



# Newsletter Issue 5

## Winter 2016

LITTLE, EXQUISITE AND LOCAL   YOUR OWN KEY   A COMMUNITY ARCHIVE

ABOUT US   REVIEWS   NEW COMMITTEE   FEES  
EVENTS   BOOK DISCUSSION SCHEME   HISTORY

### Of women, books and lanterns.

Last night, being Tuesday, September 29, 2015, the women who make up the committee of Kaipara Flats Library had their first meeting in the library itself because Evelyn, our hard working secretary, had purchased LED lanterns.

As the sun went down the room was infused in eerie, bluish-white light, perfect for showing up the print on the page. Two of us had brought our headlamps but we didn't need them.

We welcomed Kirsty, a new member who'd lived as far away as Kotinga, Golden Bay, amongst other places, before settling in Kaipara Flats. After the minutes of the last meeting were passed, we got down to business.

Alice, the chairperson, read the financial report and later told us the story of how she'd been in Wellington at the WW1 exhibition in Te Papa and, with tears in her eyes, heard the

voice of her beloved grandfather, Fred, on one of the voice recordings. He was an earlier chairman of the library and kept diaries most of his life.

The membership has increased dramatically since we did a mail drop with the last newsletter. Some people kindly join, not because they are readers, but because they want to support the little and local library.

There was discussion about how to preserve old documents either by using a fire-box, storing them on a memory stick or both. Carol, our librarian, said she would contact other small libraries to see how they did it. No doubt we will discuss this further. She also knew of two of the library windows that needed sorting so this led onto plans for some kind of working bee.

Sandra, the ex-treasurer, is moving out of the district and her husband will no longer be available for lawn mowing and gutter clearing. There was a suggestion that she

make this a condition for the sale of her house, kind of joking, but wouldn't it be good. Her house was once a boarding house to where people from Auckland could catch the train then stay overnight before returning to Auckland the next day or taking the river boat in Warkworth to travel further north.

As you can see business was interspersed with stories of history, diaries, letters and a few personal anecdotes.

When all the business was over, we cracked the champagne and continued with our stories on into the night, an auspicious beginning to our return to the library for meetings, although Alice did say she missed the sound of pumping the Tilley lamp.

**We are on the web**  
**[www.kaiparaflats.co.nz](http://www.kaiparaflats.co.nz)**

**local groups**

## The Family Orchard by Nomi Eve

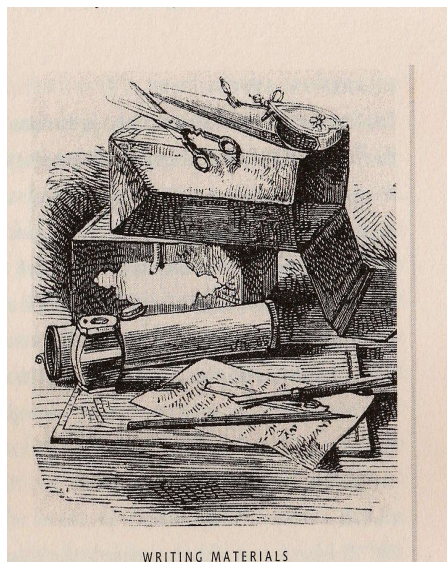
This is a work of fiction where fiction means 'formed truth'. From the stories of her grandmother and the snippets included in the book from her fictional father, Nomi has created an historical pageant of one Jewish family covering two centuries.

It begins in Palestine in 1837 with Esther who has a long term affaire with the local baker, and her husband Yochanan's unusual response. "All great literature boils down to two things, love and death," says Ezra in *Pretty Little Liars*. Here too we learn the devastation, losing a twin to war and giving away a severely disabled child, has on the family.

The book is a series of inked stories, each chapter about different family members, ending with Nomi's own 'formed truth', and permeated with the ever-present orchard.

*Their fathers, the pardesanim, the orchard men, treated their groves like favoured children, and each orange, each mango, each lemon, each grapefruit, was a precious prize that would lift not only their individual lives out of the sand, but also their whole country out of an epoch that should have been different than what it was. Stealing fruit was an almost capital offense. And yet they were about to do it. Because in the unwritten Code of Village Boyhood, stealing fruit was a necessary delight.*

'A charmed book, poignant and humorous'



Available in the Kaipara Flats Library



## Library Committee

Alice Sullivan: Chairperson

Carol Hood: Librarian

Evelyn Gauntlett: Secretary

Somma Hudson: Treasurer

Anne Cooney: Assist. Treasurer

Judith McNeil: Newsletter

Kirsty Williams

Gilbert Barruel

Themis Titman

Open Day 2016 – Devonshire

Tea - Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October,

2016 starting at 10:30 am



## Annual Library Fees Due for 2016

The library is financed by our yearly fee, \$15.00 per family which entitles you to a key to enter the premises.

Internet banking details  
ANZ 11 5200 0027112 11

Use Surname & Initial as your reference.

A form, either for new members or changed details, still needs to be completed as you are agreeing to the terms & conditions.

Email your form to the Treasurer –

[somma.hudson@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:somma.hudson@yahoo.co.nz)

Thank You.

*Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside a dog it is too dark to read.*

Groucho Marx





## History

### 'A.G.M' September 7<sup>th</sup> 1986.

The meeting was scheduled for 8 o'clock that evening. As it was their first they wanted to be there in good time ... show willing ... be part of the small community. So they set off, all agog, at a quarter-to. Driving down the now familiar Kaipara Hills Road, avoiding the odd pot-hole, they wondered aloud to each other what it was going to be like ... who'd be there.

Outside the Library there was only one other car. They parked beside it and went up the steps. A faint light shone from the window. Pushing open the door they came in from the dark to a scene from another century. Framed by solid walls of elderly books Frank Hudson sat behind the deal table, his thick white beard lit dramatically by the light of a candle. He was shuffling pieces of paper and exercise books into order.

"Come in! Take a seat. Marcus is bringing a lamp."

It was with disbelieving delight that they realised that the little wooden building was without electricity. The meeting would take place in the soft glow of other years. The library had been built in the 1800s by willing Kaipara Flats hands after a heavy days work on their farms. It had stopped still in the early twentieth century and never come forward into the present. The folk who now cared for it were approaching their seventies.

They took seats of the assorted wooden boxes and stools that had been assembled into a semi-circle facing the table, and looked around them. The dark corners ... The high roof ... The rows and rows of books. Someone had lovingly worked these into alphabetical order half-way round the room, and then given up the task. The rest were abandoned from 'M' through to 'Z'. The other end of the little library was shrouded in darkness, where the light from the candle failed to reach it. The whole place smelt strongly of books ... musty, dry, papery, heady.

Cars. Voices. Marcus Dill came in with two lamps and lit them, placing them one at each end of the table, unconsciously turning it into an altar. The space was now filled with warm yellow light and the soft hiss from the Tilly.

The circle of eight other arrivals was now complete. No-one else was coming. Marcus took his place beside Frank ... two descendants of the pioneer families of the village ... and the business of the night began.

Not that it was business-like. Items were brought up, considered, and filed away again. Frank was respectfully left to his own pace, occasionally helped by Marcus. The first hour drifted into the second. The two newcomers lost all sense of time.

"Correspondence now I think, don't you Marcus?"

"A good time for it, Frank."

"There's a letter or two here. I'll pass them round for people to look at." Papers were circulated. Philip had by now sunk into a species of happy torpor, so Anne took the first letter from him and read it with the person on her right, an alert young woman seated on a higher box than the rest of the gathering. This may have helped her to stay awake, for she gave Anne a nudge... "Take a look at the date." ... It was three years old. "Shall I mention it?" "Perhaps you

should." The matter was brought to the attention of the secretary and all eyes turned expectantly towards Frank. He repossessed the letter, and shuffled it guiltily under a ledger. "Must have escaped my notice. I'll have to deal with it later." He knew, we knew, that he never would. Kaipara Flats Library wasn't run by efficiency, but by love.

Finally the matter of elections came up. Frank declared himself ready to step down. "It takes up too much of my time" he murmured. Anne took him at his word. The others knew better. Marcus' wife, Clare took over. "You must stand for secretary again, Frank" said she firmly "Your grandfather and father held the position ... it wouldn't be right not to have a Hudson in charge." Frank accepted without demur. Marcus was re-elected chairman. A Hudson and a Dill to preside until the next Annual General Meeting was called in two or three years' time.

**The semi-circle was voted by Frank to be on the Committee. "Everyone who's attended should be a Committee member by right," he announced.**

The meeting broke up.

People talked together briefly; the lamps were extinguished; and they all emerged into the night.

Driving back up into the Hills again Philip and Anne exchanged views, and were agreed. It had been one of the happiest experiences of the eight years in the Kaipara Hills. They had, for two magical hours, slowed down and become part of another era ... of something that was fast slipping into history.

**Anne Todd.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Newsletter: Judith McNeil [judithamcneil@farmside.co.nz](mailto:judithamcneil@farmside.co.nz)

Information: Evelyn Gauntlett [jester2013@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jester2013@xtra.co.nz)

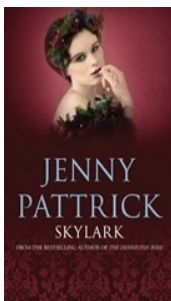
Book donations & history: Carol Hood [lew.carol@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lew.carol@xtra.co.nz)

KFL Book Club & BDS: Anne Cooney [accenton@mac.com](mailto:accenton@mac.com)

### The Kaipara Flats Library Book Club

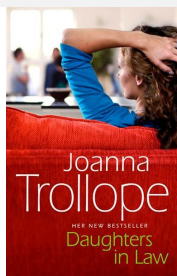
has been meeting since September 2015. It has grown from 7 members to 12 and in its first year has met two-monthly. It operates under the aegis of the Christchurch WEA **Book Discussion Scheme** where the same book is distributed to members and discussed at the following meeting. To date we have read and discussed *Skylark* by NZ author Jenny Patrick, *Daughters-in-Law* by Joanna Trollope and *Little Princes* by Connor Grennan. We are currently reading *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats* by Jan-Phillip Sendker. During summer months meetings are held at the Library and rotated around members' homes at other times.

[www.facebook.com/bookdiscussionscheme](http://www.facebook.com/bookdiscussionscheme)



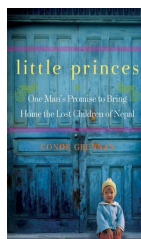
All the world is a stage for Lily Alouette in Jenny Patrick's *Skylark*, an historical romp beginning in Europe, and on through Australia and New Zealand. Lily, a singer, joins a circus, becomes a bare-back rider, meets a young man - Jack Lacey, is rescued

during an earthquake by Bully Hayes and has an illegal marriage. Set in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it is the story of New Zealand's early entertainment industry from which Jenny Patrick herself has descended. The Lacey archives are presented as a collection of playbills, scrolls and journal entries under titles like: *A Farce: The Horseman*, *The Actress and the Wench at the Gate*, in gothic lettering, archived by a fictional researcher. It is a family story about performers, adults and children, competing for parts with one suicidal outcome. I don't think this was our favourite book although I particularly enjoyed it, for its flamboyance, its flouting of conventional morality and the style in which the writer presented it.



*Daughters in Law* by Joanna Trollope is dark and deep and tinged with the central selfishness of the individuals. What begins with a seemingly successful family, becomes a war-like struggle for control. The men are passive, having been dominated by their mother, Rachel, but the daughters-in-law are like sea-monsters, disrupting the status-quo. How dare they want family dinners at their houses, get pregnant immediately after marriage or form friendships with men other than their husbands. This story could happen only in late 20<sup>th</sup> century, affluent society where having a job with a high income is a necessity, and the main reason for moving away from the family of origin. I don't think we liked this book much either although it was summarised beautifully by Anne to whom it had more meaning.

Connor Grennan's *Little Princes* is a true story of what one person is capable of, risking his life in a journey through Himla, Nepal, a mountainous province with no roads or power to find the parents of the little princes, the lively, affectionate 'orphans' he'd grown to love. Parents who had sold their children to traffickers to avoid the consequences of their being subsumed by the Maoist army. It began as one young man's footloose OE and ended with him forming the NGN, Next Generation Nepal, so he could provide further homes for these displaced children. We liked this book a lot, discussing the ins and outs of volunteer work abroad and the endearing ways of the children.



BDS recommends limiting groups to 12.

### BOOK LAUNCH

GOING EAST, A JOURNEY WITH MY MOTHER BY JUDITH MCNEIL  
AUCKLAND, TUESDAY MAY 10<sup>TH</sup>



the river has fallen over her breast  
the candle has waxed lyrical  
the teacup has the requisite  
number of leaves  
these things of themselves  
cannot divine the future

Books available from Judith at  
[judithamcneil@farmside.co.nz](mailto:judithamcneil@farmside.co.nz)