



Mundaring
Community Bank® Branch



2024

MAY MADNESS

{Quite sedate really}

June birthdays: Many happy returns to **Joyce** and **Steph**. Trust you were spoilt on your birthday Joyce – and Steph enjoy your special day and may the year ahead bring good health, joy and contentment to both of you.

R & R: **Sandra** took to the air, landing in S.A. and spent a week on Kangaroo Island as well as peregrinating around; **Mary** went further – enjoyed a week in Bali to celebrate a granddaughter's wedding; **Helen** had enough of the sunshine and headed to Tassie for a short break; whilst **Dawn** stayed close to home, enjoying time with family in Mandurah.

wheels Sculpture Park Project – first conceived some four years ago as mosaic motifs on Totem Poles, with COVID and long service leave taken by the artistic adviser intervening, the project has morphed into artwork and a native plant garden at the western end of Sculpture Park. The artwork concept is still a work in progress but now that the rain has arrived it is time to add new plants to the area. **Helpers are needed on MONDAY, 10 JUNE at 9.30!** Meet at the gazebo at the western (Gugerie Street) end. As it's a weekday the nearest car park will be full of Shire staff, so park on the gravel verge. Morning tea, shovels and an auger to drill holes will be provided. Even if you can't lend a hand to plant PLEASE come to lend your support.

wheels wandered:

Home Movie - from Hazel's pen: : We met at Osmond Glen, the home of Sally and Ray, to watch the movie **'Gifted Hands'** based on the true story of Ben Carsons a neurosurgeon.

It is an inspiring film beautifully acted by Cuba Golding Jnr. as Ben Carsons and his mother is played by Kimberley Elise. The Carsons are an African-American family from the poor area of Detroit. They struggle financially as his mother brings up her two sons alone whilst she suffers mental health problems. Ben does badly at school until his mother discovers that he needs spectacles and along with her encouragement achieves excellent grades. He entered Yale on a scholarship where he meets his wife, played by Lacena Rustin, who also gives him great encouragement.

He entered Medical School, completing his residency in neurosurgery at John Hopkins University. Ben is a great thinker and believes in god's guidance. He achieves worldwide fame after pioneering a new type of brain surgery on a young girl who is suffering from constant fits. .

He is contacted by a doctor in Germany to see if he will operate on twins who are joined at the back of their heads. This has been done before but one of the twins has had to be sacrificed. Ben works out a way to do this so that both babies will survive. He performs the long operation with the aid of many surgeons. It is hailed as a great success.

After the movie we retired outside for our usual lunch of fish and chips accompanied by 'bubbles'. We did not leave empty handed as Sally and Ray presented us with a selection of seedlings from their garden. Thank you both so much for your kindness

Rockingham , a day out – from Cheryl's pen: We had a full bus load of Spokes and a glorious, warm, still and sunny day for our Rockingham Day out. Everyone was in good spirits as we set off on what is quite a long drive. There was lots of chatter which is always lovely to hear! We were booked for 12.00 at Latitude 32, which is situated on The Boardwalk, so overlooks the ocean which was very still. And glittered diamond-like in the sun.

A jetty projects into the ocean for fishing and viewing and the white sand stretches off into the distance on both sides. Lyndell put her feet into the water but "it was freezing I can tell you that" was her response. Everyone tucked into their meals which included lobster tails, mushroom risotto, prawns, chicken mignon and other favourites. We sauntered two minutes (depending on how fast your walk) around the corner to Baskin Robbins ice creamery for desert before boarding the bus for our return. It was noted that the trip home was much quieter

Curry Cook-in Lunch – Hosted by Annette at her home in Sawyers Valley. Calendar not checked – at first it seemed we'd be a very small cohort cooking up a feast, but in dribs and drabs would-be cooks wandered in. Kate and Cindy were there to assist too. Recipes were chosen and soon everyone was collecting ingredients from the assortment laid out ready, peeling, chopping, grating, cutting. Asking what do I do next, where're the pans, which burner can I use - - Annette calm amid the storm helping all, whilst keeping an eye on Ken and his Laska! Remarkably everything came together, and cooks and helpers sat down to a feast – armed with individual small stainless-steel bowls we made our choices – beef, chicken, vegetables, Laska, and rice – which we each heaped on a stainless-steel platter with our individual bowls. Who would have thought carrots would make a sweet desert! The mountain of washing up was done and put away – though Annette's probably still looking for things not put in the right place! Heartfelt thanks to Annette and Ken for allowing us to create a feast out of mayhem in their kitchen!

The Gondoliers: The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of WA celebrated its 60th birthday with one of the British musical theatre duo's most popular comic operas, This production at the Octagon Theatre was the first since the closure of the Playhouse Theatre in 2011.

Lead by Musical Director Blake Houlahan. the G&S orchestra was in fine fettle – with *The Gondoliers* having the longest of Sullivan's overtures there was ample time to enjoy their musicianship - some perfect pizzicato was particularly impressive.

The title roles of Gondoliers Marco and Giuseppe, one of whom is believed to be the King of Barataria, were played with fine voice, and comic timing by Mathew Leak and Theodore Murphy-Jelley. Their wives Gianetta and Tessa were given personality by Liza Cobb and Sadé Stella-Joy.

Zac Porter played the Duke of Plaza-Toro with flair, nicely matched by Mary Vidovich as The Duchess. Their daughter Casilda. Emma Hazell, was in fine voice and impressively haughty

The ensemble was, active, and effective though diction wasn't always perfect, and it was sometimes difficult to discern what they were singing – true of other performers too!

An interesting take on this classic operetta. (*adapted in part from a review by Kimberly Shaw in The Whisperer*)

Darlington Chamber Music: Hermann Johann Berens "The Society Quartet" – the master Graeme Gilling and apprentice Jude Holland, four hands on the piano, were joined by Semra Lee, violin and Jon Tooby, cello for this work by little known Swedish composer Hermann Berens – oh, that I had Graeme's notes about the music – suffice to say the players received rousing acclamation after the performance!

Johannes Brahms – Waltzes(7) -from the programme notes "each one a gem of melodic invention and rhythmic vitality, varying in mood from playful and light-hearted to more introspective and lyrical" – some familiar airs amongst them. **Hungarian dances(4)** Brahms had an admiration for folk music ably translating their essence to the classical tradition – they "captivate audiences with their infectious energy and timeless appeal" – again some familiar airs, concluding the first half of the programme to joyous acclaim.

Anton Arensky Piano Trio No 2 in F minor Op 73 - "The opening, *Allegro moderato*, is a big movement built around three themes and opens very dramatically featuring triplets in the piano to a singing melody in the violin. It appeared throughout the movement including in the coda at the end. The second subject, presented first by the cello, has the quiet, yet effective elegance of a simple song and a mood of hope. In the second movement, *Scherzo-Allegro molto*, the strings are given a sparse, though telling, theme which is played against a fleet and running part in the piano. The contrasting trio features a superb waltz, slavonic in nature, The third movement, *Elegia - Adagio* reached the heights of lyricism. The lovely sad opening melody passed from the muted cello to the muted violin and then to the piano and back again. It was a personal and intimate dialogue between the instruments,. The explosive and dramatic finale, *Allegro non troppo*, made brilliant use of themes from the preceding Elegia as well as those of the first movement."

The musicians returned on several occasions to acknowledge the continued acclamation.

Before heading home we enjoyed High Tea on the verandah catered for by the ladies from St Cuthbert's Church.

Classic Book Club – "A Pair of Blue Eyes" by a favourite author Thomas Hardy. First serialised between September 1872 and July 1873, in Tinsley's Magazine, and published in book form in 1873. It was Hardy's third published novel, and the first not published anonymously. Elfrida Swancourt is the daughter of the Rector of Endelstow, a remote sea-swept parish in Cornwall based on St Juliot. Blue-eyed and high-spirited, Elfrida has little experience of the world beyond, and becomes entangled with two men: the boyish architect, Stephen Smith, and the older literary man, Henry Knight. The former friends become rivals, and Elfrida faces an agonizing choice. Written at a crucial time in Hardy's life, A Pair of Blue Eyes expresses more directly than any of his novels the events and social forces that made him the writer he was. Elfrida's dilemma mirrors the difficult decision Hardy himself had to make with this novel: to pursue the profession of architecture, where he was established, or literature, where he had yet to make his name.

Home Movie – from Hazel's pen: We gathered at Sally and Ray's home to watch 'A United Kingdom'. The last few home movies have been based on true stories as was this film. David Oyelowo plays Sereste Khama who is heir to the throne of Bechuanaland, a British Protectorate. Whilst studying law in London after WW2 he falls in love with Ruth Williams (Rosamund Pike) who is unaware of his royal connections at the beginning of their romance. He eventually reveals his true status. They marry despite strong opposition from their families and the British Government who is concerned about relations with South Africa. The mixed-race marriage is widely reported in the press.

They live in Africa for a short time and Ruth becomes pregnant. The British ask Sereste to go to London for discussions and whilst there forbid him to return to his homeland for five years. Meanwhile diamonds are found in Bechuanaland and Sereste ensures the British Government acknowledges their sovereign ownership by the Buchuana people, ensuring that his country benefits from the resources found by the mining companies.

There are many twists and turns in the plot and eventually he goes home and negotiates independence from the British. The country becomes a democracy with no royal family and becomes Botswana.

During lunch some of our group remembered the controversy surrounding the high profile mixed marriage of Sereste and Ruth.

Thanks once again Sally and Ray for hosting home movies

WASO - One of the rising stars of Australian conducting, Jen Winley led the orchestra in this Live broadcast from Perth.

Trois Femmes de légende (Three Legendary Women): Salome, Ophelia & The Dream of Cleopatra By **Melanie Bonis**.

It has been said that Melanie probably projected herself onto these female figures drawn from ancient mythology, legends or dramatic works. The piece counts among the greatest of her works

Salome - her dance at the birthday celebration of her stepfather – sensual and mysterious and somewhat impulsive

Ophelia - a young noblewoman of Denmark who, due to Hamlet's actions, ends up in a state of madness and seems to float on the waters that are about to drown her.

The Dream of Cleopatra - Cleopatra VII was said to be one of the first "celebrities" due to her beauty and affairs with Julius Caesar and Marc Antony and was one of the most prominent rulers of Ancient Egypt. Journey into the dreams of Cleopatra, where ancient mysteries and opulent treasures await. Navigate through a world of intrigue and elegance, uncovering the secrets of a queen's ambition and the timeless allure of Egypt.

Scheherazad by **Nikolia Rimsky Korsakov** The fable has it that Scheherazad so enthralled the Sultan with her stories that he computed the death sentence carried out on his former wives. "The Sultan's theme is declaimed imposingly by the heavy brass, after which we hear Scheherazade, with the bewitching violin part; In 'The Sea and Sinbad's Ship' the swelling sea is richly depicted. From time to time the violin intervenes as Scheherazade continues to weave her narrative web. The Story of the Kalender Prince' benefits from some woodwind solos. The music becomes more dramatic with a quickened pace whilst towards the end of the movement the slower episode is played most expressively. 'The Young Prince and the Princess' is, quite clearly, a love scene and it's delivered sensually by the strings and woodwinds. Finally, Scheherazade takes the Sultan to the 'Festival at Baghdad'. There's great vitality and the rhythms were taut with the colourful depiction of a crowded, lively scene as stallholders vie for the attention of passers-by. The return of the Sultan's theme is as imposing as it was at the very start but it's Scheherazade who has the last word: the soft, delicate conclusion". The performance was loudly proclaimed by an enthralled audience!

We stopped at the Midvale Tavern for lunch for possibly the last time after the steak sandwich proved to be more like shoe leather than steak

Art Gallery of WA: This year's **Pulse** celebrates 32 years of showcasing WA's talented young artists and features 60 works by 2023 Year 12 Visual Arts graduates from 36 schools across WA, with works that mostly dealt with themes of mental health and social pressures, gender and culture, environmentalism and technology. Your scribe found the exhibition somewhat bleak as it seemed the young artists mostly portrayed their experiences in a negative way. Some works that caught my eye – Benjamin Cronin "Solo Valley" a black and white lino cut; Freya Townsend, pastel coloured pencil drawings of her grandparents, one of whom has dementia, "United in Grief" and Yanxi Nancy Lin, stain and glaze on stoneware, Asian serving and cooking "baskets" "Savouring the Past".

There was time too to explore other exhibitions including a retrospective display celebrating 50 years of jewellery making by **Dorothy Erikson**, including pieces inspired by WA flora, **Balancing Act** featured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander works from the State Art Collection, including celebrating country, the effects of colonialism; different versions of history at times emotional and challenging, alongside moments of great beauty and poignancy. Whilst **Anna Park's** first museum exhibition outside the US couldn't be missed. Large black and white drawings feverishly capturing the spirit of contemporary life loomed large on the walls of several gallery spaces on the ground floor.

The weather was mild, so we enjoyed lunch outside Pica Bar before heading home on the train.