



University of the Third Age - Knysna

Incorporating Sedgefield
P O Box 1031, Knysna 6570
Website: www.u3a.org.za

JANUARY 2012
113th Monthly Newsletter

Dear U3A Members

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KNYSNA U3A will be held on Thursday, 26th January at Brenton Community Hall

The meeting will start promptly at 10.30am and refreshments will be served between 9:30 and 10:15. To avoid congestion at the door, please come early with your 2012 subs of R60 (only R10 increase since way back when!), ready to register for another fulfilling year!

All paid-up members will again be receiving a current membership card to put into their plastic holder. This should be worn at all courses, meetings and outings.

Course Presenters who presented 4 or more courses, talks or lectures during 2011 are entitled to FREE Membership for 2012 – please obtain a membership card at the front desk.

If any of your details have changed e.g. contact no, e-mail address, please fill in the attached registration form and hand in at the desk at the meeting. Membership application forms are also available at the library.

The main business of the meeting will be a revue of the activities and finances of the past year. For those with e-mail: the 2011 AGM Minutes and Chairperson's Report for 2011 are attached to this newsletter. Please read before the meeting. A few copies will be available at the meeting.

Judy sends her apologies for missing the meeting, as she and Jim will be attending UCT Summer School. While there, she will be looking out for some more of those interesting speakers to present at our U3A meetings.

Equally important is the election of the 2012 Committee – 5 members of the existing Committee retire at this meeting. We are specifically looking for a Secretary and someone to take charge of the Audio-Visual portfolio.

"The success of the Knysna U3A is undoubtedly due to the members, their ideas and enthusiasm, but it does need a group of people to co-ordinate everything, so this is an urgent appeal for volunteers to offer to serve on the Committee. To encourage you, the accompanying photograph shows that our Committee meetings are FUN!! Judy is waiting for you to contact her with your offer to join the Committee in 2012!" Judy Dixon



Immediately after the closure of the AGM, our speaker David Huisman of Ocean Odyssey will be presenting "The Local Whale and Dolphin Community around Knysna". David has been trained by one of South Africa's leading dolphin researchers. He has worked at the Centre for Dolphin Studies (CDS) and helped run their commercial whale watching operation, raising funds for CDS research programmes, collecting video footage and attending strandings. This experience has provided David with a fantastic knowledge of the marine mammal wildlife that inhabits this area.

His wife, Amanda, with an MSc in Zoology, is able to use her scientific background to support David.

U3A NATIONAL INDABA APRIL 2012

Sue Rijdsdijk, Chairperson of the George U3A, will address our AGM meeting to clarify the latest on the U3A Indaba scheduled for Monday 16th to Thursday 19th April, with Knysna hosting on Thursday 19th April. She will also indicate how anyone can access the website to register for the Indaba, and also add any activities / accommodation / etc. to the website.

KEEP THESE DATES OPEN FOR AN INTERESTING PROGRAMME!

If you have not yet done so, please use the opportunity of this general meeting to contribute to our Christmas Project for the Swop Shop run by Edge of Africa. Boxes will be available at the hall. Please, no junk food or sweets!

SWOP SHOP WISH LIST REMINDER:

- ▶ Second-hand: **Shoes**, Trousers, Shorts, T-Shirts, Warm Jerseys, Swimwear – for children 2 – 18 yrs.
- ▶ Second-hand: Story Books, Stuffed Toys
- ▶ Coloured pens, Hardcover Books (for writing), Lined Paper, Pens and Pencils
- ▶ **Pet Food** for cats and dogs – tins/pellets
- ▶ **SOCCER BALLS**
- ▶ **Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Soap, Face Cloths**

COURSE COMMENTS

Armchair Travel – Wednesday 1 February at 14h30 at Belvidere Manor. Tea/coffee and scones at R20.

Don Wood on “A Trip to Etosha Game Reserve, the Okavango Delta and the Magadigadi Pan”.

Contact: Ian Huskisson - 044 384 0302

Scrabble Club – Thursday 2 February at 10h00 at the Waterfront at 34° South.

Contact: Eleanora Fraser - 044 382 6674

Birding – Thursday 2 February, meet at Bosuns at 08:00.

The group will be visiting the **Keurbooms/Bitou estuary** at Plett to check out the waders and water birds and may also visit the **Derbyshire Quarry pond** and possibly the **Plett sewage works**.

Contact: Sue Brandt – 044 382 0099

Medical Matters – Tuesday 7 February at St Boniface Hall at 14h00.

By popular demand, Dr Johan Olivier will repeat his presentation, “**Stroke 180**” in which he explains the symptoms of a stroke and the appropriate treatment.

Contact: Sue Brandt – 044 382 0099

Know your Neighbourhood – “From Timber to Chocolates”. Wednesday 8 Feb. Meet at Bosuns at 9h15.

We will be visiting the **Timber Shed**, the saw mill in Knysna Industrial Area which is owned by Dalena Wolmarans, then driving on to the **Chocolate Shop** near the Crags (after Plett) to see chocolate and Venetian mask making.

Contact: Brenda Falconer – 044 384 1121

Non-Fiction Book Club No 1 – Thursday 9 February at the home of Gudrun Boemer, 140 Embling Close, Belvidere at 09:30.

Contact: Irene Wustrow - 044 382 7741

U3A Science Discussion Group – Tuesday 14 February at the Leisure Isle Small Boat Club at 10h00.

Sue Swain will discuss some of the “**Scientific Aspects of the Naturally Knysna Campaign**”.

Bring your own mug for tea/coffee and biscuits.

Contact: Mick Furman - 044 382 4916

Music 4 Middlebrows – Although the course is full, members may wish their names to be added to the waiting list.

Contact: June Rogers - 044 343 2571

Geology Pre-Megatrip Colloquium – Thursday 16 February at 9h00 at the Knysna Library for all those who will be doing the trip in March. Other interested persons are welcome to attend.

9h00 – 9h40: **Introduction and Stratigraphic Context in the Revisited Geological Calendar** – Tony Cain

9h40 – 10h30: **Metamorphism and Metamorphic Rocks** – Fred van Berkel

10h30 – 11h00: **Tea Break at Fat Susi’s**

11h00 – 12h00: **Kimberlites & Diamonds** – Tinus Oosterveldt

12h00 – 12h40: **Limestones of the Ghaap Plateau** – Dave Scott

12h40 – 13h00: **Q & A Session**

13h00: **Lunch at Fat Susi’s**

Contacts: John Jenkerson - 044 381 0272 or Tony Cain - 083 304 0175

Philosophy Club – Friday 17th February at 09:45 at 15-2 Hammock, Thesen Islands

Contact: Dudley Powers - 044 343 3256

Film Club - Monday 20 February at the Knysna Movie House at 14h30. Entrance fee of R10 members, R15 visitors.

“**Out of Africa**” is a 1985 romantic drama film directed and produced by Sydney Pollack and starring Robert Redford and Meryl Streep. The film is based loosely on the autobiographical book *Out of Africa* written by Isak Dinesen (the pseudonym of the author Karen Blixen), which was published in 1937. This film received 28 film awards, including seven Academy Awards. **161 mins.**

Contact: Mike Clarke – 044 382 5740

History of Knysna Part 4 – Tuesday 21 February at 10h30 in the Knysna Library.

Vicki Williams will make a presentation on “**The Visits of Cape Governors to Knysna**”. (Vicki is now well supported by microphone technology!)

Contact: Judy Dixon - 044 383 1015

Life Studies – No meeting this month.

Contact: Gail Powers - 044 343 3256

Non-Fiction Book Club No 2 – No meeting this month.

Contact: Irene Wustrow 044 382 7741

Change of Newsletter Editor

I would like to thank all those who helped me over the last three years in compiling the monthly Knysna U3A newsletter; especially **my husband Bernd** with his patience in showing me all sorts of tricks on the computer that I never knew existed. Thanks also to **Irene Wustrow** and Bernd for proofreading when I became cross-eyed with dates and grammar. Best wishes to **Gigi Lewis**, in whose very capable hands I am leaving the newsletter. Gigi’s contact details will appear in the February newsletter.

Ariane Rohloff



U3A Outing to Pledge Nature Reserve



U3A Geology Field Trip to Matjies River Cave at Plett

FOCUS ON NATURE – Sedgefield

Sedgefield was proclaimed in 1929 on the farm Sedgefield, which in turn was named in 1894 after the village of Sedgefield in England where the father (Henry Barrington) of the then farm owner was born. Presumably the English village was so named, as sedges were prominent in the area, as they are in Sedgefield here.

BUT DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SEDGES?

Sedges are rhizomatous or tufted grass like perennials or annuals of the family **Cyperaceae**, superficially resembling grasses or rushes. Their stems are usually solid & triangular in cross-section. Their leaves, spirally arranged in three ranks, are mostly basal with a distinct leaf-blade and closed leaf-sheath. The inconspicuous flowers are borne in the axil of a tiny bract (mostly green/brown/red) on spikelets, arranged in small clusters. The family Cyperaceae is distributed worldwide, forming sedge beds in swampy places providing food & shelter for birds, animals and aquatic life. In drier grasslands terrestrial game birds (francolin) feed on the small corm of some species. The sedges, with +/- 5000 species, are among the ten most species-rich plant families in the world. *Cyperus papyrus* is well known for papermaking. A modern usage for sedges is in artificially constructed water purification beds.

Sedge: from Middle English 'segge' which is derived from the Old English 'secg' of Germanic origin.

Ficinia radiata - Stergras



CONSERVATION Getting the Word Across

Are we preaching to the converted? How do we get the message across to the rest of the world? If science aims at the brain, poetry can aim at the gut. It is one thing to remind an audience through evidence-based information that we are in trouble, that we are undermining the conditions for human existence; it is another to say it in the tongue of the poet **Antonio Machado** in this poem: "**The wind one brilliant day**".

*The wind one brilliant day, called
to my soul with an odour of jasmine.*

*"In exchange for the odour of my jasmine,
I'd like all the odour of your roses."*

*"I have no roses; all the flowers
in my garden are dead."*

*"Well then, I'll take the withered petals
and the yellow leaves and the waters of the
fountain."*

*The wind left. And I wept. And my soul said to me:
"What have you done with the garden that was
entrusted to you?"*

Extracted from Environment 4 / Spring 2010

DID YOU KNOW?

The world's oldest living thing is probably Siberian Actinobacteria doing active DNA repair below 0° in the permafrost.

In Pretoria there are underground forests that are ~13000yrs old. Specimens of Welwitschia, a primitive conifer, and the Segola Baobab in Limpopo are ~2000yrs.