

Be Part of the Wider U3A Community

Newsletter of the U3A Network NSW Inc.

www.nsw.u3anet.org.au



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Magpie, by Carole Walker, U3A Northern Illawarra Art class

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The spirit engendered by the Network Conference in April was considerably dampened by the resurgence of Covid in NSW and its attendant restrictions over the past three months. Some U3As continued to utilise technology to maintain contact with their members and to offer some courses, others closed down “for the duration”. Now that the State has reached 80% double vaccination, several U3As are coming out of hibernation for face-to-face activities, others are waiting until 2022 to recommence.

Out of the gloom has come an innovative Book Project: *“Holy Crap – What ARE They Doing Now?”* initiated by Newcastle U3A. The idea was to invite U3A members across New South Wales to provide stories of what it means to be a Third Ager. 69 individual U3A members from



16 U3As responded to the invitation. Manager of the project, Beth Elliott joyfully comments that the stories “definitely have that ‘bellyful of laughs and bucket load of tears’and everything else in between... and through them all, the wealth of lived experience of we “Third Ager” shines through as well as a deep compassion for one’s fellow human beings”. She also comments that the project has uncovered a collegiality that was universal. It didn’t matter which U3A the contributors were members of: “they all came together as one, with one voice, one organization, and that has been the most inspiring part of this project.” The book is now in the hands of design editor Roy Bisson whose mermaid drawing will grace the cover.

The book is to be launched at the Newcastle Writers Festival's 10th anniversary in April next year (providing all goes well COVID wise) which will undoubtedly help bring U3A into public notice. The NWF attracts top authors and media personalities in Australia to its Writers Festival and it’s a big event on the Newcastle calendar. More news next year!



President's Column

With the Special General Meeting now over, your somewhat reduced Network Committee has commenced addressing the provision of the services that are expected of us.

We can now begin to put behind us the problems we have experienced during the last 6 months. Your committee has already begun the task of finalising the necessary services and fees for 2022.

Your new Committee is made up primarily of Regional Representatives (RRs), who are first and foremost **your** representatives. They, your RRs, welcome any input or feedback and assistance that you feel is important as they arrange the Insurances, Copyright and One Music licences, Screenrights and the vital Web hosting presence, where our 2020 project has led to a stronger service for all users.

We welcome the return of Phil Warren to look after the U3A Network NSW website and to share his technology insights and his advocacy for the important use of the internet to assist with our connecting with U3A Members and providing services to you, our Members and your U3A community.

Volunteers are the backbone of all U3As and your Network Committee will need, from time to time, to enlist the help of volunteers with specialist knowledge and skills.

Unfortunately, next year's conference in Orange, has been cancelled due to Covid uncertainty. However, Cross Regional Meetings will be arranged to replace it and these will be conducted by your RRs. They would welcome suggestions for sessions that would be of interest to you, our Members. There will be no sessions, which are not of direct interest to U3A Members and no sessions telling autonomous U3As how to manage their association.

Finally as the spectre of Covid lessens its impact on our lives, I know that I speak for all U3As who look forward to meeting again to continue learning, laughing and living once more, in the spirit of U3A.

As you plan for face to face courses and physical activities for 2022, please remember that your RR, as well as representing you on the Network Committee, may be able to assist you by sharing the experiences of others within your region.

Thank you for putting your faith in the renewed committee! Your support is sincerely appreciated.

Denis Simond, President, U3A Network NSW



Wishing all our members a happy, healthy and safe Christmas Season with family and friends and a great New Year for U3A in 2022

Covid and U3A, the consequences

by Jim Nichterlein

Here we are just out of lockdown, knowing from the figures elsewhere, that another is a possibility at some unpredictable time in the future.

It is the uncertainty that is just one part of the effects of future lockdowns, the other lies in the nature of a lockdown itself. What a lockdown does is both simple and far reaching, it reduces our horizons until we can see no further than our own immediate family and what we will do tomorrow. The anticipation and planning for next week or month thereafter have no meaning with Covid, as we simply do not know what next week let alone next month will bring.

But that not all that Covid does: it destroys trust. Covid does this in two ways. The first is that we do not understand how to deal with a rapidly changing virus; and that uncertainty leads to the second, we do not know whom amongst our friends and acquaintances we can fully trust. Anyone, be it our friends or the most fleeting of acquaintances may be a carrier. We reduce our horizons to the here and now and of our friends to those in our immediate family.

U3A however exists to both widen our horizons and to bring us into a wider group than our own family. Many U3A's have already begun their response through moving courses onto Zoom and that will continue. Our task as a U3A in the simplest of terms will be to re connect amongst ourselves our friends and then through the Network with our wider communities. Making that reconnection to rebuilt trust is really what U3A is for.

Research: Nature-based activities can improve mood and reduce anxiety

Source - Academics from the Department of Health Sciences, Department of Environment and Geography, York Environmental Sustainability Institute (YESI), Hull York Medical School and Stockholm Environment Institute at York University

Outdoor nature-based activities are effective for improving mental health in adults, including those with pre-existing mental health problems, a new study has found. The research -- led by the University of York -- showed that taking part in outdoor, nature-based activities led to improved mood, less anxiety, and positive emotions. The study found that activities lasting for 20 to 90 minutes, sustained for over the course of 8 to 12 weeks, have the most positive outcomes for improving mood and reducing anxiety.

Gardening and exercise were among the activities associated with mental health benefits. Engaging in conservation activities was also reported to make people feel better, as did 'forest bathing' (stopping in a forest to take in the atmosphere).

Nature-based interventions (NBIs) support people to engage with nature in a structured way to improve mental health.



Hawkesbury U3A Birdwatchers on the watch

An interesting Course at Batemans Bay U3A : *The End of The World: A Cultural History*

This 10 week course explores the Cultural History of the End of the World. No single text has had a more dramatic effect on the literary and artistic imagination of Western Civilisation than The Book of Revelation (The Apocalypse of John). Notions such as the Millennium, Armageddon, the Rapture, the Four Horsemen, the Whore of Babylon, the New Jerusalem, the Antichrist, the Seventh Seal, the Lamb of God and the End of the World itself have captured the popular imagination for 2000 years. Beginning with the Book itself, this course traces its political and cultural impact, focussing especially on artistic and literary works as generation by generation the West endlessly imagines its end.



The Rusty Restorers

From Oberon U3A Sept 2021 newsletter



Ferguson tractor

One of the recent projects for this group has been the restoration of an old Ferguson tractor at Oberon Museum. This tractor, once finished, will take pride of place on a newly built plinth at the entrance to the museum. Lockdown has slowed work on this project but watch this space for the finished product!

Become a Digital Mentor for your U3A Group!

An Australian Government funded program for Seniors and over 50s delivered by Stay In Touch

Would you like to help your U3A Group members and peers with basic tech skills on their devices? This is a free 10 month program for 100 volunteers from Australian Probus Clubs and NSW U3A Groups. Technology skills are nice to have, but not essential. We teach you how to mentor, and provide you with a tech tool kit that you can use with your learners!

TRAINING PROGRAM INCLUDES:

FIRST: Digital Mentor Workshops

Attend 2 x 2.5 hour small group training workshops via Zoom.

6 workshops to choose from between November 2021 - December 2021.

FOLLOWED BY: Ongoing training and support (OPTIONAL):

6 monthly x 1.5 hour group meetings to continue learning and share experiences with other NSW U3A and Australian Probus Club volunteers
30 weekly x 30 minute tech tip group training sessions

3 x 2 hour specialised technology group training sessions

Member of a Digital Mentor WhatsApp group to provide/receive support
Held between December 2021 - July 2022.

To view the Information Session handout pack go to:

<https://www.stayintouch.net.au/volunteer-digital-mentors-2021>

To BOOK into the program go to:

<https://www.stayintouch.net.au/probus-club-technology-events>

Culture, Heritage and Arts Regional Tourism (CHART) Program

The Culture, Heritage and Arts Regional Tourism (CHART) program is a \$3 million Australian Government program that aims to support community cultural, heritage and arts organisations in regional Australia as they recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) is administering the CHART program on behalf of the Australian Government.

The CHART program promotes participation in, and access to, Australia's arts and culture through developing and supporting cultural expression and sharing stories of community and historical significance. Community-run arts and cultural organisations – including community museums, galleries, and historical societies – will benefit from CHART program funding. The program will support these organisations to continue to offer appealing cultural tourism experiences to visitors, which in turn will enhance local expenditure.

The intended outcomes of CHART program grants are to:

- **Contribute** to the reactivation and recovery of organisations from COVID-19, and to their ongoing sustainability, by providing grants for eligible activities
- **Promote** regional arts and cultural tourism by supporting the development of appealing cultural tourism experiences, including through the preservation of Australia's cultural heritage and the telling of the stories of local communities and
- **Support** domestic intra- and inter-state tourism and local economies more broadly.

The CHART program is now open for applications. It will close when the funding allocation has been expended or on 29 April 2022, whichever is sooner. Applications will

be assessed in batches of 100, through a rolling evaluation process.

AMaGA encourages organisations to submit applications at the earliest opportunity.

All activities funded by the CHART program must be delivered and acquitted by 30 June 2022.

If your U3A has an idea to produce an activity that fits the criteria and will help post-Covid recovery, why not investigate this program.

For further information and online grant applications go to
<https://www.amaga.org.au/chart>

In one respect at least, human beings are radically different from the rest of life on earth. We have the ability to imagine. As a result we have unlimited powers of creativity.

- Ken Robinson

Imagination is more important than knowledge – Albert Einstein

Balance 'n' Bones DVD

The DVD continues to receive a positive response from U3As as an easy-to-use and useful addition to their class offerings, and from individual members who want to keep up their exercises during term breaks. The exercise program was devised and is presented by Beth Denny, an experienced and qualified fitness instructor, especially for older people, to strengthen bones and balance.

Copies of the DVD are available for sale at \$25 each, inclusive of postage, to be made by direct deposit to the U3A Network account. To obtain a copy, contact Ainslie Lamb , ainslie2518@gmail.com

Books That Made Us – an idea for a U3A course

The ABC will be commencing a 3 part documentary series, described as “ an extraordinary literary adventure to explore the stories that have shaped our nation’s identity” in *Books That Made Us* – hosted by Actor Claudia Karvan and premiering on Tuesday 23rd November at 8.30pm on ABC TV and ABC iview.

In the series, Claudia Karvan meets some of Australia’s current writers, including Richard Flanagan, Alexis Wright, Helen Garner, Tim Winton, David Malouf, Kate Grenville, Christos Tsiolkas, Thomas Keneally, Liane Moriarty, Trent Dalton, Kim Scott, and Melissa Lucashenko.

Some of the nation’s finest critics and creative minds, including Tim Minchin and Annabel Crabb, dissect these great stories, offering insights and understanding. Subtly woven throughout is the context and social history, the backdrop to when and why these novels were written.

In addition to the television series, ABC Books is publishing a companion book by Carl Reinecke which will be released on Wednesday 17 November.

“Australia’s novels lie at the heart of the country. Capturing everyday lives and exceptional dreams, they have held up a mirror to the nation, reflecting the good and the bad. Touching on colonial invasion, the bush myth, world wars, mass migration, the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and the emergence of a modern, global, multicultural nation the book examines how these pivotal events and persuasive ideas have shaped some of Australia’s most influential novels, and how these books, in turn, made us.”

U3A book clubs, and other classes interested in Australian history and literature, will find these ABC productions useful resources as a basis for their discussions.

Bushfire Stories – Black Summer 2019-20

Produced by U3A Northern Illawarra U3A to record the stories of U3A members affected by the South Coast bushfires, some copies are still available. Cost is \$25 inclusive of postage. If you would like a copy, send your order to the Treasurer, U3A Northern Illawarra,

Email: irelandjudy@hotmail.com

Don’t forget to include your postal address.

Payment may be made by EFT transfer to:

U3A NI Inc. BSB 641 800 ACC 200 420 144

Or by direct deposit at any IMB Branch using the above account reference.

Please use your full name on the transaction.

From the Editor ...

As U3As return to offering their courses and activities again, I hope that you will remember to record your highlights in word and picture, and your ideas for rejuvenating your members, and send them to me to share with you’re the rest of the U3A community through *Newslink*.

The next issue of *Newslink* will be in March 2022. Please send me your items by 25th February 2022 to u3answ@gmail.com

Ainslie

One glance at a book and you hear the voice of another person, perhaps someone dead for 1,000 years. To read is to voyage through time. - Carl Sagan

Research invitation: accessing health and driving information

The **University of Wollongong** is conducting research about how and where people, aged 65 years and over, access information about their health and driving. You might be interested in providing your views and experiences about this topic by participating in an interview. Your views will help guide the development of strategies to promote a resource for drivers aged 65 years and over.

If you would like to participate or have further questions, please email Ben Chand at bchand@uow.edu.au. Once received, you will be contacted by a member of the research team to arrange an interview date and time.

For further information Visit our website Aged and Dementia Health Education and Research (ADHERE): www.adhere.org.au
School of Nursing | Science Medicine and Health
University of Wollongong NSW 2522 Australia

Memory Walk & Jog 2022 is your way to get active and raise funds to beat dementia!

Get together, create a team, get active and help beat dementia. With your determination (and feet!) you'll join an inspiring community as we make a better today for the estimated 472,000 people living with dementia in Australia.

Canberra 27 February 2022, Barrine Drive, Lake Burley Griffin,
Cronulla 20 March 2022, Don Lucas Reserve, Cronulla.
Hunter 27 March 2022, Speers Point Park, Lake Macquarie
Illawarra 20 February 2022, Lang Park, Wollongong
Lithgow, 13 February 2022, Tony Luchetti Showgrounds
Mudgee, 12 February 2022, Lawson Park Mudgee
Sydney, 22 May 2022, The Bay Run, Leichhardt Oval#3, Lilyfield
Wagga Wagga, 6 March 2022, Apex Park, Wagga Wagga
Western Sydney, 20 March 2022, Lizard Log, Western Sydney Parklands, Abbotsbury.

Further information and registration at memorywalk.com.au.find-an-event



Koolewong, photo by Judy Frewen, U3A Central Coast (NSW)

U3A NSW NETWORK COMMITTEE CONTACTS

President – Denis Simond - president@u3anet.org.au

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Secretary – Greg Brown - secretary@u3anet.org.au

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Regional Representatives –

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Mid-North Coast – position vacant

Monaro-south east – James Nichterlein - rru3a_monaro-se@u3anet.org.au

Riverina-murray – Greg Brown - rru3a_riverina-murray@u3anet.org.au

South Coast – Denis Simond - rru3a_southcoast@u3anet.org.au

Web Administrator – Phil Warren - u3answ.website@gmail.com

