

LATEST EMAILS BETWEEN DENISE IN HUKANUI/HAMUA WI – Our New Zealand Link WI AND JULIA IN BASLOW WI

From: Denise Gavin
Sent: Friday, February 1, 2019 9:16 PM
To: Julia Warne
Subject: January/February



Morning Julia and Baslow Darlings,

We had our February meeting last Wednesday (very Irish!) at Colleen's home in Masterton. It was about 32 deg, so we sat under her beautiful trees around tables and had our meeting and lunch. There were 11/14 there, so that was good. We gave out another 3 Christmas parcels, just one to go now. They are just beautiful, thank you all so very much.

A few of us went for a short walk and watched as Colleen's husband Glen, fed the eels in a stream. They have a very strong sense of smell and could smell the food that was put in the stream. Up they swam against the waterflow to get their feed. Eels are amazing creatures. When the females reach reproductive age – decades on, they make their way downstream, joining many rivers and make their way to the Pacific Ocean. Then they swim up to Tonga, give birth and die. Their little ones somehow make their way back to the river/stream where their mothers came from. Eeling used to be very lucrative and many old, fat females were lost, but we have been educated to their life story and they are mostly left in peace. We have some massive ones in our back dams, and I guess when the time is right, they will make their journey. They can also go over land to get to where they need to go. Our old cat found a few that way!

Colleen also has a pool so a few of us dipped our feet in there to cool off. A very pleasant day.

Our next meeting with Deborah and Nigel in attendance will be at Pat's home just north of Masterton on Wednesday 6th March. Am sure Keith will entertain Nigel very well! We usually have a look at Keith's industrial glass blowing skills whilst we are there. So interesting.

The weather cooled down slightly but is warming back up again today. Had a few mls of rain overnight. Most schools went back last week. They can return anywhere from 28th January to 7th February, as long as they have 384 half days at school! Gives schools leeway to add days to weekends etc if they start earlier or finish later. Our Waitangi Day (NZ Day) is this Wednesday 6th February.

Hope you aren't in for the weather that the US has been getting. So very cold. With all the electricity being used for heating, there must be some power outages along the way.

OK. Tis all for now. Have a good February and enjoy your centenary festivities for this month.

Love to you all,
Denise and the Hukanui-Hamua Darlings x x

From: Julia Warne
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 5:48 PM
To: Denise Gavin
Subject: February in Baslow

Dear Denise and Hukanui-Hamua Darlings

Sorry for the hiatus. Our meeting didn't fall until the 13th this month and I have been away since then. Friday to Tuesday with son and family. We rented a small cottage for two nights, spent Saturday in Cambridge and hired a punt with guide who pointed out the different University Colleges along the river, together with anecdotes. Then, on Sunday we went to the races at nearby Huntingdon. I gave Anya (12) and Jaya (13) £10 each as betting money. We all chose our horses and then watched each race, eight in all. Anya found it all very stressful!

Thank you so much for your monthly news. Lovely to hear that you are currently able to enjoy your meetings in the summer sunshine. It was interesting to hear about the eels. They used to be much more prolific here than they are now. Maybe not in Derbyshire but certainly in coastal Counties such as Lincolnshire and Somerset. Not sure whether this is due to climate change or man-made changes to the riverbeds. From here the eels migrate to the Sargasso Sea in the North Atlantic. It is an area bounded by four currents forming an ocean gyre, particularly salty and has its own characteristic brown Sargassum seaweed. So, there must be something special that suits the eels in that area.

You will see from Jane's report attached that we had a particularly interesting speaker at our meeting this month. Although many complain, we really are lucky to live in countries with high standards of medical care. Today we have enjoyed our monthly WI lunch, this time at The Cavendish Hotel in Baslow. This was one of our 'posh' lunches, not sure yet where Jane and Lorna will be taking us next month.

Deborah and I met up at the meeting. She is excited about introducing herself to her new grandchild in Wellington, and she and her husband are also very much looking forward to meeting you all in a couple of weeks. I am very envious. She has chickens in her large garden, so usually brings fresh eggs to the meeting for the Sales Table. I am sure you will enjoy your time together and we will look forward to hearing all about it, together with a full photo display.

Lots of love to you all from,
Julia and the Baslow WI Darlings xx

From: Denise Gavin
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 10:34 PM
To: Julia Warne
Subject: February!

Hello Julia,
Have been thinking about you too! The month is slipping away quickly once again. We have been enjoying warm temperatures but would really like some rain! Apparently, it is on the way but bringing cold weather with it – oh well, we can't have everything!

Your time with Karsten and family sounded like bliss. Punting down the Avon (?), a bit like kayaking!!!! Haven't done much of that of late. River is very low and have to walk through rapids, but that is OK – there are blackberries on the banks to try and reach when I am in the kayak. Just have to keep an eye out for a swan. There is an older swan and a younger one. Presumably the older one lost his mate in the duck shooting season last year. We don't usually allow duck shooters on our stretch of the river, but if they do come I ask them to leave the swans alone.

Mazunga Joan sounds an amazing lady. I love watching "Call the Midwife" when the series are on over here or the Christmas Specials. Then we get "One born every minute" from Liverpool hospital and there is a stark difference!

We laid Grandad, first wife Vera and second wife Joan to rest last Saturday. 52 of us there including 4 of Joan's 5 children and families, plus our 3 and their partners (except Jymahl who was on duty) and nieces and nephews of Dad. At peace now. We decided to dig the hole to put the ashes in and boy it

was hard. Had 4 spades and it took a few volunteers/conscripts to get it down to the required depth. Lots of stones, maybe a river many moons ago. There is a vineyard right around the cemetery so the dryness obviously suits the grapes.

OK. We are looking forward to meeting Deborah and Nigel and hearing about her family and Baslow.

Keith and Pat's granddaughter Emma is being married a few days before our meeting, so Pat will have family staying, but they are fine with that.

Have a good weekend Julia.

Love to you,
Denise x x