

2021 Spring Newsletter

Important information:

U3A Wonthaggi contact number: 0491 093 300

Term 4 dates: Monday 5 October to Friday 26 November

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We've had another disrupted term due to the pandemic. Fortunately, most of us seem to be coping reasonably well. However, many of us have found this most recent lock-down the hardest to deal with. So I'm pleased we can open again for the final week of Term 3. Let's hope we are granted a hefty dose of normality for the remainder of the year. The weather is picking up too, which always makes everyone feel more cheerful.

I have been enjoying Lyn Street's Shakespeare class for many years. Recently we managed to finish an interrupted reading and viewing of Macbeth, which was enjoyable. I have also been attending Mary Schooneveldt's Women History Overlooked class. We have looked at women engineers, scientists, artists, explorers and sportswomen. We will wind up the term with writers and women in local history. Everyone has had a go at presenting about our own favourite women, which has been fun too. We have been zooming the class during the lock-downs with Mary's hands on the controls. Thank you for the extra effort, Mary.

During this term, we bedded down a few changes to the committee. Graeme Charles has moved out of the Treasurer's role and is now sharing the Program Management responsibilities with Maureen Sivyver. John Laing is now looking after the finances. We are fortunate at U3A Wonthaggi to have enough volunteers willing to contribute their time and skills to keep our U3A running. They, along with our wonderful tutors, are a great bunch of generous people. Many regional U3As are not so fortunate.

Janet Allen, a former President, long term committee member and volunteer in so many ways, is stepping back from her role as choir coordinator. On behalf of the committee and members, I want to acknowledge Janet's outstanding contribution to the life and wellbeing of U3A Wonthaggi. Hopefully, we will continue to enjoy Janet's company as a course member for many more years. Thank you, Janet.

Vice President Glenn Cant and John Laing have started planning a birthday celebration for U3A. The function will probably be at the new Life-Saving Club venue at Cape Paterson, which, I am assured, is gorgeous. As most of you will know, after a lot of planning, we had to abandon the Christmas in July lunch due to the impacts of COVID restrictions. We will get details of the birthday function to you after the next committee meeting.

Do you know how old our U3A is this year?

Warm Regards,

Lynn Kirk



from the editor's desk...

Hello U3A members,

In the words of my Winter Newsletter last term, 'as we farewell our third term, we can reflect on life in Covid times. Another outbreak, another lockdown, another U3A closure.'

Déjà vu... Groundhog Day...



I've had my second 'jab' and am eagerly anticipating my return to England, hopefully in May 2022 – fingers crossed... and toes... and eyes... and even the hairs on my head!

Thankfully, spring has returned to us. Nature has fulfilled her promise of renewal that pulls us through the winter drearies. Frosts and fogs retreat for another year, and colourful spring blooms such as tulips and bluebells burst forth from the warming earth. No wonder cultures around the world celebrate the first day of spring! I trust you've all completed your annual spring cleaning and can now get down to the business of frolicking in the fields, enjoying the fragrance and beauty of blossoming trees. You may even catch sight of a daffydowndilly '*beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze*'.

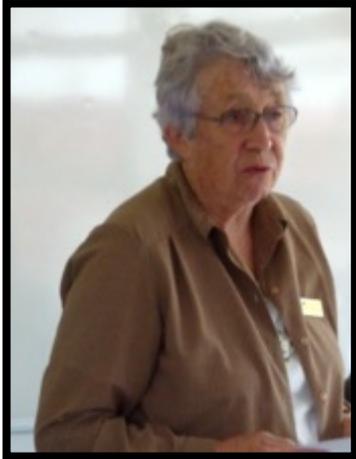


As always, thanks to our newsletter contributors. Don't forget, it's everyone's newsletter, so anyone can send a contribution at any time to: osullivan.robyn@gmail.com

Wishing everyone a term break filled with renewal and revival and all the glories of springtime...

Robyn O'Sullivan

Vale Nancy Brown



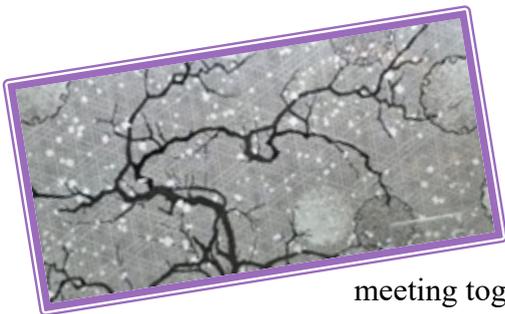
Nancy Brown, one of our life members, long time Secretary of our Committee of Management, Tutor, and friend has passed away in New Zealand at the age of 89.

Nancy and her late husband Don joined us in mid 1999, shortly after retiring and relocating to Inverloch. They joined the Friday Current Affairs and Shakespeare Groups. At that time we did not have our own room, and operated only on two days a week.

Not all that long after this, Nancy became a Committee member and then Secretary. In this role she was involved in gaining extra funding which enabled the purchase of much of the equipment we now own, as well as enabling us to hire the garden room on a fulltime basis.

When she eventually retired from the Committee, she became a tutor. Her class was the Foundations of Western Civilization! This was based on a Great Courses series, but Nancy added a huge amount from her own knowledge and resources. She continued this until she decided that her deteriorating hearing made it impractical.

Nancy then divided her time between Inverloch and being with her daughter in New Zealand. Two years ago she relocated to N.Z, intending to travel back and forth as she had been doing for a few years, but Covid made that impossible. However, she did keep in touch with some of our members. She still felt part of U3A Wonthaggi, and some of us will always regard her as such.



Japanese language

by Victor Wood

U3A students of the Japanese language are enjoying meeting together and learning about another culture and its people, who have a language so different from our own. We utilise the many resources available to us, such as using devices to connect to some excellent internet websites. This includes origami, songs, short stories, tongue twisters, jokes and anything else we can think of to make learning Japanese so much fun.

Join us for an interesting and effective beginners' class in the Japanese language.

Monday Book Group

Even with the lockdowns, we're up to our seventh book on Monday 13th September! I was counting the titles with trepidation not knowing what to expect but, considering the lockdowns and the fact that we only meet once a month, seven's not a bad number.

At the beginning of each year, I ask members who wish to be involved in choosing books to say what they would like to read, and we work from those suggestions.

Members of the group have indicated that they enjoy our discussions even if they have not enjoyed a particular book very much. We find that talking about the plot, themes and characters usually enhance our understanding and enjoyment of each book.

A book that we all enjoyed, which is a rare event, is 'All the Light We Cannot See' by Anthony Doer, mainly about the beauty, goodness and resilience of two characters on opposite sides, how humans are the same whatever race they are, and much more.

If you love stories, adventure and 19th century British history, I recommend 'The Clockmaker's Daughter' by Australian author, Kate Morton.

There are between ten and twelve books in the boxes we borrow from the library, so, with twelve people in the group, we have a full house.

We look forward to uninterrupted meetings in term four!

Stay well, Felicia



THANK YOU, JANET...

Our long-time choir member, Janet Allen, has decided to step down as convenor. We wish her well and take this opportunity to express our appreciation and recognition of her many years of solid contribution to U3A Wonthaggi Choir. Janet did a grand job of coordination and organising performances, not to mention sorting out all those music sheets!

Cryptic Crosswords

Bruce Cumming

Nothing much to report from the Cryptic Crosswords class this term. It's obviously been a stop/start exercise, and I thank the regulars for turning up whenever we can have a class. Our newcomers from early in the year have stuck with us, and we do have a wonderful group of people who just love doing cryptics.

In case of crossword withdrawals: the editor has compiled some cryptic clues.

1. Moving version of Tristan (7)
2. Stiffener used by most architect. (6)
3. Times when things appear obscure (6)
4. Heartless fool, say, making a bet (7)

... from U3A Network Victoria

Use of School Buses in Rural and Regional Victoria

A state government Inquiry is looking at the transport limitations experienced by regional Victorians and how school buses might facilitate better services.

The Inquiry is seeking community input, and U3A Network Victoria was asked to submit on behalf of the Victorian U3A movement. Network-Vic then asked 55 regionally based U3As to complete a survey questionnaire about public transport services. President Lynn Kirk responded to the survey on behalf of U3A Wonthaggi.

In total, 22 U3As from 15 shires responded. Most respondent-U3As were located 20 km or more from their nearest major centre. The survey answers revealed that for most respondent-U3As public transport is not a convenient option for getting around generally or when attending community events or activities.

Network-Vic's submission to the Inquiry:

- supported the use of school buses to supplement existing public transport options in regional areas
- indicated that it would be beneficial if additional services ran between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm Monday to Friday
- suggested that school buses could be made available on request, during school holidays and weekends on an ad-hoc basis.

We await the Inquiry's report and the Victorian Government's response. It is encouraging to see a level of awareness within the state government that regional Victorians may not have adequate, let alone good, public transport options.

Lynn Kirk
President



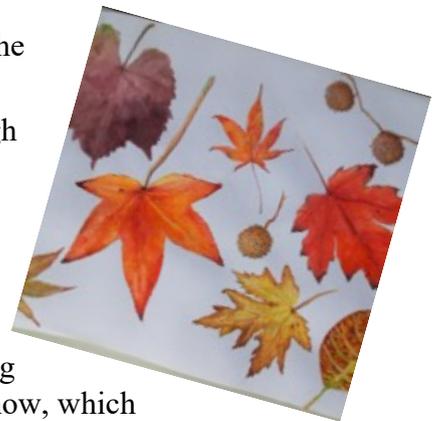
MONDAY ART CLASS

WITH JENNY McDONALD

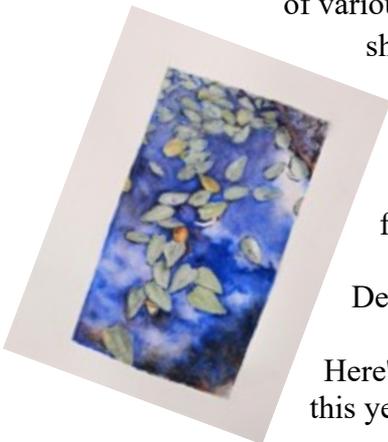


Out of 10 weeks in Term 3, Monday Art Group has managed to get together on only four rather spasmodic occasions. Unfortunately, this has affected the pace of development in people's work.

Despite that, much has been gained through deeper understanding of composition and colour combinations, by comparing the techniques of various different artists. Discussion and the sharing of ideas is a wonderful thing!



Some of the group members are planning to submit entries to the Inverloch Art Show, which will be run in conjunction with an Open Garden event for this year's fundraising.



Despite all the lockdowns we have had, the class remains full.

Here's looking forward to a more productive and satisfying Term 4 for this year.

Be safe everyone.



On Harry Freeman's Course: The Brain

by Maureen Sivyver

Through Harry's class technique as facilitator, learning was at its optimum – personal research, discussions, and prepared or impromptu interactions. At our age, we need to tackle different strategies to accumulate and retain knowledge through participation rather than listening to a lecture and nodding briefly before going home and being distracted with other issues. Harry's process for learning – appreciating the brain's tools – gave insight into the best way we can improve our learning strategies even if we're over 70. If we're under 70 there are no excuses!

On opening day, the room was at Covid capacity. We shared why we were there: some out of interest, some eager to equip new memory capacity or to prolong it, some wanting to deal with existing memory struggles. We learnt that genetic factors, our life's journey, and exposure to noise, light and stress will all impact on our future journeys. We also learnt that the easiest thing for us to change immediately was diet and exercise, which are fundamental to keeping the slowing process at bay.

During the first term, we understood how the physical brain is structured; how its neurons, synapses, dendrites and axons interacted; how chemicals direct our health from our gut; and which chemicals influence our moods as they interact with each other.

Then there are the external stimuli – visual, aural, tactile, taste, olfaction (smell), even sixth-sense capacity, and how they are all processed.

By the end of March, briefly interrupted by lockdown, we had learnt about diversity in the brain's storage and processing as well as its physiological recovery. Special mention, for would-be researchers: *William Greenough, a professor of psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, was a pioneer in studies of neural development and brain plasticity. He studied learning and memory and the brain's responses to environmental enrichment, exercise, injury, and aging. He demonstrated that the brain continues to form new synaptic connections between nerve cells throughout life in response to environmental enrichment and learning. This mechanism is fundamental to learning and memory storage in the brain. Greenough is regarded as the predominant researcher in this area and has been described as "one of the towering figures in neuroscience". (Wikipedia)*

Other references gave us access to experts in the field: Eagleman, Doig, Mosley, Flynn (in Great Classes) to name a few. We watched PowerPoint presentations Harry had compiled, containing material we can store at home and use for later reference. By the end of June, we had stretched our brain's capacity, built an acrostic, devised uses for a brick, and celebrated an engagement with an octopus.

In summary, I learnt how new ideas we acquire and interactions we accommodate can effectively ensure the brain is constantly modifying its processing patterns and maintaining health. Personally, my brain has developed greater flexibility if I give it enough warning. So if I try to solve a cryptic puzzle after I've been doing something creative, I struggle. But if I

tackle it early after exercise, but before my brain has time to settle into its daily routine, I can solve maybe three of DA's clues before I reach for help.

My recommendation: if you want to increase your processor capacity, or at least slow down the aging of your brain, keep exercising, maintain a healthy diet, and learn new things. Join a discussion group about anything. If that's tricky, try tackling ordinary things differently. And make sure there are at least three moderately demanding listening and attending activities in your week, not merely dumps of information on either side.

Thank you, Harry.

A Woman's Path

Mary Schooneveldt is facilitating a new course for Term 4, A Woman's Path. The course extends the knowledge and insights gained through the Term 3 series, Women History Overlooked. In the 20th Century women marched for the right to vote, worked in factories during times of war and lobbied to be treated as equals.

The course examines factors and people that influenced women's journeys to challenge the status quo and seek gender equality and basic rights: challenges still present in 2021. Background material includes Great Course videos and other documentary data. Course participants are encouraged to present their own research

ATTENTION U3A MEMBERS!



Are you interested in trekking the local byways with a friendly band of walkers, enjoying good fellowship and regular gentle exercise? Then you're in luck. Robert Butler's Thursday morning Walking Group has vacancies for this term. Members meet in the U3A carpark at 9.30 am. Just go online to enrol, or contact one of the program organisers at:

talktous@u3awonthaggi.org.au



Desperately Seeking Men...

If you have a voice and you enjoy singing, please consider joining the U3A choir. Did you know that only three men are regular choir attendees?

New male voices, to swell the singing, would be mightily well received.

So come along, your U3A needs you!



U3A WONTHAGGI PROGRAM

Term 4 2021 — Monday 5 October to Friday 26 November

MONDAY

MAHJONG GROUP Convenor: Carol Cox	Weekly 1:30–4:30 Garden Room	Ideal for anyone who has, or wants to develop, an interest or passion for this ancient game of strategies, probabilities and luck. Beginners and experienced players welcome.
MONDAY ART GROUP Tutor: Jenny McDonald	Weekly 9:30–12:30 Mawson Hut	This semi-formal class teaches the theory behind composition, design and colour & watercolour mixing. Teaching methods include demonstrations, exercises, and discussions about techniques.
MONDAY BOOK GROUP Convenor: Felicia Di Stefano	Monthly (last Monday) 2:00–4:00 Mawson Hut	We meet to discuss the chosen book each month in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where all views and opinions are welcome. Members have an opportunity to select books at the start of the year.
YOGA & MOVEMENT Tutor: Dot Charles	Weekly 10:00–11:00 & 11:15–12:15 Cape Paterson Hall	This course blends yoga and other forms of physical activity to help combat ageing. We flex joints, stretch muscles and improve coordination. <i>Requirements: a yoga mat and a water bottle</i>

TUESDAY		
GARDEN CLUB Tutor: Lorraine Carroll	Weekly 9:30–11:00 Garden Room	After gardening at home, it is great to chat with others about it. There is always something happening in our gardens to share, and new and old gardening tips to pass around. Our group watches DVDs to see how it's done; we also swap plants & produce. Occasionally we visit gardens.
HISTORY OF EASTERN EUROPE Tutor: Graeme Charles	Weekly 11:15–12:45 & 1:15–2:45 Garden Room	This course reveals the modern history of Eastern Europe, providing an in-depth treatment of its politics, societies, and cultures.
WEDNESDAY		
FITNESS, FUN & OCCASIONALLY FOOD Convenor: Graeme Charles Contact on 0411 422 557 or graemeicharles@gmail.com	Fortnightly From 9:00 am Various starting points	This group is for active walkers wishing to explore South Gippsland. Walking time is about two hours, followed by lunch when possible. Some walks require driving for 30 minutes to the start point; we can carpool. Routes will be selected by group members.
RECORDER CONSORT Contact: John Bell	Weekly 9:30–11:00 Mawson Hut	If you play the recorder and would like to make music with others, you are welcome to join our dedicated group. We perform at local nursing homes and other venues.
CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS Tutor: Bruce Cumming	Weekly 11:15–12:45 Mawson Hut	“I can’t do Cryptic Crosswords!” Well join our friendly class of beginners and experienced people, and learn the secrets of this fascinating world of words.
ITALIAN CONVERSATION Tutor: Maggie Harriss	Weekly 1:45–3:30 Mawson Hut	Practice speaking Italian in a supportive environment. Add knowledge, vocabulary and grammar in specific contexts.

<p>A WOMAN’S PATH Tutor: Mary Schooneveldt</p> <p>* NEW COURSE</p>	<p>Weekly 10:30–12:00 Garden Room</p>	<p>This new course extends the knowledge and insights gained through the Term 3 series, Women History Overlooked.</p> <p>In the 20th Century, women marched for the right to vote, worked in factories during times of war and lobbied to be treated as equals. A Woman’s Path examines factors and people that influenced women’s journeys to challenge the status quo and seek gender equality and basic rights: challenges that are still present in 2021.</p> <p>Background material includes Great Course videos and other documentary data. Course participants are encouraged to present their own research.</p>
<p>THURSDAY</p>		
<p>WALKING GROUP Guide: Robert Butler</p>	<p>Weekly 9:30–10:45 Meet at U3A car park</p>	<p>Want to trek the local byways? Our friendly band of walkers enjoys good fellowship plus the benefit of regular gentle exercise.</p> <p>A range of walks, and an occasional cup of coffee or tea...</p> <p>New members welcome</p>
<p>BOCCE GROUP Convenor: Gary Beard</p>	<p>Fortnightly 1st & 3rd weeks 9:30–11:00 Cape Paterson</p>	<p>The perfect social activity: a fun game that will improve your hand-to-eye coordination, exercise your laughing gear, and stimulate your competitive muscle.</p> <p>Bocce is held at the link adjacent to the Cape Paterson Community Hall</p>
<p>JAPANESE FOR BEGINNERS Tutor: Joan Hindle</p>	<p>Weekly 9:30–11:00 Garden Room</p>	<p>Join us for an interesting and effective beginners’ class in the Japanese language.</p>
<p>CRAFTAHOLICS Convenor: Marion Kerry</p>	<p>Weekly 12:30–3:00 Mawson Hut</p>	<p>Drop in, bring your current project, share expertise, and help each other.</p> <p>This group is for anyone with twitchy fingers, who loves to create, and anyone who wants to get started.</p>

PAINTING WITH WATERCOLOURS Convenor: Lyn Goodwin	Weekly 12:30–3:00 Mawson Hut	This is a self-support group that gathers to share their interest and enthusiasm for painting with watercolours.
FRIDAY		
TAI CHI Tutor: Mary Schooneveldt	Weekly 9:30–10:30 Goat Island Gallery	Tai chi is a gentle but therapeutic form of exercise, based in Chinese traditions. Involving slow movements and deep breaths, it has many physical and emotional benefits. “Today, it’s principally a tranquil, gentle and pleasurable means of attaining and maintaining health and harmony in mind and body, mobility, suppleness and mental alertness.” Mr Han Jin Song – Tai Chi Australia's Founder and Chief Instructor
BRIDGE FOR BEGINNERS Tutors: Matti Shub and John Quayle	Weekly 10:00–11:30 Mawson Hut	If you’re interested in opening your world to a new skill and a whole community of Bridge lovers, then this class is for you.
CURRENT AFFAIRS Convenors: Steven Ward and Glenn Cant	Weekly 9:30–11:00 Garden Room	This forum is an open discussion group where members are free to listen or express opinions on topics selected from local, national and international news media. New members welcome
SHAKESPEARE Tutor: Lyn Street	Weekly 11:15–1:30 Garden Room	Reading and discussing the plays from the perspective of Shakespeare and Europe.
CHOIR Convenor: Jackie Brennan	Weekly 2:00–3:30 Anglican Church, Inverloch	We love to sing songs from our extensive repertoire: it’s relaxing and good for the soul. We also perform for many community groups. New members welcome. Male voices are particularly needed.
SATURDAY		
SATURDAY BOOK CLUB Convenor: Helen Cole	Monthly 3rd week 2:00–4:00 Inverloch	We meet to read and discuss books. We’re limited to 12 members because we get our books from the library, and they come in a box of 12 copies.
LEISURELY LUNCHESES Convenor: Gary Beard	Monthly Last Saturday	Venues for this term will be confirmed prior to the events.