

Renew Women's Weekend - by Donna Miller

From early evening on Friday 18th March, ladies from all around the North Island began to arrive at the grounds of Waikato Outdoor Society on the western outskirts of Hamilton.

Some arrived alone, and some came with friends. All came to have a much deserved break from the daily demands of their lives to replenish, refresh and rejuvenate their minds, bodies and souls.

And the Renew Women's Retreat Weekend at Waikato Outdoor Society provided the exact avenue to do that.

From pampering to nourishing, Carrie Grason and her team of ladies from Waikato Outdoor Society thought of everything.

The first treat organised was a welcome cocktail and mix and mingle poolside followed by a light dinner. Then all the ladies watched a great chick flick - Julie & Julia - on the large screen while eating delicious buttered popcorn.

After a restful sleep, some got up for the early session of yoga at 7am. What a wonderful way to start the day with Mary Watson, a professional Yoga Instructor from Wellington. Mary ensured the session was suitable for all levels of yoga experience, and even for those with none.

Following breakfast, forms with each treatment being provided - manicure, pedicure, massage, facials and even a professional photo shoot - were displayed for the ladies to put their name against time slots and co-ordinate a full day of blissful treats.

The treatment providers, most of whom were professionals, gave freely of their own time in support of this wonderful women's event. At any one time during the day, six women were receiving pampering of some kind meaning the providers worked extremely long and hard.

During the day, another two yoga sessions were held each with a slightly different style and level of expertise.

A very tasty and wonderful dinner was enjoyed by the ladies who chatted companionably.

The evening entertainment was a fantastic quiz created by Carrie with the questions all being about women throughout the ages and things women are interested in. As with all great quizzes, some of the questions were easy and known by most, while others really stretched the brain and were quite a challenge.

Then the late evening yoga session Mary took was Yoga Nidra which took those who participated into a fully relaxed "going-to-sleep" stage.

Again after breakfast on the Sunday morning, more treatments and pampering were available before the women started packing up and heading home after lunchtime.

About a third of the ladies that attended the event, had never been to a naturist club before. Some even arrived at the event not realising the venue was a naturist club but decided to stay on once they found out. Also, most of the treatment providers were not naturists.

All who attended the retreat made special connections and experienced something significant that they will treasure for a long time. Several mentioned that even though the concept of naturism had never occurred to them previously, they were considering visiting their local naturist club and finding out more about the lifestyle.

Carrie and her team of helpers ought to be sincerely congratulated for providing an incredible event for naturist women, and especially for reaching out to ladies in the non-naturist community. The male members of Waikato Outdoor Society who helped with preparations but were excluded from the club for 48 hours during the event also need to be thanked and appreciated.

Carrie and her team are already talking about holding another women's event next year. The whole naturist community appreciate the immense efforts, patience and sacrifice required over several months to bring an event such as the Renew Women's Weekend together.

Heartfelt thanks to Carrie and the amazing team at Waikato Outdoor Society.