

New Members' Kit
2022



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NEW MEMBERS KIT
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Reg No 0043021E | ABN 175 168 120 96
Address: 239 White Road Wonthaggi 3995
Website: <http://u3awonthaggi.org.au/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WonthaggiU3A>
Email: secretary@u3awonthaggi.org.au

Welcome to U3A Wonthaggi

1. The U3A Movement

The U3A movement exists to provide life-enhancing opportunities to members. Retired and semi-retired people aged over 50 come together and learn together, not for qualifications but for its own reward: the joy of discovery. Add to this the pleasure of finding new friends and sharing interests with old ones.

Members share their skills and life experiences: the learners teach, and the teachers learn, and there is no distinction between them. Volunteers run all aspects of U3A.

U3A is a worldwide movement. The Victorian U3A movement comprises over 100 individually incorporated U3As who provide services to approximately 39,000 members.

U3A Network Victoria ('Network') represents the Victorian U3A movement to governments, government business units and other funders. Network also provides support services to establish new U3As, promote growth and support good governance. U3A Wonthaggi is a member of Network Victoria.

2. About U3A Wonthaggi Inc



U3A classes began at Wonthaggi in February 1995. In that first year, Lyn Street, Marlene Zwygart and Bill Bittelman (among others) conducted classes; all are still active members; Lyn Street remains an enthusiastic tutor.

GOVERNANCE

U3A Wonthaggi is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* ('the Act'). Consumer Affairs Victoria regulates and oversees Victoria's incorporated associations. The Act and our constitution (known as the *Rules of Association* or the *Rules*) govern how U3A Wonthaggi operates. A copy of our rules is pinned to each classroom noticeboard and is available to read or download from our website.

We also have policies that document our operating principles and procedures. For example, we have a *Membership Terms and Conditions Policy* and a *Privacy Policy*. All current policies are available on the website; others will be added from time to time.

PURPOSES

The official purposes of U3A Wonthaggi are documented in the rules.

The basic principles underpinning all U3As are similar:

- all work is voluntary – both administrative and tutorial;
- funding comes from membership subscriptions, grants, fundraising activities and occasional gifts and bequests;
- membership subscriptions are kept low so that anyone can join;
- the target membership is people aged over 50 who are not in full-time employment;
- a shared belief is that we never stop learning;
- courses and activities offered to members aim to enrich our lives through learning, exercise, personal growth and social engagement;
- no formal qualifications are required for membership, admission to classes or volunteer roles;
- we are not a professional training body, there are no exams, and no credentials are awarded.

MEMBERSHIP AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES

The membership subscription is \$50, payable annually at the start of the year or on joining. The membership fee is halved for tutors and waived 'Life Members'. The committee appoints Life Members from the ranks of members who have served the interests of U3A Wonthaggi in a range of volunteer capacities over a long period. The current Life Members are Lyn Street and Peter Allen.

Members' subscriptions are used to fund rent on the Garden Room, utility bills, insurance, maintenance of the Mawson Hut, learning materials, audiovisual equipment, computing and printing equipment, furniture and so on. If a course imposes an additional cost, a small course fee may be levied; this will be disclosed on the website in the course information section.

On 1 November 2021, there were over 230 paid-up members of U3A Wonthaggi. Of these:

- 95% were drawn from the Wonthaggi, Inverloch and Cape Paterson communities;
- 5% are from other surrounding communities;
- 72% are women, and 28% are men.
- members range in age from 56 to 96 years.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

An elected committee manages U3A Wonthaggi's operations and determines policy. Committee members are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Our AGM is usually held during March each year; however, the pandemic required some rescheduling due to social distancing requirements.

There are currently eight committee members:

Lynn Kirk	President	president@u3awonthaggi.org.au
Glenn Cant	Vice President	
Mary Schooneveldt	Secretary	secretary@u3awonthaggi.org.au
John Laing	Treasurer	treasurer@u3awonthaggi.org.au
Maureen Sivyver	Member	
Jackie Brennan	Member	
Graeme Charles	Member	
Peter Fitzgerald	Member	

During 2022 the committee will meet on the third THURSDAY of each month. The minutes of committee meetings are available to members; a folder of minutes is available in the library inside the Garden Room. Any member is welcome to provide feedback and suggestions to the committee; this is best done by email to secretary@u3awonthaggi.org.au.

COURSES AND ACTIVITY LEADERS

Our volunteer class leaders (usually referred to as tutors) are the backbone of U3A Wonthaggi. Without them, our organisation could not exist. Please remember to give them a *Thank You* now and then.

All members are encouraged to volunteer as a tutor/activity leader or in another capacity. If you have an interest or skill that you would like to share and further develop, please consider becoming a tutor. If you would like to talk about the possibility of running a class, contact U3A at 0491 093 300 or tutorhelp@u3awonthaggi.org.au.

You may have already enrolled in a class or looked at our website; a current course list is always available at <https://u3awonthaggi.org.au/courses-activities/>. Our course offerings vary throughout the year. Our website also shows which classes are full or have vacancies. Many courses are offered for a whole year, while others may run for a term or two. All options are possible.

Our course offerings routinely include recorder, choir, bocce, walking, yoga & exercise, history, Bridge, art, crafts, Saturday lunches, Japanese, Italian Conversation, Shakespeare, book groups, gardening, crosswords, Tai Chi and current affairs.

MEMBER ID

Members are provided with an ID badge when they join; your membership number is printed on the badge. Members are asked to wear their badge when attending U3A. If you misplace your badge, you can ask the Secretary to print a replacement for you.

COURSE ETIQUETTE

- When you enrol in a course, put the start date in your diary or calendar, so you don't forget.
- If you change your mind about a course or no longer wish to attend, let the Secretary know so that someone on the waiting list can take your place.
- Please turn off your mobile phone at the start of a class or make it silent. Do not take calls in class other than in an emergency.
- Always wear your U3A Wonthaggi identification badge when attending classes and ensure that your emergency contact details are completed on the back of the badge.
- All members are expected to show respect for tutors and other members and refrain from disrupting a class by any inappropriate behaviour.

COVID19

All COVID-19 rules and regulations need to be followed in accordance with the U3A Wonthaggi COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements Policy approved by U3A Wonthaggi's Committee and published on U3A Wonthaggi's website. As of November 2021 this states that 2. Any person who attends a face-to-face course or activity organised by U3A Wonthaggi must be fully vaccinated and be able to provide appropriate evidence. See [COVID19 Vaccination Requirements – U3A Wonthaggi](#)

VENUES AND CAR PARKING

U3A Wonthaggi shares its Wonthaggi location at the Jean Meltzer Campus with three other organisations: Bass Coast Adult Learning (BCAL), Wonthaggi Woodcrafters Inc and Wonthaggi Community Garden. There is parking for U3A members at the rear of the site; the access way is sign-posted. Parking is also available at our three off-site venues.

Affordable accommodation can be challenging to find for not-for-profit organisations. We are fortunate to have exclusive use of two stand-alone buildings at 239 White Road Wonthaggi. The Garden Room is leased from Bass Coast Shire Council via BCAL, and Mawson Hut is owned and maintained by U3A Wonthaggi. Some classes are conducted at off-site venues, including:

- Cape Paterson Community Hall
- Inverloch Anglican Church Hall
- Goat Island Gallery Wonthaggi.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The committee's main channel of communication with members is our newsletter, which contains information about people, activities, courses, events and topics relevant to our membership. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to members via email. Members without email receive a printed copy. The newsletter always includes the course program for the upcoming term.

Our newsletter is also a helpful way of informing members about what is happening in classes and at U3A generally. We welcome regular contributions of stories, reviews and photographs from tutors and members.

Newsletter contributions can be emailed to the newsletter editor Robyn O'Sullivan at tutorhelp@u3awonthaggi.org.au

TERM DATES AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS FOR 2022

U3A Wonthaggi adheres to the Victorian Government's school terms, except for Term 4, which usually concludes at the end of November. The 2022 term dates are:

Term 1	31 January – 8 April
Term 2	26 April–24 June
Term 3	11 July–16 September
Term 4	3 October–25 November

Classes are not usually held on public holidays; however, some tutors negotiate with class members to meet on a public holiday. Some tutors may also negotiate with class members to extend beyond end-November. These discretions may not be available to groups that operate off-site as the venue owner may make other arrangements.

CATERING & AMENITIES

Tea and coffee facilities are provided in each classroom at White Road. Refreshment costs are not included in the membership fee. Members are asked to contribute to the honesty jar to cover expenses; 50 cents a serve is usual.

CLASS SIZES & ADMISSION TO CLASSES

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, class sizes were reduced in 2021 to comply with public health regulations and this may continue in 2022. Any change to permitted class sizes will be communicated directly to tutors and members. All members must be vaccinated, registered and enrolled in U-MAS before they can be admitted to a class.

WAITING LISTS

Unfortunately, members may find themselves on the "waiting list" for a course. In these cases, we encourage members to go ahead and enrol as this will enable us to assess the demand for a course. Where demand is sufficient, we will try to arrange for a second class to operate.

3. Enrolments, Records & Members Privacy

U3A Network Victoria developed the U-MAS database used by U3A Wonthaggi. We ask members to enrol and pay their annual membership online via U-MAS, which can be accessed from our website. A guide to online enrolments is available on the website.

If you cannot enrol online, please contact us for assistance at secretary@u3awonthaggi.org.au or president@u3awonthaggi.org.au

When you join U3A, you will be allocated a membership number and asked to create a password. This process preserves the privacy of your data. Please keep a record of your membership number and password so that you can quickly enter the database in the future.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER & PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

An Attendance Register is maintained by each course/activity leader for each class. The registers are used for general record-keeping purposes and insurance purposes. For COVID recordkeeping purposes, we ask all members to register their attendance by using the QR codes in each classroom.

MEMBERS' PRIVACY

Each activity/course leader is provided with contact details (telephone number and email address) for the members of their group. This enables leaders to contact you if necessary, e.g., where a scheduled class needs to be cancelled for any reason. Tutors are instructed to treat your contact details as strictly confidential. Apart from course leaders, your contact details can only be accessed by some committee members. We do not share your contact details with anyone else at U3A or anyone outside of U3A. U3A Wonthaggi complies with all relevant privacy legislation and conducts an annual review of its privacy practices.

MEMBERS' LIBRARY

We have a book library in the Garden Room available to all members. We operate an honour system for borrowing and ask borrowers to record loans in the record books stored in the libraries. Our volunteer librarian is Bev McEwan.

WIFI

A WiFi router is located in Mawson Hut. WiFi is available for members' use in both classrooms. The Network name is **Netcom6178**, and the password is posted on a noticeboard in each classroom.

4. Health & Safety Issues

The committee relies on each group leader to help maintain a safe environment for members. Each leader has a role to play in emergencies and when a member suffers an injury or illness while attending U3A. U3A carries insurance coverage for accidents and injuries incurred during U3A classes and events.

As a member, you are fully responsible for the state of your health, and you must take all reasonable steps not to place yourself or other members at risk. You are required to only participate in courses and activities which you are physically able to undertake.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If a member is taken ill or injured and the situation appears serious (e.g. unconsciousness, heavy bleeding, seizure or severe pain), the group leader will call for an ambulance. Where possible, you will be consulted about how the situation will be handled.

We ask members to record an emergency contact in U-MAS; this information is then printed on the back of each member's badge. Wearing your badge enables U3A, a hospital or doctor, to contact a relative or friend to support an ill or injured member.

Tutors are required to record and report accident and safety incidents that occur during class. Among other benefits, this information will assist the committee to review the incident and take steps to reduce future risk.

FIRST AID SUPPLIES

First Aid supplies are located in the classrooms – please look for the green signs.



COVID RELATED PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Tutors are provided with updates on how the Government's COVID-related health regulations will affect U3A's operations. Members are required to comply with key regulations such as mask-wearing and hand sanitiser. Any member who refuses to comply with a reasonable request concerning health and safety will be asked to leave U3A's premises. At the end of each class, members are requested to sanitise the table surfaces using the spray and paper towels supplied.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

In an emergency, members must follow the course leaders instructions and move quickly to the **Emergency Assembly Point** in the car park at the White Road entrance. Look for the green sign.



The following procedures must be adhered to during an emergency requiring evacuation.

- The person identifying the emergency – fire, gas leak, security threat – must immediately notify BCAL's office (ph 5672 3115). BCAL will ensure that emergency services are notified.
- Care must be taken not to put yourself or any other person in danger.
- Please do not leave the campus without informing your tutor, as he/she is responsible for supervising and recording evacuations.
- Follow instructions given by Emergency Services personnel and BCAL's fire warden.

