

BDS Footnote

NOVEMBER 2009 - # 4

NEWSLETTER OF THE BOOK DISCUSSION SCHEME



37 YEARS OF GOOD READING

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1 SEASON'S GREETINGS

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and New Year from the staff and board of the BDS. We hope you have had an enjoyable reading year. We would like to thank all convenors for the work you do on behalf of your members. You help to make the BDS the success that it is.

2 WE'RE SHIFTING PREMISES

We're very happy to advise that the BDS will be shifting to new premises in Sydenham at the end of December. We have approximately 860 book groups (8,600 members) and we're still growing so our present small Gloucester Street premises are no longer suitable.

We will advise you of our new address details later in the year and we will include a slip in all January book parcels advising our new contact details. Our telephone and fax numbers will remain the same.

3 RE-ENROLMENT FOR 2010

Re-enrolments for 2010 are progressing well so our grateful thanks to you all. If anyone is experiencing any problems with re-enrolment then please get in touch as we're happy to help.

For those groups that advised they'd like to receive 2011 titles when they're ready, we will be emailing you around June to advise of the new titles. If you would like to add any of these to your book selections, then an email or a phone call is all that will be required.

4 MARY LOUISE'S STAFF PICK

Mary Louise has been the convenor of a Christchurch group for a number of years and works at the BDS on Friday mornings. We gave her the challenge of choosing the BDS title that she enjoyed the most. This is her pick and her thoughts on the book:

Mao's Last Dancer (Li Cunxin)

Non-Fiction

Li Cunxin tells his journey from boyhood in a peasant family always on the edge of starvation to being a leading world dancer and finally a stockbroker in America. He was plucked out of school when an 11 year old to train in Madam Mao's Peking Dance Academy. It is a story about abject poverty, family love and the triumph of the human spirit. It is very readable.

4 BOOK CHOICES FOR 2010

Have you visited the BDS website www.bds.org.nz to check 'What's Hot'? We include feedback from the groups to help you with your book selections. Please keep in mind that your book choices can be changed at any time through the year so if you want to add or remove titles, just get in touch with us.

What's Hot

The following titles have been rated 'hot' by groups during 2009:

Fiction

Ask the Posts of the House
Atonement
Blindsight
Book Thief, The
Bulibasha
Captive Wife, The
Half of a Yellow Sun
Mister Pip
Namesake, The
Never Let Me Go
Thousand Splendid Suns, A

Non Fiction

Diving Bell & the Butterfly, The
Infidel: My Life
Mao's Last Dancer
Nazi Officer's Wife, The
Never Have Your Dog Stuffed
Skin to Skin
Stasiland

5 NEW SOFTWARE

We are in the process of upgrading our software so groups will notice some changes in 2010.

- *Book choices*

A computer programme will now be selecting the titles. If your group did not put your titles in order of preference, then monthly (or two-monthly) titles will be chosen completely at random from your book selections. If you'd like to change your book selections, or put them in order of preference, then please let us know as it's no problem to change selections.

- *Website*

We are also upgrading the website. When completed, groups will be able to search book titles and view comments made by reviewers and groups. We will advise more as this work progresses.

6 STATISTICS

Thank you to those groups that completed the annual survey. The winner of the chocolates was Group Palmerston North 028. Congratulations to you, the chocolates will soon be on their way!

Stats that may be of interest to you:

Ages

19-29	.5%
30-39	6.0%
40-49	17.5%
50-59	27.0%
60+	49.0%

Gender

Females 96% Males 4%

Ethnicity

97%	NZ
2%	Other (Predominantly UK)
1%	Asian, Maori and Pacific Island nations (in that order)

7 CONVENOR MEETINGS

Successful convenor meetings took place in Auckland and Christchurch in October – 92% of Auckland convenors and 90% of Christchurch convenors recommended that these meetings should be repeated in other centres. If the BDS can gain further funding for the meetings, then we will be visiting other centres in 2010.

8 ROYAL NEW ZEALAND FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND

The Foundation for the Blind and the BDS are working together to help blind and partially sighted readers join BDS book groups. We invited the Foundation to speak to the BDS:

The Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind (RNZFB) Library and the Book Discussion Scheme are working together to link blind and partially sighted readers into book groups.

The RNZFB Library's current analogue cassette system provides limited copies of books, so if a blind or partially sighted member joins a book group, the RNZFB library might not be able to supply them with a talking book of the title their group is reading that month because the copies are on loan to others.

However, the RNZFB Library is about to transition to a digital format service with talking books on CDs which will be burned on demand. This groundbreaking service will, amongst other things, mean blind and partially sighted book group members will be able to order their book for the month and have it sent to them within a few days.

Neil Jarvis, RNZFB Executive Director, Access Innovation and Enterprise, is really excited about giving RNZFB Library clients the opportunity to join BDS groups. He says: "Many of our members are avid readers and this opens up another opportunity for them to participate fully in their community".

He notes the new service uses a digital recording format standard called DAISy (Digital Accessible Information System). "The most wonderful aspect of DAISy is that blind and partially sighted readers can have a reading experience very close to that of their sighted peers because each book is structured so they can navigate around it. They can also use bookmarks to, for example, refer back to passages they wish to discuss at a book group meeting".

In the coming months, RNZFB and the BDS will need to compare their Catalogues so that BDS groups with blind readers will be able to choose BDS books that are also available as RNZFB Talking Books.

The new digital Talking Book service will be rolled out to a pilot group of 50 RNZFB Library members in November this year. The plan is to transition all Library members to the new service by June 2012, although how quickly that takes place depends on the availability of funding.

BDS Footnote

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BDS Transition Group: Murray Jones (chair), Barbara Hutchinson (FWEA Chair), Beth Davies, Bill Hardie, Karen Willyams, Barbara Brown (Manager)

www.bds.org.nz

The Book Discussion Scheme is a member of the Federation of Workers Education Association in Aotearoa New Zealand/Te Whetereihana o nga Kaimahi Akoranga o Aotearoa