



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: July 2017

U3A CT, PO Box 785, Howard Place, 7450

Administrator Telephone 021 532 7522

\* Email: [u3a.ct@sybaweb.co.za](mailto:u3a.ct@sybaweb.co.za) \* Website: <http://www.u3a-ct.org.za>

## FORTHCOMING U3A GENERAL MEETINGS

**BAXTER: Thursday 27 July 2017.** 10h00 for 10h30. Speaker: **Professor Tim**

**Noakes: *The Banting Diet: where are we now?***

**Thursday 31 August: Dr Peter Johnston: *Cape Town's changing climate and water shortage***

**Thursday 28 September: Mary van Blommestein: *Flowers we gave the world: a sketch of their stories and illustrations***

### ATHLONE

Wheatfield Bowling Club, 15 Orange Ave, Belthorn East – **Thurs 20 July:** 10h00 for 10h30

**Prof Richard Calland: *Unwrapping Mandela's gift: the virtues and limitations of South Africa's constitution***

Thursday 17 August: **TBA**

### ATLANTIC SEABOARD

St Peter's Anglican Church Hall, Park Ave, Camps Bay - 10h00 for 10h30

**Thursday 10 August: Michael Bagraim, MP: *What is happening in Parliament***

### FALSE BAY

Fish Hoek Civic Hall: **Wednesday 19 July:** 09h30 for 10h00

**Derek Stuart-Findlay: *The History of the Silvermine Valley and farms***

**Wednesday 16 August: Rachel Colenso: *In a high and desperate place***

### TYGERBERG

Bellville Civic Centre – 09h45 for 10h30

**Thursday 10 August: TBA**

## TOUR OF INTEREST

A tour of the **Heart Transplant Museum at Groote Schuur Hospital** will take place at 11h00 on 11 August 2017. Cost to pensioners: R100 per person. Contact: David Gamsu, 021 4391301 or email: [juda@telkomsa.net](mailto:juda@telkomsa.net)

## OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are concerned by the number of overdue subscriptions and would ask that, if you have forgotten and don't yet have a yellow membership card, you pay as soon as possible, so we can continue to keep subscriptions at the same bargain-basement level.

## CANCELLED COURSE

Regrettably, because of declining attendance, we have had to cancel the *Art Matters* course on the first Thursday of the month at Meadowridge Library.

## BAXTER CANCELLATIONS

If there is student unrest again this year, UCT may at very short notice shut down the Baxter. Last year we had to cancel the September and October General Meetings. We send out notices on Yahoo and to retirement villages, but we cannot reach members on snail mail, so we would ask that, if there is more student unrest, please check first that the General Meetings are still taking place.

## U3A SA

This covering structure, to give one voice to all U3As, is run by secretary Stefan Pretorius. He has issued figures on the 28 U3As, with 11 378 members. Somerset West has the highest number of about 2 000 members, with Cape Town having about 1 600.

## U3A FORUM

This annual meeting of all U3As from Cape Town was held on 22 June and was attended by Eve Dunnell, Sylvia Schrire and Jeanie Hareb. It is not a decision-making body, but is purely for exchange of information.

## NEW POLITICAL TOPICS COURSE

This course, run on a Monday afternoon, is very well attended and is going very well.

## RECENT MEETINGS AT THE BAXTER

### 27 April 2017: John Matisson

What a joy to spend Freedom Day morning listening to John Matisson, the political journalist and author of *God, Spies and Lies!*

His wit, humour and insight left us drooling to read more of this revealing saga. Matisson describes how Zuma does make mistakes, for example, by inadvertently appointing people to his cabinet who turn out to be honest!

Looking at the full spectrum, Matisson admitted to not knowing which of the two possibilities, high or low (shades of Clem Sunter, a colleague), South Africa would take.

He emphasised the importance of the Constitution and civil society, and urged people to play a more active part.

At the time of his talk, John Matisson had been appointed an interim member of the SABC. We can expect great things from this SABC board.

### 1 June 2017: The Russian Revolution February and October 1917

This interesting presentation was given by our own Eve Dunnell! Accompanied by clear photos and illustrations, a glimpse into this fascinating aspect of history, included the salacious influence of Gregory Rasputin on Alexandra. Although he "smelt like a goat, and was a drunken womaniser", Alexandra came to rely on him because he could soothe her son, Alexei's pains and send him to sleep. However, very damaging to the regime were the rumours that he was Alexandra's lover.

### 28 June 2017:

#### Laurine Platzky: Spatial Integration in a Post-Apartheid City

Do you ever wonder what can be done about shack dwellings, township floods and fires, travelling distances, etc., and ask yourself what planning is being done? In a highly informative speech, Laurine Platzky explained what current thinking is coming up with, and also the obstacles that are hindering progress in these fields, often and unfortunately, a disjoint between provincial and national interests.

In 1901, with the removal of Black Africans to Ndabeni, the awkward demographics began. The old urban forms with their communities, schools, sportsfields, churches, shops and so on, were pulled apart, and informal settlements, with all their problems of water, sanitation, informal food supplies, joblessness and distance from commercial centres, sprang up. Limited formal housing and increasing numbers of backyard dwellers exacerbated the problems. The housing situation thus became "one of the most intractable legacies of apartheid," the speaker quoted.

The answer – if there is one – lies in Integrated Human Settlements (row houses, mixed-use blocks with shops, open spaces, schools and parking spaces), Laurine Platzky suggested. Great opportunities exist in spaces such as the Conradie Hospital site and Site Q in District Six. Now we wait to see what will be done to turn them into "places which absorb their past but actively change for a better future". A truly enlightened – and enlightening – vision indeed.

As in this case, where a copy of the talk delivered is provided, it can be found in full detail on the U3A website.	
---	--

<i>The Russian Revolution, Part 2: Lenin and his legacy</i> will be given at Pinelands Library on Thursday 20 July at 2.30 p.m.	
---	--

## **ON TOUR WITH DERICK RULE**

18 June 2017

We've just returned from a tour to Kruger Park and Panorama Route, with some 55 U3A guests on board.

Highlights of the tour included sightings of elephant (about 100 in all), buffalo, rhino, giraffe, kudu, waterbuck, impala, warthogs, nyala, hyena and a myriad birds (raptors and others).

The tour included visits to Blyde River Canyon, Burkes Luck Potholes, Gods Window, Lone Creek Falls, Mac Mac Falls and the small Anglican Church (designed by Sir Herbert Baker) in Sabie.

Guests returned from the tour with supplies of Macadamia nuts and avocados, thoroughly exhausted but very happy.

### **DERICK RULE'S SUTHERLAND TOUR, JUNE 2017, BY PETER LAWSON**

Some 40 members gathered at the Pinelands Town Hall at 08h00 on Monday June 26, warmly wrapped in preparation for Arctic conditions ahead. During the previous night Sutherland had experienced a temperature of 14 degrees below zero; nonetheless, those familiar with the writer were startled to see him wearing long trousers. The luxury coach had the engine running to generate internal warmth and travellers lost no time in boarding; departure was on time at 09h00.

We set forth along the N2, passing the airport, wondering if the driver knew where he was going, but when he turned onto the R300 we appreciated his strategy in avoiding Spaghetti Junction. After a brief stop at the N1 service centre to pick up another dozen members from Durbanville and Somerset West, our convenor and guide Derick Rule kept us informed as we proceeded through the tunnel, then enjoyed mountain views, autumn colours in the vineyards, and eventually the seemingly boundless Karoo before arriving at Matjiesfontein. Members enjoyed a sing-song in the local hostelry followed by lunch at the hotel.

After lunch we continued to Sutherland, experiencing another rarity in today's society, an area with no mobile phone or internet connectivity. Forewarned of this, some of us hastened to place orders for Karoo lamb from the butchery in Sutherland, which we would pick up on Wednesday morning.

On arrival the bus delivered most of us to the hotel, some to local B&Bs, and it was snooze and/or socialise until dinner at 19h00. We were back in the land of connectivity and some members lost no time in assuring their loved ones that they had survived the journey and were not knee-deep in snow.

Stargazing was scheduled for the evening, but clouds got in the way. However, we enjoyed some interesting and entertaining videos. We then joined our electric blankets in our beds (we had switched these on immediately upon arrival), but the outside temperature remained above zero.

Visitors to the SALT telescope are limited to 30 at a time, so on Tuesday we split into two groups, one of walkers experiencing a country trail or the historic town, the other of spectators viewing the telescopes and further information about the history of the Earth, the solar system and other galaxies. The enormous Salt telescope, the largest in the southern hemisphere with a mirror 11 metres in diameter, has to be seen 'in the flesh' to be truly appreciated; for the writer this experience alone was well worth the trip.

After lunch at the hotel the two groups exchanged activities, and at 18h00 we all enjoyed an organ recital in the nearby church before a sumptuous dinner at the hotel. We had hoped to make up for the failure to view stars on the previous evening, but once again clouds got in the way – many of us decided to make up for this at the observatory back in Cape Town.

On Wednesday morning, after all members had taken breakfast at the hotel, the bus made a final call to the butchery, loaded up cartons of lamb, and set out for Matjiesfontein. Here we again had lunch at the hotel and had time to visit the local museums before continuing to Cape Town.

The writer was surprised at how much of the railway line is only single track, and disappointed not to see any trains between Paarl and Matjiesfontein, despite travelling alongside the line for much of the journey and spending over four hours in Matjiesfontein. There seems little doubt that the original engineers made a mistake by building the line to a 3'-6" gauge instead of the standard 4'-8.5". Their successors finally got this right with the Gautrain.

Despite heavy traffic, we were back in Pinelands on time at 18h00 and were unanimous in our appreciation of the wonderful job done by Derick.

## MEMBERSHIP FEES

***Please note that the "registration table" is open from 09:30 to 10:15 exactly....***

- U3A Cape Town membership fees for **new and lapsed members:**
  - > Members on **email** or **residing** at Woodside Village, Pinewood Village or Norfolk Place: **R50**

- > Members requesting **snail mail**: **R70**

Please pay fees at our meetings, or use an EFT (banking details: Standard Bank, Pinelands Branch code 036309, A/c no. 373 993 943)

- **Direct cash/cheque deposits must include R15 extra for bank charges.**

- **Members renewing** pay R10 less in all cases as the R10 joining fee is omitted.

### **SUBSCRIBE to YAHOO EMAILS**

Send an empty email (no subject, no body) to:

[u3act-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:u3act-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

OR contact Sherlayne on: [u3a.ct@sybaweb.co.za](mailto:u3a.ct@sybaweb.co.za)

**N.B. Unless members accept the invitation to join Yahoo, they will not receive newsletters, course lists, monthly bulletins or any communications from U3A!**

**AN APPEAL:** Please keep us notified of changes in your *postal, telephone, fax or email* contact details. Postal address: U3A, PO Box 785, Howard Place, 7450.

