

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Welcome back to everyone. I hope members new and ongoing are enjoying the courses and activities available since U3A Wonthaggi reopened for business in February, albeit with some limitations. Thanks to our fabulous tutors and group leaders, Program Manager Robyn O'Sullivan has put together a program that offers a good range of learning, social and exercise activities. After 2020, we all value these opportunities more than ever, and I am happy to report that our membership has held up well; currently, we have 203 members.

The 2019 Annual General Meeting was very well attended in December 2020, as was the lunch that followed. I want to acknowledge past-president Gary Beard and his committee for sticking with things through the worst of the pandemic and keeping our organisation alive. Several U3As have closed due to the impacts of COVID, including our nearest neighbour at Phillip Island. Some other U3As, particularly in Melbourne, have yet to reopen for face-to-face classes, just one of the positive aspects of regional Victorian living.

The 2021 committee was elected at the December AGM. We were very fortunate to have eight members volunteer for committee roles as many regional U3As have struggled to attract people prepared to take on the work of running a U3A. Our 2021 committee comprises Glenn Cant (Vice President), Mary Schooneveldt (Secretary), Graeme Charles (Treasurer), Robyn O'Sullivan (Program Manager and Newsletter editor), Averill Holderhead, Jackie Brennan and Peter Fitzgerald. Between us, we are covering a wide range of responsibilities. In January, given COVID restrictions, we had no

choice but to ask members to enrol and renew their memberships via the online database system that the previous committee had purchased from U3A Network Victoria. You will recall that we had a telephone helpline of six people to assist members with this. I am happy to say that all members approached the task with good humour and resilience, despite some of the problems encountered. It was a big job for the committee members to learn to use this new system and get everyone enrolled with just a few weeks lead time, so congratulations to everyone for rising to the challenge.

Sadly, we were settling into our routine when the Garden Room building was broken into on a Sunday night in February. Some damage was done to the interior; electronic equipment was stolen along with some surprising items - they took the mop and bucket, plus the sugar and biscuits, from the kitchen! We have just received a response to our insurance claim and will be shopping and working during the term break to restore the building. I want to thank Mary and Frank Schooneveldt, and Glenn Cant for straightening up the building so thoroughly and quickly that very few people noticed the damage. Mary handled most of the dealings with the insurer very capably, which helped speed things along. Thanks to Mary.

The end of term 1 is near; best wishes for a happy and relaxed Easter with family and friends and to making the most of our 2-week break before we welcome you back on 19 April.

**Lynn Kirk
President**



2021 Committee (left to right):
Lynn Graeme, Averill, Glenn, Robin, Jackie, Peter & Mary

PROGRAM REPORT

Good news! The Anglican Church Hall in Inverloch is available again, so the U3A choir will resume in Term 2. New enrolments are very welcome!

Although many of our classes are full due to COVID restrictions on class sizes, some are still open for enrolments; these include Yoga, Mah Jong, Japanese for Beginners, Walking Groups, Recorder Consort and Saturday Book Club. Some new courses are already planned for Term 2 (see below). The full program for Term 2 can be viewed on the website. Enrol via the website at <https://u3awonthaggi.org.au/>, or contact me for assistance (Ph 0491 093 300).

We also have unused sessions in the timetable, so if you are thinking about offering a course or leading some other kind of activity, please email me at osullivan.robbyn@gmail.com. Remember, courses can be any shape or size: weekly, fortnightly, monthly; held on weekends; for a term, a year or indefinitely. Whatever commitment you're able to make will be greatly appreciated.

Robyn O'Sullivan, Program Manager

New 2021 Activity Bocce is away!



The inaugural Wonthaggi U3A Bocce activity is up and running at Cape Paterson, with early games starting to separate the wheat from the chaff. As the competitive juices start to flow the true personality of participants is becoming apparent with the use of the measuring tape becoming more and more frequent and the odd verbal dig being used as a tool for the distraction of the opposition.

The standouts at the moment are Noelene "bash and crash" H, using her fine eye to skittle the opposition at every opportunity. Also, Graeme "frog in a blender" C, so named because of his unusual left-leg-up style. Heard in the background recently was the comment from a very competitive member, "I may be a grandma, but I can still kick your butt in Bocce".

Gary Beard, Group Leader

"Be Connected" Free Digital (Computer) Sessions

Our neighbour, Bass Coast Adult Learning, is part of a free Australian Government initiative helping over 50s to get the most out of going online and developing digital skills. Drop by Bass Coast Adult Learning's office or call 5672 3115 to register your interest.

NEW COURSES

New tutors, Matti and John will begin running **BRIDGE FOR BEGINNERS** on Fridays @ 10am. Also, a new **HISTORY OF EASTERN EUROPE** course will commence on Tuesdays at 11.15. Tutor Graeme says that, Coronavirus notwithstanding, this 24-lecture course will conclude by year's end. Quite a few of those who attended Graeme's US Civil War course are backing-up for another dose of history which says something about their durability and interest in history generally. There are spaces open for new faces. Enrol online, or ring for assistance.

Calling Members To Consider volunteering Some time

Do you have talents or expertise from your working life, such as IT or planning skills, that you'd be willing to share? If you think you may be able to help with running and maintaining all things associated with our U3A, the committee would love to hear from you. You never know what might be useful, and any contribution, will be greatly appreciated.

Term 2 starts 19 April 2021