

August 2019

Australian History

It's 9.25am on Friday morning at Woolgoolga Library and the steps are crowded with eager U3A members. In Summer, they're searching for shade, and in Winter, a spot to stand in the sun, until that door opens at 9.30am sharp. Then, it's a rush to prepare the meeting room for another morning of fascinating information about what really happened in our country in the past and those who made it happen.

Australian History is one of the longest running of our Coffs Harbour U3A classes. We've been listening and learning to the in depth stories of Australia's progress in Ancient and Modern Times for about 18 years in Woolgoolga and previously also in Coffs Harbour.

The very capable facilitator is John Imrie. As a child, he experienced the Great Depression and served in the RAAF during World War II. An historian and "local treasure", John is a great asset to U3A. At 92 years of age, he is able to enhance the accepted view of history with his experiences over those years. His own rich family history includes that of his forebear, Rev Samuel Marsden!

John researches his topics thoroughly and introduces us to the men and especially the women, who helped shape our society. Usually it was for the better, but the villains are not neglected.

After an entertaining and illuminating couple of hours, punctuated by lively morning tea discussion (with Tim Tams but not Vegemite) those who are interested, continue the discourse during lunch at Woolgoolga Diggers.

New members are welcome. Please feel free to sit in on a class to see if it suits you. For further information contact John on 6649 2456 Mary Lange



John Imrie in class.

PS It is John's birthday on 31 August, he will be 93. It is understood there will be a celebration organized by his friends in the Australian History Class

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOHN FROM U3A



Spray Painting as Art

On 7 August, Keith Norris one of the Multi Media Art Class, gave a demonstration on spray painting as an art form. Firstly, stencils are made and the number of stencils are according to the number of colours to be used. Then stencils are placed on the work and sprayed.



It is also possible to use plants as stencils. Depending on their placement and the order plants are removed between spraying, will influence the result



WINGED WARRIOR

Mrs Lambert stood hands on hips, gazing at the masses of white plumage and strange looking pellets scattered throughout the room; every day it was the same.

She had immediate reservations when Freddy Fowler, the squat red haired, freckled faced, big nosed, middle aged bloke applied to rent the upper level flat – he looked sus – but the substantial bond thrust into her hand and the three months rent in advance quelled her concerns – but now she was regretting her decision – he had to clean up his act or move out, irrespective of his generosity.

THUD – Commissioner James Gordon's fist thumped violently into the desk . . .

"Confound them – one bungle after another – I've had enough – we're the laughing stock of Gotham City!"

Gordon glared across at his deputy Noah Help. "Batman and Spider-Man just don't mix; ever since they agreed to combine their so-called talents in Gotham it's been nothing short of a disaster. Three notorious criminals, The Riddler, The Penguin and that fool The Joker; almost in custody when one or the other would stuff up – how could that Caped Crusader possibly get tangled up in Spider-man's web? No they're an insufferable handicap; I'm terminating their services as from now!"

Noah looked nonplussed. "But sir, we need a super hero in Gotham, we'll never control the crime without one, what will we do?"

"Don't worry Noah, I've taken care of that little issue, I've got just the man for the job; he's the king of the super heroes – Gotham will be in safe hands again . . . I've hired . . . CHICKEN MAN".

Freddy tossed the dossier aside, he knew more about The Fox than any report – seven years of withdrawal on his small chicken farm with no more to worry about than reminiscing his past heroics – what the heck he contemplated as he perused the request from Commissioner Gordon – I've got a few good years left in me. The thought of again tackling dangerous criminals especially The Fox excited him . . . now where did he put all that paraphernalia.

Chicken Man had encountered The Fox many times, with his feathers being ruffled; whilst the felonious Fox had somehow dodged his efforts to bust him, always dodging the "final bullet". The vision of that ferocious

fox entangled in his trap – it was the vision that sealed the deal.

Freddy knew of The Foxes insatiable appetite for valuable artworks, so the exhibition depicting vulnerable wildlife at the gallery would prove irresistible; it would be his final downfall.

Freddy checked the contents of his utility belt – super-soaker, the fail-safe crim-catching net; and the slime and pellet impregnated exploding eggs, more than enough to foil that carnivorous cur. Now for the magic ring which would transform him into the super chook; Chicken Man – he was ready to go!

Chick Man stood at the open window flapping his wings in readiness, loose feathers drifting to the floor, he looked out at the darkening buildings silhouetted against the rising moon . . . then he leaped into the inky void and towards the Art Gallery squawking his battle cry . . . tookouck TOOUUUCK!

The Fox crouched silently in the corner behind a marble statue, examining the room containing the priceless Preying Owl exhibit – all was still – the only movement was the lonely chicken feather zig zagging slowly downward from above before coming to rest on the very tip of his snout.

AaaaTichooo! The Fox scrambled towards the exit realising the presence of his arch enemy Chicken Man somewhere above . . . too late . . . the suds from the super soaker sent him sprawling, then the slimy egg pellets literally tattooed his saturated torso, and finally the catapulting net smothered the tormented transgressor leaving him helpless.

Chicken Man looked down with distain at the snared scoundrel smiling ruefully, "Mr Fox, my friend, you won't be terrorising any chickens in the henhouses for a long long time – only cockroaches in the pen".

Phil Toy



Turkmenistan

We crossed from Uzbekistan into Turkmenistan. It took about two hour to clear customs. We had to have visas printed and luggage searched, medicines examined. We were met by our female guide and driver.

The weather was hot 30-35C Our first sightseeing was Konya-Urgench at one time head of Islam in Central Asia, later destroyed by Ghenghis Khan, some old mosques, mausoleums and madrasahs remaining. We then drove a long way to the flaming gas crater at Darwaza in the desert. A gas oil rig collapsed in 1972, they lit the escaping gas thinking it would burn itself out...it is still burning.

We then drove to Ashgabat the capital. Our car had to be washed at a huge car washing station before we entered the city. Ashgabat has been completely rebuilt after independence.. The government buildings, apartments etc are all covered with Italian marble tiles giving Ashgabat an air of the surreal. Monuments abound, linked to the common history of the Turkmen people. The centre of the city is a showpiece, with enormous statues gracing squares and fountains.

The thing that struck us was all the new residential buildings have green roofs and white walls. Their flag is green and white. The school children from kindergarten until the end of high school are all dressed the same. The girls wear long green tunics, white blouses, their black hair is in two plaits and a little cap. The boys wear grey trousers, white shirts and a little cap. University students wear maroon dresses and college students dark blue. The women all wear the same style of dress, different colours with a scarf the same as in Tajikistan.

It is a fascist state. There are cameras everywhere. We were pulled up by the police at least twice a day. The president's photo-shopped picture is everywhere, in every activity. . You can't take photos in most areas.

We flew from Ashgabat to Mary (pronounced Marie) and then toured the archaeological site of Merv which sprawls over one hundred square kilometres, holding the history of centuries of civilization. There were many ancient castles made of mud bricks as well as later buildings.

The people of Turkmenistan do not smile and don't appear happy. When we went to the Russian market to buy souvenirs we were paying in US\$ the shop keeper wanted to crouch behind the counter to hide from the cameras.

The Russians seem to have their own existence. We went to several Russian restaurants and on our last night we went to an outdoor beer garden with entertainment. Russians wear western clothes. A funny habit they have is, both men and women drink beer through a straw!!

Would I visit Turkmenistan again? No, it is too controlled. Read more on the 'net. Karen Baff



These young people were at Merv the same time as us, note same style dresses which sweep the ground.



My friend Heidi, viewing the gas crater at Darwaza



One of the ancient castles at Merv – UNESCO World Heritage site.