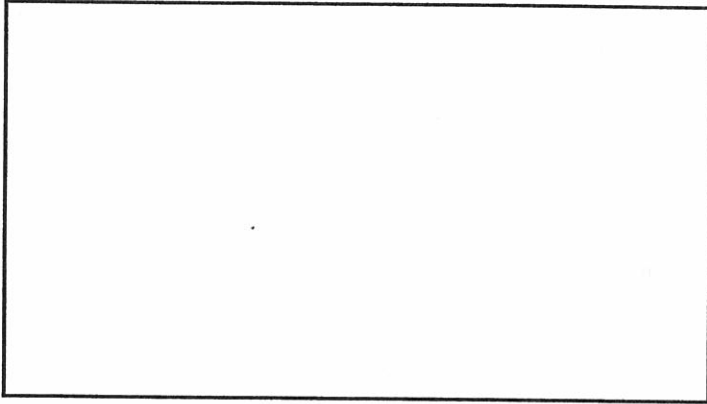
Contribute to newsletter

Help with book sales

Serve on the committee

Assist with events eg setting up room, door duty, checking catalogue for material to display at talks

NB: Membership is for 12 months, to commence 1st July, start of our financial year.



Affix stamp here

The Friends of the Nelson Library  
Private Bag 41  
Nelson 7042

### MONTHLY BOOKSALES

Remember these continue to be held on the first Saturday of each month in Elma Turner Library. 10 am–12:45pm.

Enquiries to Jill 548 0075