



U3A TAKAPUNA INC

Email: u3atakapuna@gmail.com Website: www.u3atakapuna.org.nz

December 2017 Newsletter

**Meeting on Wednesday
6 December at 10.00am**



Citizens' Centre, College Road, Northcote

From our President

November presented us with two great talks. First up was Christine Ball whose talk on the Tragedy of HMAS Sydney a Light Cruiser that was sunk by a German Raider with loss of all hands. Christine with the help of slides showed us something of the human face of this tragedy and also covered the building of a memorial to the sailors who died. We thank Christine for a well prepared and presented talk.

As a follow up we have an article on page 6 of this Newsletter written by Tony Lewis which gives us an informed Naval overview of this tragic event.

Our second speaker was Tony Hardy, Orthopaedic Surgeon who worked for many years at Auckland Hospital. Tony not only covered Orthopaedics but also gave us a potted history of Surgery right back to Neolithic and Pre Classic ages around 3000 BC. He then covered the future of orthopaedics and warned of society needing this more as we are increasing our weight. A fascinating talk given by a real specialist in the field.

On behalf of your committee, I would like to thank all who have contributed to the success of 2017 and also wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. If you are going away please travel safely and we will see you back here in February 2018.

Lost Property

**Found - lightweight anorak in a bag, size XL/2XL after November meeting.
If this is yours, phone Ron on 09 478 2490**

Citizens' Centre – great news!

The hall is now being managed by the Kaipatiki Community Facilities Trust and will be closing during January for much needed maintenance and upgrading. This will include a new kitchen, new furniture, blinds in the lounge, and removing accumulated junk in the locker room and other areas.

Prepare to be pleasantly surprised when we arrive for our February meeting.



I Love Takapuna Christmas Carnival

When: Saturday 2 December 2017

Time: 11.00am – 3.00pm

Where: Hurstmere Green, Hurstmere Rd, Takapuna

Cost: Free

This year, we are once again closing Hurstmere Road to celebrate Christmas in Takapuna!

We have heaps of entertainment for the family including train rides with Sammy the Train, circus workshops, interactive shows, roving characters, food trucks and stalls, bouncy castle, petting zoo, face painters, and balloon twisters. Rumour has it, Santa will come along to enjoy the day too!

Need help choosing a meet up place for friends to see the event? The centre of the event is Hurstmere Green where our Christmas Tree will be!

Don't miss this fun family event

Christmas Meeting - Show and Luncheon

Wednesday, 6 December 2017

(see programme on next two pages)

Fun, Fellowship and Luncheon. Please bring \$5 towards the cost of the lunch and remember to wear your **name label**.

Please contact Marcia Roberts, our Catering Convenor, if you have any special dietary requirements. For example – Gluten Free

Committee Members for 2017/2018

President	Ron Wilson	☎ 478 2490
Vice President	Vacant	
Immediate Past President	Graham Alcock	☎ 473 5607
Treasurer	Vacant	
Secretary	Elizabeth Lind - Mitchell	☎ 426 3362
Speaker Convenor	Stuart Kendon	☎ 410 8994
Catering Convenor	Marcia Roberts	☎ 418 0397
Reception	Sue Pearson	☎ 449 2221
Membership	Helen Ritson	☎ 489 5366
Study Group Co-ordinator	Christine Ball	☎ 410 7789
U3A Network	Ron Wilson	☎ 478 2490

Other Responsibilities

Acting Treasurer	Hilary Miller	☎ 488 7595
Audio Visual	Garry , Barry, Chris and John	
Hall Setup	Boyd, Phil and Pauline	
Newsletter Distribution	John and Judy	☎ 489 4425
Newsletter Editor	Murray Pearson	☎ 449 2221

Deadline Date for February 2018 Newsletter

Sunday 21 January

Editor: Murray Pearson: ☎ 449 2221 Mobile: 021 644442

Email: pearson.murray@gmail.com

Guest Speaker - Wednesday 7 February 2018

Celia Caughey with her talk entitled:

Enlightening Experiences from Vietnam

Mini Speaker will be Boyd Miller: Volcanoes of Auckland

U3A Takapuna
2017 Christmas Gathering
Wednesday 6 December

MC Judy Hanna

PROGRAMME

- 10.00 Assemble and be seated**
- 10.15 President's Welcome**
Introduce MC – Judy Hanna
- 10.20 Presentation – Hilary Miller**
That Was The Year That Was
- 10.30 Two Videos**
- 10.50 Interval**

- 11.00 The World Famous Quiz**
Past President Graham Alcock
- 11.20 Rose Singers**
A selection of Christmas songs
(Be ready to sing along)
- 11.50 Conclusion MC/President**
- 11.55 Lunch preparation**
- 12.00 LUNCH**

A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS

The Sinking of HMAS SYDNEY off Shark Bay, (26 34S, 111 00E) WA by HSK KORMORAN; 19Nov41

Christine Ball in a very good mini-talk at the November General Meeting issued a challenge to any naval historian or military person present to provide an account of how this tragedy could have occurred. She had explained that she was neither of the above and hence her talk was largely centred on the impressive naval memorial which has been erected at Geraldton, WA. I have taken up the challenge. It was a tragedy. There were no survivors from the Sydney; all 645 officers and men, from Captain J Burnett to the four civilian canteen staff perished. The Kormoran was also sunk (scuttled in the end) but this allowed 317 of her company of 399 to take to the lifeboats. They were all picked up in the ensuing week and detained for the remainder of the war in Australia.

Of the two ships and their armament, Sydney was one of three modified Leander or Perth-class light cruisers of the RAN, first commissioned in 1935. She was 562ft in length and displaced 8,940 tons; main armament 8 x 6 in (152mm) in four twin turrets ('A' and 'B' forward and 'X' and 'Y' aft); secondary armament 4 x 4 in (102mm) anti-aircraft guns; 8 x 21 in (530mm) torpedo tubes in quadruple mounts. She carried a Walrus amphibious aircraft.

The Kormoran was a merchant ship converted to an auxiliary cruiser, commissioned in 1940, the largest and newest and largest of seven auxiliary cruisers/commerce raiders in the German Kriegsmarine. She was 515ft in length and measured 8,736grt. Her main armament was 6 x 5.9 in (150mm) single guns supplemented by 2 x 37mm anti-tank guns. Due to the configuration of the guns a full salvo would have been four x 150mm rounds compared to eight rounds in a Sydney salvo. Also 6 x 21in (530mm) torpedo tubes capable of firing three torpedoes on each side, port and starboard. The 150mm guns were concealed behind false hull plates and cargo hatch walls, which would swing clear when the order to 'decamouflage' was given, while the secondary weapons sat on hydraulic lifts hidden within the superstructure. The ship could disguise herself as one of several Allied or neutral vessels of similar dimensions. Thus the reader can discern that while there was an equivalency in the guns and torpedo armaments of the two ships, the Sydney had advantages in speed, gun range and the weight of shot in salvo fire(all guns being fired simultaneously). She also had a reconnaissance aircraft which the raider did not. The Kormoran's advantage lay in deception. Space does not allow full description of the action which has been pieced together in the 76 years that have elapsed since that fateful encounter, culminating in discovery and underwater survey by ROV of the two wrecks in waters around 2,500 fathoms deep. Analysis of the damage inflicted on the Sydney and the geographic dispersion of the wreck on the ocean bed, supports the re-construction of events gained from the interrogation of the German survivors.

Continued from Page 6:

How could this have happened? Essentially the Sydney approached too close, while attempting to confirm the vessel’s identity (2000 yards on the beam of Kormoran and on a parallel course). She thus negated her advantages and when the raider realised the game of bluff was up (she was asked to display the secret call sign of the vessel she purported to be) she was able to beat the Sydney to the punch by opening fire first with main armament and torpedoes.

The official history of the Royal Australian Navy in the Second World War summarised the action as follows: ‘...**the raider cast off her disguise and opened fire with all her concealed weapons. The Sydney replied but the few seconds’ advantage proved decisive. ...Granted the difficulties of piercing a raider’s disguise, the very close approach made by the Sydney during the exchange of signals was certainly injudicious.**’ And the final word (sic) was: ‘...**But to make a close approach to a suspicious ship, on a favourable bearing for gun and torpedo fire, is to court disaster.**’

In 2009, an Australian Commission of inquiry investigating the loss of Sydney and possessed of all the evidence including the analysis of the ROV survey of both wrecks, arrived at similar conclusions. It found that the Captain behaved inexplicably, but not negligently, when he brought the ship too close to the German raider. The Commissioner concluded: I am satisfied Captain Burnett made errors of judgement. I have not made any findings of negligence”

Thank you to Tony Lewis for this article

Study and Special Interest Groups

Auckland Heritage	Christine Ball ☎ 410 7789
Meets: 3 rd Friday – 15 December at 10.00am	
Venue: The Esplanade Hotel, Devonport	
A tour of the historic building, followed by Devonshire Tea (\$10 per head)	
Foundations of Western Civilisation ✱	Graham Ritson ☎ 489 5366
Meeting: Tuesday, 12 December at 11.00am	
Venue: Sky Lounge, Mayfair Village, 14 Oteha Valley Road	
Christmas Lunch	

German * (Inter U3A Group) Meets: This month: Tuesday 5 December at 10.00am Followed by lunch at Aubergine 12.00 noon <i>Frohe Weihnachten</i>	Peter Robinson ☎ 489 4494
Modern History * Graeme ☎ 489 5526 Martin ☎ 294 7820 Meets: 2 nd Wednesday – 13 December at 9.45am Venue: Graham Alcock's home, 919 East Coast Rd, Northcross Topic: Usual talks followed by Christmas lunch	
Poetry Meets: 2 nd Monday - Monday 11th December at 1.30pm Venue: Apt. C462 Northbridge, Akoranga Drive Topic: Two favourite poems.	Val Overington ☎ 486 5582
Scrabble – * Meets: 1 st Friday - Friday 1st December at 9.45am Venue: 5A Rahopara Street, Castor Bay. Topic: Scrabble games, then Christmas lunch at Kings Plant Barn Cafe, Porana Rd, Glenfield	Sue ☎ 449 2221 Sue. ☎ 449 2221 <i>Please call Sue if you intend to come on 1st December to the lunch</i> Note: New members very welcome from February 2018 onwards
World War II * <i>From pre war causes to post war recovery</i> Meets: Note different date: Tuesday 5 December at 1pm Venue: 58 Balmain Road, Birkenhead Topic: End of year pot luck Christmas lunch and general discussion on what we will most likely cover in 2018	Ian Morris ☎ 480 0919

Happy New Year!

* = New members welcome