NEWSLETTER FOR AUGUST 2025

Ver – 28 jul-final

Greetings, Plett U3A members!

1 PLETT U3A EVENTS CALENDAR

Jan has prepared a one-page calendar of planned future events for your convenience: see below. You will note that this calendar includes a summary of all of the Monday programmes at Formosa Garden Village. The outings and presentations are highlighted in RED …. Remember that the full calendar is available on the website.

DATE			EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
Tue	29	JUL	Outing to Wittedrift	10 – 12am	Wittedrift
Mon	4	AUG	Andrew Marr History of Modern Britain - New Britannia	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	11	AUG	Museum Masterpieces - Palace to Museum - The Story of The Louvre + Leonardo and The Origins of The Collection	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	18	AUG	Museum Masterpieces - Italian Renaissance and Baroque Painting + Spanish School of Painting	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Wed	20	AUG	A Holiday in Bali - Talk by Jan Hough	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	25	AUG	Museum Masterpieces - Rubens and Flemish Painting - Early German + Rembrandt, Vermeer and Dutch Painting	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	1	SEP	South African Shoreline - Introduction & The Making of the series	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Tue - Fri	2-5	SEP	History and Fossil Trip to Graaff-Reinet	Full days	Graaff-Reinet
Mon	8	SEPT	South African Shoreline - Cape Town to Cape Point	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Wed	10	SEPT	A trip down the Danube - Talk by Basil van Rooyen	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	15	SEPT	South African Shoreline - Cape Point to Cape Agulhas	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	22	SEPT	South African Shoreline - Struisbaai to Knysna	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village
Mon	29	SEPT	South African Shoreline - Noetzie to Jeffries Bay	10 – 11am	Formosa Garden Village

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Plett U3A WhatsApp group

This month's news letter contains a follow up on the Trees of Formosa Garden Village, with some pictures. We don't usually include follow-ups or reports-back in this letter but made an exception as we understand that this topic is of interest to many of us, including those members who were not able to be at either of Mr v d Bussche's two visits to FGV.

We recently introduced a new way for the Plett U3A committee to communicate with you—our official Plett U3A Announcements WhatsApp group. This is a central space for sharing updates, important announcements, and reminders of upcoming events.

To date, 115 members have joined the group but 92 members still need to join it. Some non-joiners might be hesitant as they are worried about being bombarded with birthday wishes, cartoons and the like. That will not happen because only the group's 4 admins can post messages and we are all very strict about what goes on it: only Plett U3A material.

Once again …. joining is easy! Simply click on the link below or contact Jan Hough for assistance.

https://chat.whatsapp.com/J0LhJe7OHct4vzbhIECoH2

2.2 Welcome to new members

The Committee welcomes the following new members to Plett U3A:

Richard Baker

Peter Krige

Jules Whiteman

Benita du Preez

Franz Dreismann

Gail Ractliffe

2.3 **Membership update**

Peter reports that 44 new members have joined Plett U3A so far this year. Hope that means we are doing something right??

We have a total of 210 members of whom 161 are renewals from last year.

3 **OVERVIEW OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

Wednesday 20th August. 10h00 at FGV: Following a recent short holiday trip to Bali, Jan will share some of his experiences. He will present a photo tour of a land of temples, balmy weather, beaches, charming people, polite service and gridlocked traffic, a country that South Africans can afford to visit.

4 FOLLOW-UP ON PREVIOUS EVENT

4.1 Trees of Formosa Garden Village

Anne Clark reports that Formosa Garden Village (FGV) is aptly named and the many trees that have been planted in the last 40 years contribute to the tranquil surroundings in the village. Many members will recall that in October 2024 Georg von dem Bussche, long time resident of FGV and a well-known Forester, gave U3A a fascinating presentation on indigenous trees in our area. This was followed up in February this year by a walk led by Georg around FGV to look at the trees, both indigenous and exotic, that are thriving in the village. Many of these were labelled by Georg and the late Don Ayres in 2011 and 2013.



Tree labelling at FGV

It was noted that there are many more trees that have not been labelled, most notably the small grove of indigenous trees that were planted and cared for by Don Ayres in the area adjacent to his cottage (101) and the magnificent Yellowwood (*Podocarpus falcatus*), which we believe is about 40 years old. In addition, Georg and his wife, Barbara, have planted several interesting trees opposite their cottage (91).

The walk with Georg was so well received by those who took part that the U3A committee decided to donate R1000 to FGV for the labelling of 20 more trees in appreciation for Georg's time and expertise, and also in appreciation to FGV for giving U3A the use of the facilities for our meetings.

Accordingly on the 19th July Anne had the pleasure of helping Georg to attach labels to the trees that we had chosen and these can be seen if you take a walk around the village and take particular note of the trees opposite the swimming pool – all indigenous – and the magnificent exotic Swamp Cypress (Taxodium distichum), in the front garden of cottage no 2.



A Cape Holly at FGV proudly displaying its label. This tree will be familiar with many of us who go walking in local forests

For those of you with a botanical bent the trees that were labelled are as follows:

X788	*Metrosiderox excelsus*	New Zealand bottlebrush
189	*Vachellia xanthophloea*	Fever tree
139	*Pittosporum viridiflorum*	Cheesewood
261	*Vepris lanceolata*	White Ironwood
636	*Buddleja saligna*	Olive sagewood
39	*Celtis Africana*	White stinkwood
380	*Sersia chirindensis*	Red crowberry
X311	*Quercus fugosa*	Evergreen oak
617	*Olea europea susp. Africana*	Wild olive
570	*Curtisia dentata*	Assegaai
224	*Apodytes dimidiata*	White pear
18	*Podocarpus latifolius*	Real yellowwood
555	*Syzygium cordatum*	Umdoni
397	*Ilex mites*	Cape holly



This is a waterberry which as its name suggests, is often found next to perennial streams. It is very common in forests around Plett although it is wide-ranging throughout South Africa. It makes black berries which look very edible although they are not palatable for humans. Birds love them, however.

4 **Looking ahead**

Graaff-Reinet – History and Fossil tour – 2-5 September 2025

Plans are firmly in place for our forthcoming trip to the cultural centre of Graaff-Reinet in early September. We will start on Tuesday evening with a dinner at the Graaff-Reinet Club, including a presentation by a local expert. We have confirmed bookings for the next day at the new Karoo Origins Museum as well as the Kitchings Fossil Centre under the leadership of Prof Bruce Rubidge. On Thursday morning, we will then visit a selection from the many different museums in the town, with guidance by Dr Anziske Kayter. In the afternoon will be a trip up through the Camdeboo National Park to the beautiful Valley of Desolation, where we will learn about the local geology and how those stone towers came to exist.

There are a lot of other interesting activities in and around the town, and these may be visited on the last morning before heading homeward .

The trip is fully subscribed at present.

5 **Some final thoughts ….**

Twenty Mixed Metaphors to Enjoy

1 We'll burn that bridge when we get to it.
(Combines "cross that bridge" and "burn bridges")

2 It's not rocket surgery.
("Rocket science" + "brain surgery")

3 He's skating on thin ice and headed straight off the deep end.

4 Let's circle the wagons and get all our ducks in a row.

5 He's in the driver's seat of a sinking ship.

6 She's opening a can of worms and counting her chickens before they hatch.

7 If we play our cards right, we'll hit the ground running and shoot for the stars.

8 I'm just trying to put all my eggs in one basket before the other shoe drops.

9 Don't throw the baby out with the silver spoon.

10 They're grasping at straws in a haystack.

11 He's biting the hand that feeds him to the wolves.

12 We've got to take the bull by the storm.

13 The pot's calling the kettle a loose cannon.

14 She's a jack of all trades and a master of none of the above.

15 I'm drowning in a sea of red tape while jumping through flaming hoops.

16 This idea has legs, but the jury's still sleeping on it.

17 He's barking up the wrong slippery slope.

18 We’re treading water at the tip of the iceberg.

19 Don’t count your cards before the fat lady sings.

20 Let’s toss caution to the wolves and take it with a grain of salt.

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