

NOVEMBER 2022

NEWSLETTER

Hello dear Members

The year is slipping by quickly and here we are knocking on the door of November. To me, I feel as though I've been cheated out of the lovely Spring balmy nights in the lead up to Summer. And the hours usually spent performing leisurely seasonal tasks in the garden at this time of year have changed and are now frantically attached in short bursts between showers! The blossoms haven't let us down though ... they're a picture! And the countryside is lush and green with the last remnants of the yellow flowers from canola crops a beautiful contrast.

As a former farmer for more than 35 years, extreme weather is a dreaded curse. I have lived through the long interminable 'drys' and extreme heat and experienced unseasonal devastating 'wets'. Unfortunately, there are consequences with any extremes of weather and it goes without saying that our heart goes out to those affected by the floods – not only in our nearby towns, but across Australia.

Our president Rod, and wife Shirley, attended the U3A State Conference in Bendigo during the last Term break. Thank you both for generously donating your time over the break for our benefit. Rod has written a summary of the Conference in his President's Report.

John McQuilton: For King, Country & Empire: Australia's Home front 1914-1918.

This course is so enlightening – and dare I say, fun! John challenges us in our thinking. How we thought back then and how we think now are very different. Social circumstance and access to information are the prime reasons this is so. In one hundred years from now, young people will wonder why we think as we do! Our world is continuously evolving/changing. Come and attend these wonderful sessions ... it is never too late.

Our coffee morning on 28th October is one not to be missed! Our well-travelled and respected member, Alwyn Friedersdorff's topic for the day is: Across the World in a Pandemic. Alwyn attended the Zonta Convention in Hamburg as Australia's District 23 UN Chair and President of Albury Wodonga. She will give some background to how she fills this prestigious role and then present a travelogue on her experience and following special summertime adventures in Norway and Germany over a 4 week visit in June/July this year. Coffee mornings are proving to be very special social occasions. They provide the opportunity to chat and mix with members from other classes. Remember, please bring a plate of goodies to share if possible.



And finally ... I became aware, through Arts Appreciation, of the annual Citrus Festival in Griffith and did a road trip to check it out last Saturday. It was amazing! Griffith is so culturally diverse. The median strip was resplendent with dozens of large orange (literally) sculptures. I took a photo of one of the structures made by members of Griffith U3A. Aren't they a clever lot!.

Again, sit back with a coffee and have a read of what's been happening in our neck of the U3A woods. Let's celebrate our dynamic chapter and all it offers.

Happy reading
Judy White – Editor
E: jjelbart@gmail.com



Our November Coffee Catch Up is on ...

Friday 25 November, 10am

Our guest speaker, Dr Pieter Mourik, will speak on family history and the use of DNA. The presentation will be Hybrid and a Zoom link will be sent out in the week before 25th November. Peter is encouraging face to face attendance as some of his material is in hard copy.

As always, please feel free to bring along a small plate to share.



REMINDER

Don't forget, our October coffee catch up is on Friday 28 October with our own Alwyn Friedersdorff sharing her experiences with Zonta and trekking in Norway. Not to be missed!

From the President's Desk



Report on the Annual Victorian U3A State Conference. for 2022.

Earlier this month Shirley and I spent a pleasant 2 days in Bendigo representing U3AAW at the annual Victorian State U3A conference titled "Building Back Better". The concept was to formulate a plan for U3A to recover from the setbacks of the covid pandemic and plan for a future of the organisation.

The two days think and talk fest was facilitated by Bruce McKenzie who did an excellent job of getting about 100 delegates to identify the organisations current state and needs, its desires for the future and the possible pathways to achieve its goals. Interchange of ideas was rampant and valuable and generally showed U3A Albury Wodonga in a good state in comparison to other similar sized U3A's. We gained some good insights especially regarding the exchange of course material and community interaction.

The highlights of the social program were the opening cocktail party at the Ulumbarra Theatre which is the converted old goal, well worth a visit and the conference diner at the Bendigo RSL which featured a sing-a-long with about 20 Ukulele players and guitarists from the Bendigo U3A Ukulele Group. Great Fun. Thank you to Bendigo U3A.

I have been fortunate to attend a couple of new courses this term which have been terrific.

"For King and Country" by John McQuilton explores the social and political scene in Australia during WW1 and is fascinating for those of us who had parents and grandparents who lived in the era.

The "Claytons Our World" classes of a Wednesday afternoon ably facilitated by our Program Manager Ludger have provided the opportunity for vigorous discussion on contemporary issues combined with a revision of one of Gerry's past presentations.

If you have a subject you would like to explore with a vocal and enthusiastic audience this term, please let Ludger or myself know.



We have been assisting the Wodonga City Council to produce a guide "Being Connected in Wodonga" "An Age Friendly Guide" This excellent publication was launched last week by the Deputy Mayor Graeme Simpfendorfer to an attentive crowd including our own Peter Massey who features on your behalf in the publication.

Finally, your Committee has again been busy planning next years' Timetable, planning for online and face to face registration for 2023 in late November, and holding discussions with the GAAC Committee. Membership fees have been pegged at \$85 for 2023 (\$45 for Semester Two and \$25 for Term 4 ONLY).

Keep Smiling
Rod Farr



Birdwatching Group

Coordinator Bernie Datson



I set this group up in 2020 not really knowing whether it would be a viable proposition and Covid restrictions and border closures made it difficult but early interest was encouraging. But in 2021-2 numbers have grown (20 on the class list) and things seem to be going well. I have found that interest is keen. Members have State Government and other bird guides eg Friends of Chiltern Bird Guide, Woodland Birds of the Central Riverina, Birds of NE Victoria, Wetland Birds of the Central Riverina. They have been encouraged to put up posters at home like The Waterfowl of the Murray-Darling Basin and particularly Wetland Birds of the NSW Murray Riverina regions.

It was most pleasing to hear back from some members that children and grandchildren would stand around the posters discussing the birds, as I consider that unfamiliarity and disinterest are often linked. If we can get more people to develop an interest in native birds, butterflies, trees or whatever is in the local environment that takes their fancy we will help them realise the importance of looking after the environment and remove some of the general malaise, ignorance and apathy in communities that allows politicians to get away with what really amounts to criminal neglect on environmental matter.

The group does some car-pooling and is prepared to travel for up to half an hour or so to available venues. So far, our "Local Area" venues have included Wonga Wetlands, Sumption Gardens, Baranduda sites, Kremur street, Nailcan Hill, Kiewa River Killara, Lake Hume area, Allan's Flat Ridgway Reserve, several Chiltern sites, Castle Creek Nature Reserve and there are other "hotspots" yet to be visited. Our emphasis will always be to become familiar with all the common birds of the area, males, females and juveniles and most importantly to become familiar with their calls. This is most important, as future encounters with unfamiliar birds will enable us to rule out all the common birds of the area.





The nature of the U3A population is such that maximum class numbers are rarely reached and people drop out for various reasons so new members are definitely welcome. The only requirement is that members have binoculars or a camera that enables them to share our experiences with other members.

There will be a slight change of emphasis on all future outings, when for example, native wild flowers are in abundance in an area, we will attempt to identify the most common ones. New

members will be provided with several wildflower brochures in addition to the birdwatching ones. There are a number of birdwatching apps available at reasonable prices and some are free. New members will be given advice about these and also the easy to carry field guides.



GUATEMALA



Our **Arts Appreciation** monthly guest speaker was our fellow 'classmate', Rod Miller. His presentation was 'Antigua during Holy Week'.

During a visit to see his son and daughter-in-law in Guatemala City, the capital of Guatemala, Rod was made aware of a unique religious festival held each Easter in nearby Antigua. The city of Antigua is situated in the central highlands only a half an hour's drive from Guatemala City. Antigua is a vibrantly coloured cultural city known for its preserved Spanish Baroque-influenced architecture. Antigua is also a World Heritage site, with Roman Catholicism the dominant religion.

Annually, in the lead up to Holy Week, the centre of Antigua's cobblestone streets are decorated with colourful 'mats' in readiness for what is reputed to be the biggest and most beautiful festival in Latin America. These amazing creations are skillfully made by hand by its people who use vegetative material – flowers, fruit etc. and/or coloured sawdust to depict holy scenes, birds etc – refer photos - in readiness for the famous processions.



Holy Week in Antigua is full of folk traditions with the highlight being the religious processions of floats that wind their way through the streets. The floats can weigh up to 3 tonnes and are carried on the shoulders of teams of bearers (who substitute in and out at different points along the route due to the weight). Costumes worn by the bearers are different one day to the next. It is deemed a privilege to be a bearer. The extraordinary processions are a colourful expression of faith celebrating Jesus Christ and are a daily spectacle commencing on Palm Sunday. Unfortunately, the painstakingly made mats are destroyed as the processions run over them but are remade 24 hours later ready for the next procession!



Thank you, Rod, for taking us on this wonderful journey and sharing these amazing experiences.

A LONG AND WINDING JOURNEY FROM AUSTRIA TO WODONGA

LET GUDRUN REID TELL YOU HER STORY ...

I was born at the end of World War 2 in Austria, the second of five children. My parents came to Australia in 1956 looking for a better future for their children, leaving all their extended families, friends and lifestyle behind.

We lived for over 3 years at Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre where my father had various jobs as a labourer and my mother was a Nurse Aide, as their Austrian qualifications were not recognized in Australia. Despite this we all enjoyed Bonegilla – a peaceful and largely stress-free place, where, almost miraculously, nations who had been mortal enemies lived in peace together. Apart from the peace, there was of course Lake Hume very close by. Heaven!



My mother had taught English before leaving Austria, although this was not particularly useful, because the language teacher was American and the English we learnt bore little resemblance to Australian English. As children do in most cases, we very quickly learnt the language, leaving my parents struggling. I attended Bonegilla Primary School and Wodonga High School to Intermediate Level (Year 10), then worked as a bookkeeper at a car dealership, and in retail and hospitality.

I married David and had two daughters and a son, and now have two adult and one teenage grandson and one granddaughter.

One of my passions has always been education and I successfully completed my Matriculation Certificate (Higher School Certificate) as an adult part time student and then went on to get tertiary qualifications as a Teacher and Social Worker.

Some of the many jobs I had include Teacher, Veterinary Nurse, Health Insurance Broker as well as being a Social Worker for 22 years working with and supporting homeless families. This was one of the best and the most rewarding job.

I have always been inspired by, and deeply admire, the courage and resilience of people who were often faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges which they are usually able to overcome. Owing to my interest and commitment to education, U3A was a logical progression and I became quite intensely involved, taking part in many and varied subjects including Philosophical Discussion, Photography, Random Thoughts and Ideas and Book Club among others. I was also involved with the Committee as an active member including serving as President and Regional Delegate to U3A in Melbourne, and, when required, in giving talks to promote the organization. For two years I was Program Coordinator developing and supporting a very large and varied range of subjects and the wonderful and incredibly generous group of highly skilled volunteer lecturers.



Another great passion and interest both David and I shared was travel. This began when the children were quite young, travelling and camping all around Australia, across and around the continent and also the many local treasures closer to home, like Bright and the close-by mountains. From Sydney to Perth, Adelaide to Darwin, Melbourne to Port Douglas and the Red Centre, we explored it all!. We also travelled extensively in Europe, England, Scotland and Wales, Ireland, Asia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Pacific Islands (Fiji, Vanuatu), the United States and Canada (both East and West Coasts), Dubai, and many more places along the way. These travels also included several cruises – the Mediterranean, Yangtze in China and Danube Cruise from Bucharest to Prague.

Sadly, David passed away in 2015 after a fall which seriously smashed his hip. Serious complications led to him being on life support for two weeks and a further six weeks in intensive care. He slowly clawed his way back to being able to return to the general ward, when a sudden subdural bleed overwhelmed his system and he died within five hours. Ironically it was as though he had been through a war zone and then been hit by a bus!

I will always be grateful for the support of many friends and colleagues of U3A. U3A is truly an embracing community which offers social contact, friendship and interaction with education as a wonderful bonus. I continue my world travels with exploration of the West Coast of the United States and Canada and also Sri Lanka.

Then came Covid. Thank goodness for Zoom which enabled us to maintain our connection with each other and have some contact and human interaction. It is now at last possible to return to normalcy. It remains now to express thanks and admiration for the lecturers, support staff, management committee and most of all to my fellow students for U3A has become an important part of so many lives.





Lemon Sour Cream Cakes

from: Little Café Cakes – Julie Le Clerc

Ingredients:

- 125 grams butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup caster sugar
- 2 lemon, 1 zested
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain flour
- 4 tablespoons caster sugar, extra



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease and flour 12 individual friand tins.
2. Cream butter and sugar until pale.
3. Beat in the zest, eggs and sour cream.
4. Fold in sifted dry ingredients.
5. Pour into prepared tins and bake for 20 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.
6. Allow to cool a little before removing from cake tins.
7. Spoon lemon sugar over each cake.
 - a. To make lemon sugar combine extra sugar with the lemon juice.



"Drink wine. This is life eternal. This is all that youth will give you. It is the season for wine, roses and drunken friends. Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life."

— Omar Khayyam

A Day at the Vineyards



With a grey, overcast, rainy start, Wednesday, 28 September couldn't be described as the perfect day to explore Rutherglen's wonderful wineries. But, let's face it – everybody either loves life one sip of wine at a time, or just enjoys a well-organized adventure.

Our first stop for morning tea was at de Bertoli's in Rutherglen, where Jennifer King, Events Manager, discussed the history of the de Bertoli family and their wineries in Yarra Valley, Riverina and Rutherglen. With an initial focus on the making, and tasting, of Prosecco, we soon ventured into the evolution of wines across the various regions and across various wine styles, from their Noble One Semillon to Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs. We enjoyed sampling a few wines, and strolled through their art space.



Next stop – Lunch! Homemade wood-fired gourmet pizza and some beautiful velvety-textured wine at the Olive Hills Estate.

Olive Hills is a boutique winery, owned and operated by the Perry Family and situated on a beautiful historic property in Rutherglen. The grand, imposing homestead and winery were built by Scottish immigrant, Hugh Fraser, in 1886, and following a long period of neglect, our hosts Ross and Kay Perry took on the mammoth task of resurrecting the vineyard to the stunning property it is today. We explored the remnants of the blacksmiths building and nearby well, and the many innovative renovations which make this property truly unique.



Thank you to our hosts Jennifer, Ross and Kay and to Rod and Col for organising a very memorable day.



VALE **Jan Donohue 1944 -2022**

In the late 1960s Jan and her late husband Ron moved to Wodonga where she taught at Wodonga Primary School up until 1973. After spending time at home, when their three children were young, she returned to the workforce at Albury Family Day Care and spent many years as the manger before her retirement in 2006.

Jan joined Albury Wodonga U3A 16 years ago and began by attending the Garden Group and had remained a staunch member ever since, often contributing not only baskets full of cuttings plants and comments but also deputising and leading the group sessions and instigating activities. Over the years she was enrolled and actively participated in many U3A programs including Play reading, Cards, various History topics, Singing, Arts Appreciation, World Politics and I am sure others that cannot remember.

Over the years Jan would have encouraged many people to join U3A with her totally unassuming manner she had an amazing ability to network and initiate activities. Jan had been a keen walker all her life and during COVID lockdown she had gathered together various friends and acquaintances to walk the walkways and pavements of Albury Wodonga. Two to three times a week they walked and still do, to keep fit and remain connected. If I list all the friendships, she has made through her participation in the community the list is extraordinary, not just because of its length but its diverse nature.

Despite being unwell for several years Jan remained positive and focused on **living** and enjoying life with her family and many friends until the end.



Wednesday Afternoons Sans Gerry

While our Gerry is having an extremely well-deserved break to spend time chasing the grandkids around, and generally relaxing and living life to the full, our multi-talented Program Coordinator is taking us through This Week's News, prior to one of Gerry's pre-recorded sessions.

We have explored the energy crisis in Europe as they head into a very bleak winter. As Russia cuts off the supplies of cheap natural gas that the continent depended on for years to run factories, generate electricity and heat homes, many countries are struggling to deal with looming power rationing and blackouts and perhaps a deep recession. It was alarming to learn how much household energy bills have risen as Governments are desperately trying to source alternate supplies.



Next - Elon Musk - he may be divisive, but there's no doubting he's an innovator, risk taker and he's achieving great things. So, who's heard of Starlink? Elon Musk is the brains behind this innovative satellite internet network being constructed by SpaceX which provides groundbreaking internet access when it comes to both speed and stability, even in the remotest parts of rural Australia.



Starlink can provide fast, reliable internet at

home, or, if you like to hit the open road (there must be a few grey nomads out there) Starlink provides a portable "antenna" that you can set up anywhere. Which, of course, led into a discussion on electric and hybrid vehicles.



Paraprosdokians

If you enjoyed these in the October Newsletter, here's a few more ...

They begin the evening news with "Good evening", then proceed to tell you why it isn't.

Buses stop in bus stations. Trains stop in Train Stations. On my desk is a work station.

I thought I wanted a career. Turns out I just wanted paylips.

In filling out an application, where it says "Emergency contact", I put "doctor".

Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they're sexy.

Behind every successful man is his woman. Behind the fall of a successful man is usually another woman.

You do not need a parachute to skydive unless you want to do it again.

Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.

You're never too old to learn something stupid.

To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

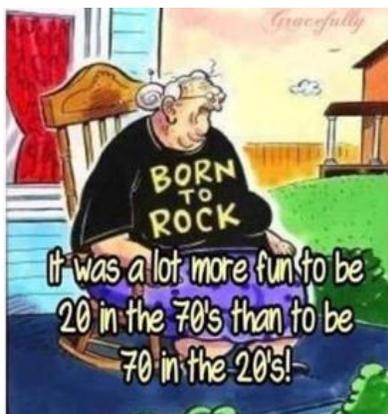
Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

If you would like to have a million dollars, then start with two million.

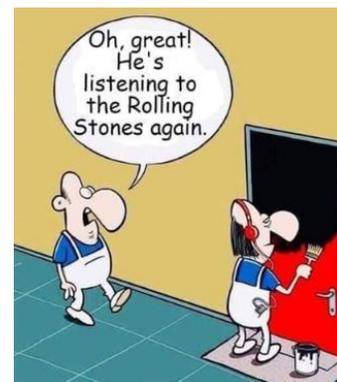
During World War II, Sir Winston Churchill's address to congress began with:
"It has often been said that Britain and America are two nations divided only by a common language."



Sweet Caroline
IS BANNED!
 ~There will be NO~
 -Touching Hands
 -Reaching Out
 -Touching Me
 -Touching You



All I'm saying is,
 at any point during
 that ride through the
 desert he could have
 given the horse a name.





When Omama Died

(contributed by Gudrun Reid)

I remember the day when my Omama died
Back in the place that we still called "home"
Where the weather behaved as it should do in December
while we were under a relentless Australian sky
outside in the uncompromising clarity of a December noon
mocked by the pitiless pounding of an Australian sun.
The very sun which a moment ago had so delighted us
as we'd basked in its December heat, gloating.

How could we have perceived it as beauty,
that fierceness scorching the earth.
The blue of that vast uncaring sky.
Endless and cloudless, that awful December day.
How could the light be so bright so hard,
the grass on those rounded hills, so brown and dead,
the trees, misshapen and blue, motionless
yet apparently shimmering in the mirage-like haze.
This awesome, aggressive, ugly beauty
of an Australian December.
It was all suddenly so wrong, so alien
Where were the clouds, where was the greenness.
The birds don't sing in Australia, at midday in the heat in December.
There is stillness, no sign of life
and Omama has died so far away.

It is cooler in the house, but more brutal.
There is now the impotent grief and regret
of our mother, who is facing the ultimate cost
of bargain she made with life -
to trade one family and all her roots for a chance of a future for her young.
It was choice that had seemed so right, inevitable, irrevocable.
Made with so much courage and a certain bravado. Yes, the goodbyes that were said were forever.
They knew that they would not go back. Goodbyes that broke their mothers' hearts
But this.....was truly forever.

Now here in this oldest of all lands, which paradoxically had only future – no history, no past
(for who talked of its real history then)
my mother was facing the outcome of her choice.
Was this land, with its warmth, its bounty, its promise
so much better than the world we had left behind?
Had it really been imperative to transplant
her young onto this hot Australian earth so that they might flourish and thrive.
Was this helpless pain of being so impossibly far away
the price that had to be paid to escape the scars of war
in our beautiful home? Was this pain the price
for finding peace among people who knew only peace,
who had never heard the sound of gunfire or the tramp of soldiers in the street?



Was this the price for living in a land so blessed that it would never know war.
Where homes could stand in pride and innocence
shimmering undisturbed and smugly peaceful
in the hot December noon amidst their neat individual gardens

We lit candles for Omama that December day (which bent in the heat)
and sat talking, remembered other Decembers.
The visits to Omamas house, which always smelt of coffee and beeswax and
food and something else – so intrinsically Omama.
It was warm in her house too, in December.

We sat together, our family, which a short time ago,
had been large and exuberant, suddenly so tiny
and isolated in our grief, without the comforting mantle
of all the others who loved us and our Omama.
Alone together among neighbours who had never known her
and who did not even know she had died.

We sent flowers as a means of connecting
from this land which always bloomed.
But what flowers would they find
in the snow of December? It did not matter
because Omama would be laid to rest
in the hard frozen earth in the place
that was no longer our home.

Many years later I went back to this home place
stirring memories of times long ago.
Everything seemed so much smaller. Because I was bigger?
Or because I now had a much larger scale to measure by?
I saw again the greenness, the symmetry of the trees
The crags and soaring peaks of the mountains
The clouds in a smaller sky. And I saw that it was beautiful there.

Yet I missed my Australia
I longed for the big blue skies of an Australian December.
The land and its colours, which once were so wrong, now seemed so right.
I was glad to come home to my harsh country where I have struck new roots
and have young of my own. I see the wealth that is my family and I know that I belong.
My mother has gone to join Omama,
so perhaps they both know that the choices and the pain
had a purpose and a good outcome.

I visited the grave of my Omama and left flowers there.
But it wasn't December. It was March.

Term dates

Term	Start	End
1	31 Jan 2022	08 Apr 2022
2	26 Apr 2022	24 Jun 2022
3	25 Jul 2022	16 Sep 2022
4	03 Oct 2022	02 Dec 2022



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