

Vision

Published by the School of Philosophy Auck. Inc. for enjoyment and communication

Issue 13, Apr 2005

A Celebration of Art, Music and Dance

In January this year three study groups came together to enjoy an inaugural Cultural Weekend at 268 West Tamaki Road.

Despite it being the long summer break, a good number of students were able to attend, with the welcome addition of several from the Wellington School who gave strength to the groups and who in turn appreciated the chance to study in a larger company.

The I/c of Cultural Studies in Auckland, Digby Crompton, co-ordinated the weekend. In his opening address, he spoke about "culture" and its meaning for New Zealanders. He included dictionary definitions of the word – "tillage, cultivation, training or discipline by which man's moral and intellectual nature is elevated; the result of such training; enlightenment, civilization, refinement".

The weekend saw a "rebirth" of the Art Group, with Ngaire Bennett as tutor. As an experienced artist in water-colours, Ngaire has been a member of the group for many years and is continuing the direction established by the late Peter Tibbits. Several new members have joined this group, who will greatly benefit from her guidance.

During their sessions, the artists used the principle "paint what you see", which embraces not only the ordinary vision but

also the inspirational imagination which is most important to creative work. The need to develop practical skills which would serve to remove limitations was seen to be most necessary to enhance capacities and talents.

As for the singers, they enjoyed a full and varied programme under the care of Kathy Dean from the Wellington School, with sessions each morning devoted to study of the octave, and singing sessions. They also studied the words of Marsilio Ficino on music. There were light-hearted tune-ups, and several sessions learning new music, including compositions by John-Paul Bowman and Adrian Green (visiting from the London School). These and other short pieces were performed during a concert on the Sunday evening.

Like the artists, the singers and musicians participated fully and experienced contentment and peace.

The nine ladies studying the Abhinaya Dance form also welcomed the company of the other groups. As their tutor, Rosemary Auld, said: "There was a definite sense of the disciplines feeding and nourishing each other as we discovered everyone's various talents and enthusiasms."

The programme for the dance moved forward, revisiting older dance exercises and introducing new studies. It seemed to



Enjoying the sun and good company

seamlessly include the more and the least experienced in the group, with study and discussion, warm-ups and practice. The group was fortunate to have the experience of Erica Watson, who has studied Indian classical dance for many years. She introduced new rhythms and performed some fine, descriptive Bharat Natyam dances in the final evening concert, during which the dance group's items also delighted those present. There was a consolidation of the

work that has been continuing in Abhinaya in Auckland and Wellington and a recognition of the dance as a spiritual practice.

One student described how the world comes to meet us when the heart is open, and so it seemed, with the dance taking its place alongside the music and art, and contributing to a penetration and a greater understanding of the natural laws in relation to culture in the fullest sense.

Auckland School Cultural Groups

Wednesday	Vedic Chants	9.00am	Lilian Beanland	521-5054
	Plato Group	10.00am	"	"
Friday	Art Group	6.30pm	Ngaire Bennett	445 3827
	Choir	7.00pm	Frances Gore	817 5060
Sunday	Vedic Dance	8.30am	Rosemary Auld	412-8782
	Shakespeare Study Group	6.00pm	Hamish Hudson	638 9667

New members to these groups are welcome. For enquiries, please phone the group tutors listed.

Practical Parenting Groups

Over thirty parents and other interested people from the Philosophy School and Ficino parent body are meeting this term on Tuesday and Sunday evenings to study practical parenting in the formative years 0–10. In an increasingly confused world, this new course offers a clear insight into these crucial years and practical guidelines for laying down a good character in a well-adjusted child.

The nine week course content covers:

- What is the true essence of a child?
- The three fundamental needs of the child and how to meet them.
- How true discipline leads to growth of being.
- The different roles of the mother and the father and how to get the best from them.
- How to recognise the distinct stages of development between 0 -10 years.
- The three great influences on the child and how to maximise them.
- How to provide the best.
- How to promote the development of character.
- Why it is useful to have a vision for your child.
- Finding practical solutions for practical problems.

The group tutors report that group participation is lively and that attendees are finding the application of the course material beneficial.

Next term it is intended to offer a follow-on course to study practical parenting in the challenging years 10–21. The real question is not what is your child going to do but what sort of man/woman are they going to be? This nine week course will cover:

- How to deal with the destructive nature of idleness. Overseeing the company they keep and how they spend their time.
- How to apply a reason-based approach to the avoidance of addictive substances.

- Meeting the practical needs of your child from ten upwards.
- How to instil the importance of honouring and respecting parents. How to develop character, responsibility and discipline.
- What guidelines to offer regarding relationships and sexual morality.
- How to develop in them a magnanimous sense of service to family, community and mankind. How to establish and apply house rules.
- Having a vision for your child. How to develop their talents and interests. Practical ways of assisting in the selection of a career.
- How to manage the essential change in the relationship between parent and child after sixteen.

In answer to queries, the possibility of repeating the 0–10 course next term is being considered. This will depend on demand. The organisers are now calling for expressions of interest for the following courses, all commencing in the week 16 May 2005 at 27 Esplanade Rd.

0 – 10 course. Tuesday, 7.30pm
 Sunday, 7.00pm

10 – 21 course Tuesday, 7.30pm
 Sunday, 7.00pm

Cost: \$30 per person (this a nominal charge only, to cover costs of refreshments and course material).

Please phone Mrs N Farrelly (09-834-5408) or write to:

The Organisers
Practical Parenting Courses
c/o 2 Murray Rd
Te Atatu Peninsula, Auckland

The intention is to offer the 0-10 course to the general public later this year, possibly in October, followed by both the 0–10 and 10–21 courses early in 2006.

Youth Groups

by Graham Farrelly

Not to the forefront, but very much a part of the School in Auckland, are the four Youth Groups, which provide young people with good company and good food for the heart, mind and body.

The groups – two for young men and two for young ladies – are split into the age categories 13-16, and over 16, and the material provided aims to foster the natural desire for truth in the young. Translated into teenage language, that means trying to make coming to group more appealing than “The Simpsons” – a challenge for their tutors! Worldly attractions are many and varied, as we all know, and it’s not always easy to persevere but youth group members should be congratulated for their efforts to attend group in the face of the pull of other, tempting activities.

Meditation is practised as the primary means of finding true contentment and real self-confidence. Students are encouraged to examine their beliefs and the principles that guide them, and to test these with reason and the teachings of the wise.

Material presented falls into three categories: philosophy, general knowledge, and “life skills”. The balance of the three is varied according to the age and nature of the students, to try and maintain interest. Tutors are encouraged to present material from their own study that they find inspiring, and provide activities in their area of expertise. For instance, the Secondary Boys group, with Malcolm Wolfram as tutor, is currently working on a project to build bunks for one of the School’s accommodation buildings.

The Youth Girls group tutored by Kerrin Waterer (who is also Ficino School Manager) assist with special jobs at Ficino such as covering library books.

Groups have weekly evening meetings and one residential weekend a term. Members of the Auckland youth groups (16 and over) are eligible to attend Australasian youth weeks held approximately every two years in Sydney, and international youth weeks in London and Toronto. The next one is scheduled for Sydney in 2006.

Swan Plants

Here is a seed, God.
Let it bloom tall God.
Swan plant show your Beauty.
Let you grow toward God.
Shiny and green you lie.
After you have rested
Fly and show your Beauty.

(Catherine Stokes, 8 yrs)

God Is In

God is in the seed,
God is in the Swan plants,
God is in the room,
God is in us,
God created us,
God is in the teacher.

(Felicity Auld, 8 years)

(Catherine and Felicity attend the Sunday School held at 27 Esplanade Road every second week)

A Special Day

Put together beautiful weather, a varied menu of interesting lectures, a pleasing number of students, plus a great selection of another sort – delicious food and wine – and you have all the ingredients for a successful event.

And so it was. The second Cultural Day to be held at the School's property in Esplanade Road, on 20 March this year, was a happy and fulfilling occasion. Twelve lectures were on offer covering a wide range of topics, from 'The Machinery of the Mind' to 'The Economics of Old Age'. The enthusiasm of the presenters was infectious and inspirational, showing their love and knowledge of their subjects.

Between 50 and 60 students registered for the day, and there were many helpers who worked hard prior to and on the day itself to provide everything necessary. Considering that the popular "Round the Bays" race – an annual event attracting many thousands – took place on the same day, the number attending was excellent.

As I/c of Cultural Studies in the School, Digby Crompton gave a short address to open proceedings in which he spoke of the words 'culture' and 'cultivate'. "A way to view the aim of the School would be the cultivation of the love of truth in each of us," he said. Referring to the 12 presenters, he added that the combination of the love of truth through the love for their subject "is indeed special, fresh and new".



Then we went to our designated lecture rooms for Session 1.



Convivium on the verandah...

"The Machinery of the Mind", delivered by Dr Gary Grohmann – scientist, musician, and Branch Leader of the Canberra School – was immensely popular, with calls for him to return to Auckland to give another talk.

Other topics presented in three sessions throughout the day were "Philosophy and the Family – Part 2", "The Spirit of Canada – a personal view", "Lessons for Marriage", "Leonardo da Vinci", "Plato and Education", "Being a New Zealander in the 21st Century", "The Dynamics of True Goal Setting and Creativity", "Service – Bondage or a means of Liberation", "Shakespeare and Number" and "Philosophy and the Need to 'Lighten Up'."

Morning and afternoon tea and a buffet lunch of fresh food were enjoyed by everyone and the day concluded with a concert in the Ficino Hall by Dr Grohmann, consisting of excerpts from his presentation on the life and music of Mozart given at Auckland University's Music Auditorium the night before.

Feedback has been positive, with several expressions of appreciation for the work put in by speakers and helpers, the care shown in the presentation of everything, and the opportunity for a shared experience between tutors and those attending.

New Theatre Opens

On April 3 a new venue for the arts and entertainment in Auckland was opened in Manukau City – the Genesis Energy Theatre at The TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre.

As part of the opening ceremony, involving five choirs and an orchestra, a 15 minute piece of music by one of New Zealand's foremost

serious composers, Leonie Holmes, was performed using text from a poem called 'The Journey' written by Tessa Stephens, a member of the Auckland School. Leonie is one of Tessa's ex-college pupils and herself attended the School some years ago.

The organisers liked the poem as it incorporated the ideas they wanted conveyed, and it was

The Journey

Spirit breathes
One into many
One into many

A still cool dawn.
In the hush the first hint of a breeze
Shivers across the water.
Slowly the rim of the world lightens,
Dull-red blazing to white-gold.
Rising sonority of gull-murmur and spirit wings
As the day swells to radiance.

Sun rises higher and wind whirls
Contorted cloud forms that thrash and billow in fierce
Freedom, in time with the crash of sun-splintered surf
And the rhythmic slash of paddles
As the waka heads shoreward.
People come
People come

Now the wading bird must share his haunts
And the tui must tune his song to
The chant of Hoturoa paddling up the Tamaki,
Marvelling at bursts of scarlet on the shore,
Raucous bush and bountiful mudflats.
Aching blue and brilliant green,
People and land, sea and sky,
New-bonded.

Time passes. Sun slides west.
The tide fills in many footprints as
The voyaging canoes of a new age come and go.
Ebb and flow still lures Poaka the stilt over the isthmus.
Nightly his cry sounds from Tamaki to Manukau,
Though softer now,
Muffled by the roar of new imperatives.

Dusk comes. Light dims.
A criss-cross of black seal and concrete blocks
Grips the land.
Weary workers inch home,
Coloured beads on a black-tarred chain, fragmented,

'Waka' = canoe

According to the Maori, Hoturoa was commander of the first canoe, or waka, to paddle up the Tamaki river. The Philosophy house at Glendowie overlooks the Tamaki estuary.
New Zealanders will recognize the 'bursts of scarlet' as the pohutukawa blossom. These trees line the coasts and make a brilliant display in the summer.

On the eastern side of the Auckland isthmus is the Tamaki river, and on the west is the Manukau harbour. The tides are different on each coast.
Wading birds feed on one side then fly the short distance to the other side. At night especially, you can still hear the cry of the pied stilt.

printed in the programme for this spectacular event.

The poem is set against a dawn-dusk-dawn sequence. These times represent the journey from early settlement to present day. It is a passage from a kind of primal innocence to a baser commercialism. Yet underneath this movement there is always the presence of spirit.

The end represents a return to recognition of common bonds, a melding of diverse peoples; all part of the same natural setting. A man-made, concrete symbol of this bond is the Events Centre itself. The end, with echoes of the first stanza, represents a new beginning; hopefully, a growth in understanding of who we are.

Captives in their glass privacy,
Jarred by stop-go of brake-light
And sense of loss.

For beneath the wheels of commerce
And the grind of gears,
Beneath the tinsel talk and varied hues,
The mixing and matching, toing and froing,
Scream of siren and choking exhaust,
Beneath all this,
Ancient rhythms still vibrate in the memory.

Remember, Remember
Return, return

Dark now. Dark.
From somewhere a breeze stirs evening embers,
Caressing, coaxing.
Slowly an image forms,
Faint at first, then gaining substance:
An open space, a great gathering singing as one,
And a great welcoming, full of warmth and love.

From that vision bright sparks of hope
Ignite a compact of elements
Blended in the weave of ancient cycles.
Spirit braids threads of destiny
In shades of brown, white, black,
All knit by a red weft, pulsing and
Melding in the heart of a new tomorrow.

Rising sonority of gull-murmur and spirit wings
Vibrate in the dawn of a new day.
Light grows and cloud lifts,
Petals unfurl and the fern frond dips.
Slowly the rim of the world lightens,
Dull-red blazing to white-gold
As the day swells to radiance.

Many into One
Many into One

Domino Gloria

The Events Centre is a very big project incorporating theatre, arena and stadium. It is designed to provide a focus for melding the diverse population of Manukau city, the third biggest city in NZ., as well as offering a venue for multifarious events.

Manukau city is noted for great ethnic variety.

Gazing into Infinity

MOZART: the man and his music;
a view through his letters and piano sonatas.

Reviewed by Graham Soughtton.

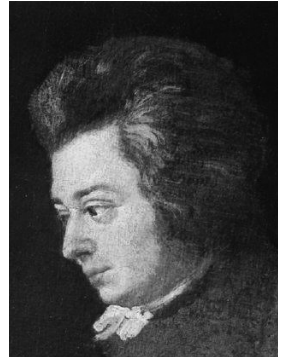
The lecture and recital by Dr Gary Grohmann on Saturday, 19th March was always going to be a wonderful event for Mozart fans. If not a fan, then there would be few better opportunities to become one than to spend an evening in the very good company of Dr Grohmann, branch leader of the Canberra School and a highly accomplished pianist and teacher. His love and reverence for Mozart is infectious.

His PowerPoint presentation of the life of Mozart was beautifully complemented with scintillating performances of five selected Mozart works and one each from J.S. Bach and J. Haydn.

Bach, Haydn and Mozart, together with Beethoven and Handel, formed the nucleus of an astonishing outpouring of classical music composition in eighteenth century Europe.

Dr Grohmann made a strong case for considering Mozart as supreme in the history of Western music, describing him as not only the most accomplished pianist of his time, but also a brilliant violinist, and conductor. With over 600 major works produced in his short life, in Dr Grohmann's words, "Mozart is the most wonderful jewel in the whole world of music".

The performances began with a Bach prelude to demonstrate to us that chord sequences have a legal procession from which can arise a huge variety of effects; and in this case a powerful sense of mystery and love. It was a perfect introduction to Mozart, who was a master of the laws of composition and who studied assiduously every day of his life so that he might be the perfect instrument to express the music which poured through him. In his letters he wrote often of hearing entire works in the mind and of how then it was just a matter of remembering and writing.



Mozart (1756-1791)

M o z a r t possessed a truly astonishing memory, and, for example, knew all Handel's masterpieces by heart; a fact which had Dr Grohmann obviously marvelling, as he told us.

Aldous Huxley once wrote that "after silence, that which comes nearer to expressing the inexpressible is music".

This remarkable evening with Dr Grohmann introduced us to a Mozart who well understood that this musical expression is the divine will at work and that music itself needs to convey harmony, beauty, playfulness, joy, wonder, and always be pleasing. "Otherwise", said Mozart, "in the same way that violent rage transgresses every order... and a person no longer knows himself; so too music seeking to know itself must never offend the ear." In this spirit of understanding, Mozart introduced the world to pure melody. As he himself said, "Melody is the essence of music".

Through the evening Dr Grohmann's exhilarating playing of the sonatas ensured no one could be in any doubt about the master composer's sparkling melodic genius; and he quoted the great philosopher Goethe, who said, "What else is genius than the productive power through which deeds rise, worthy of standing in the presence of God....and are lasting? All the creations of Mozart are of this class."

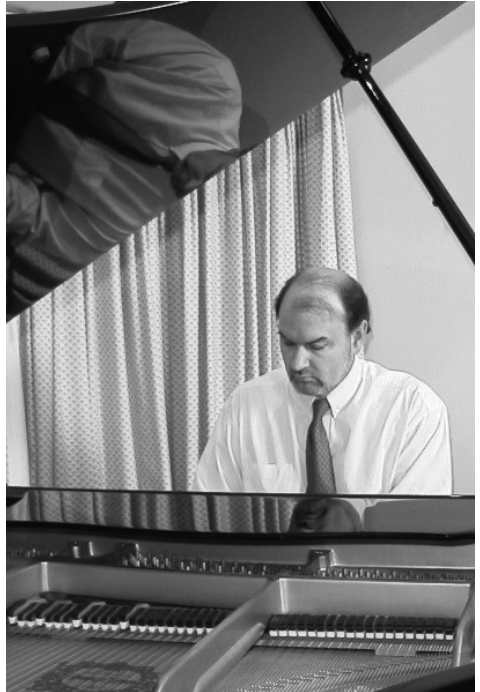
These few hours with Dr Grohmann and his beloved Mozart ended with a heartfelt performance of Haydn's variations in F minor,

written shortly after Mozart's death. In this work, poignant echoes of Mozart resonate and with the closing notes, it is as though Haydn makes him appear, to wave a gentle 'farewell'.

As Mozart's almost equally musically talented sister said after his death, "Outside of music he always remained a child". Yet...as Dr Grohmann so ably demonstrated to us... inside music, what magnificence, what mastery.

The final word on Mozart the man and his music surely belongs to his beloved wife Constanze (Mozart wrote that God made them for each other). On being asked to choose the greatest likeness from the many portraits of her husband she chose the one illustrated on these pages, because it best shows how he looked when he played.....as if gazing into infinity.

The Infinite. From where else would the sublime joy that is the music of Mozart originate? For helping us towards an understanding of what this might mean, thank you Dr Grohmann!



Dr Grohmann at the piano

In the words of Mozart...

"It is a mistake to think that the practise of my art has become easy to me. I assure you, no one has given so much care to the study of composition as I. There is scarcely a famous master in music whose works I have not frequently and diligently studied."

(to Conductor Kucharz in Prague, 1787)

"Le Gros bought the Sinfonia Concertante off me. He thinks that he is the only one who has it; but that isn't so. It is still fresh in my head, and as soon as I get home I'll write it out again."

(to his father, 1778)

"Young as I am, I never go to bed without thinking that I may not be alive on the morrow; yet (no person) can say that I am morose or melancholy. For this happy disposition I thank my creator daily, and wish with all my heart that it were shared with all my fellows."

(to his father in 1787, just prior to his father's death)

"Melt us two together and we will fall far short of making a Haydn"

(to the pianist Leopold Kozeluch, who had triumphantly pointed out a few slips due to carelessness in Haydn's compositions)

Machinery of Mind

The following is a summary of a lecture given on the Cultural Day by Dr Gary Grohmann.

Is the Mind a Friend or not?

We would all like it to be a friend, a companion, someone walking side by side with us. Mind is spoken of in conversation all day long; thus we hear phrases to describe the mind such as clear, still, active, confused, agitated, busy, brilliant, can't think, mind is stressed, stunned, chatting to itself, challenge to the mind, mind games, brains trust, mental torture, genius, lucidity of mind, messy mind, power of attention, photographic memory, mental disease, mental constructs, ideas, etc. There are also famous phrases describing the mind, for example -

I think, therefore I am.

As you think, so you are.

Mind dwells in the Past and Future, rarely in the Present.

Mind over matter.

But what do people want? Everyone says that they want Peace of Mind.

The word 'mind' means 'to think' and comes from the word 'Mankind' and ultimately 'Manu', the law-giver.

Descriptions of mind are found in writings of Saints – they suggest detachment as the mind is trouble; Philosophers – they suggest to watch the mind, be careful of it, conquer it and use reason, logic, wisdom of life and consciousness; Poets/writers - who describe beauty of mind; Scientists/Psychologists – who explore the machinery with systems such as those of Karl Jung.

Most issue warnings !!

Descriptions of mind include -

- All that we are is the result of what we have thought (Buddha).
- Lord make me an instrument of thy peace (St Francis).
- Dive deep O Mind dive deep, in the ocean of God's beauty (Sri Ramakrishna).
- The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want (Ps. 23).

What feeds the mind?

The senses feed it information but there is a need to take in information with measure. How? Note this from the Katha Upanishad –

"Self rides in the chariot of the body, Intellect the firm-footed charioteer, Discursive Mind the reins.

"Senses are the horses, Objects of Desire the roads. When Self is joined to body, mind, sense, none but He enjoys.

"When a man lacks steadiness, unable to control his mind, his senses are unmanageable horses.

"But if he control his mind, a steady man, they are manageable horses."

What affects the mind?

Attachment and belief! Mind is affected by environment, food, physical fitness/health, and company. If any of these are not ideal then the mind can be affected.

It is also affected by desire and aversion, pain and pleasure, sound, and dwelling in and repeating past and future. Allowing the mind to dwell on negativity is the worst activity for it.

What is the substance of mind?

It is full of language - words, sentences, commentary, images, desire. The question is, are we this ever-changing scene?

So what substances are steady and useful? Love, stillness, reason & clarity. These need to be cultivated.

Does the mind have a structure? It has organs-

- Discursive mind (instinct): connected to senses.
- Discriminating mind/reason (intuition).
- Ego ("ME").
- Memory (storehouse).

The mind is an instrument for our use.

Desire is the greatest enemy of the mind. It sends it into past and future by nursing an offence, bemoaning the current situation, trying to secure the future, aversion. Desire then produces procrastination, whiling away the time, idle thinking and agitation. An agitated mind cannot be 'Friend'.

So how do we cultivate mind as Friend? By moving inwards, coming into the present and moving deeper into oneself; however, we must appreciate the need to do so.

We can also practise giving attention.

What do we feed the Mind?

Proper food for the Discursive Mind is patience – have patience with one's own mind and also others. Avoid criticism. Proper food for Reason is principle – find true and good principles. They wipe out justification. Proper food for Ego is willingness – serve the needs around us, and our fellow man. Proper food for Memory is open-heartedness – be magnanimous.

What is rest for the mind?

Sleep is to body as stillness is to mind. Stillness can be found by sitting quietly, connecting with the senses, or meditation.

To free yourself from any agitated state you might encounter there is a simple and reasonable formula - "I cannot be that which I observe".

Let Mind be Friend.

Further on the Subject of Mind

We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.

- Swami Vivekananda (1863 - 1902)

The true art of memory is the art of attention.

- Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)
English essayist

The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

- John Milton (1608 - 1674) English Poet

Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well.

- Mahatma Gandhi (1869 - 1948)
Hindu lawyer, pacifist and political activist

Human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives.

- William James (1842-1910)
American psychologist, philosopher

Philosophy

An introductory course of twelve weekly lectures

RECOMMENCING IN MAY

The course is offered for the interest and enjoyment of thoughtful men and women who seek an understanding of the nature of human existence and the world in which we live.

The lectures show how great philosophic ideas of past and present, put into practice, lead to clear thought, reduction of stress, and effective action in work, study and every aspect of daily life.

The course, which includes the opportunity for discussion, is given on Tuesday and Thursday (7.45 to 10pm) and Tuesday morning (9.30 to 11.45am) and you may vary your day of attendance.

The fee for this course is \$120 for adults, \$60 for non-earning students. Enrol now by phone, or in person from 30 minutes prior to your first attendance, or visit our website:

www.philosophy.school.nz

Course commences:

Auckland: 17 and 19 May 2005

27 Esplanade Road, Mt Eden

For Enquiries Phone 09-630-2703

or 09-638-7577 (during week prior to enrolment)

Hamilton:

For Enquiries Phone: 07 856 7174

School of Philosophy (Auckland) Inc

A registered charitable organisation. Established 1960

Contributions Welcome

Thanks are extended for contributions to the newsletter, particularly Cultural Day lecture texts which we intend to present more of in future issues. We welcome articles of philosophic interest. Publication cannot be guaranteed, but if you would like to contribute (items needed by Week 6 of each term) please contact:

Marilyn Marshall

Ph 579 8646 Fax 579 7854 Email marilyn.marshall@xtra.co.nz