



U3AAA BULLETIN

No 5 JULY 2012

As readers can see we are now sporting our newly approved logo which was launched at the recent Queensland Network Conference. Thanks are due to Jim Hales, recently retired president of the Queensland Network, for his efforts in pushing this search to a successful conclusion.

We welcome the new state network in Western Australia and wish them the best for the next stage of development.

Lindsay Glenn, U3AAA Chairman, has recently negotiated an agreement with Odyssey Travel under which they will sponsor the Alliance for three years in return for space in our newsletter.

FROM THE CHAIR

The recent "Ageing with vitality" Conference held in Queensland on the 5 and 6th June enabled most of the current State Networks Alliance delegates to attend. This occasion saw the newly elected President of U3A Network Queensland Rhonda Weston join fellow Alliance delegates from NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and our U3A Online to hold an Alliance meeting to progress a number of issues.

We thank outgoing Queensland delegate Jim Hales who played a part in the initiation of the Alliance for his support and assistance to the Alliance whilst a delegate and wish him well in his future enjoyment of what U3A has to offer.



*Lindsay Glen
Alliance Chair*



*Barbara Gardiner
Alliance Secretary*

Matters discussed included a decision to permit meeting to proceed with a more realistic quorum given that formation of some network structures are yet to be resolved despite allowance being made for them within the original Memorandum of Understanding. We are to further investigate the issues involved in the formation of a more formal organisational structure. A dedicated Alliance website is to be investigated along with the possibility of limited general sponsorship. The Alliance will also seek a nominal annual subscription from member Networks to assist with the National based representational work on their behalf.

VICTORIA

Since the last Bulletin issue Victoria has made progress on a number of fronts:

- We welcomed our 99th Member U3A to the Victorian Network at our June Meeting.
- This occasion also saw the trialling of an electronic linkage with a regional delegate.

Whilst not perfected it was successful enough to support further refinement for possible future adoption to enable wider participation where distance or timing proved an obstacle to delegates physical attendance at meetings.

- The same Council Meeting also saw the presentation of a prototype website which is being developed to replace our trusty but ageing current online presence very soon.
- Our Branding Programme has commenced the rollout of standardised logo formats to all our member U3As for adoption within their organisations.
- Preparations are in place to celebrate the forthcoming 30th Anniversary of this State's Department of Health initiative which will include a combined U3A choral performance at the Melbourne Town Hall aiming at 500 participants drawn from both metropolitan and regional Victoria U3As. We are anticipating strong support for the occasion at the Carnival of Learning event to be held once again at Federation Square to open Seniors Week celebrations in Melbourne. This has become a grand opportunity for us to showcase U3A and what it offers to a wider audience.

- Our Education Committee is to hold a number of training seminars for course presenters in partnership with ACE Vic. (Adult & Community Education) and a number of local community groups. This concept of partnership development is an excellent means by which U3As may engage with and build mutually beneficial relationships within the wider community.

Clearly U3A remains an active and vital organisation with exciting prospects for both the present and future membership base as we continue to develop and expand our contribution to healthy ageing through the provision of learning and stimulating activity programmes.

Lindsay Glen Chair U3A Alliance

REPORT FROM QLD NETWORK.

The Qld State Conference - Go4Gold was a huge success. Thanks to Adrienne Brougham and her Steering Committee, the event provided two days of interesting guest speakers, entertainment and plenty of opportunity to mingle and network. The 120 delegates represented 21 of the 24 Qld Network member U3As, as well as visitors from NSW, VIC, WA and NZ. As always there are opportunities to learn from these events and the feedback suggests positive outcomes.

The 2013 Qld State Conference *High Country Encounter - Autumn the 3rd Season* will be held in Toowoomba on Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th April. A pre-conference tour is being organised on Monday 22nd April. The venue is historic Gabbinbah Homestead, and due to space the conference numbers will have a ceiling. Details will be available on the Toowoomba website as they become available. www.u3atoowoomba.com

U3AAA MEMBERS AT GOLD COAST GATHERING



Jim Hales(Qld), Peter Flanigan(WA), Rhonda Weston(Qld), Diane Delchau(Online), Elsie Mutton(Vic), and Allan Haggarty(NSW) with the new U3AAA logo in the background

In keeping with the constitution, Network Qld has several changes on the committee. Jim Hales, Rick Swindell and Dianne Delchau have stood down from their positions as President, Vice President and Secretary. The new President is Rhonda Weston, Jim Hales Vice President and Adrienne Brougham Secretary. Alan Williams is continuing as Treasurer and Mary Courtney as Grey Matters editor. We welcome Ian Lipke (Brisbane) and Julie Porteous (Redlands) to our committee. We sincerely thank Rick and Dianne for the enormous contribution that they made to the Foundation of U3A Network Qld. They will be missed from this committee.

The new committee will continue to work towards expanding U3A within Qld. Two new areas are developing at present. These areas are away from the coast, where U3As appear to develop quickly, and it is encouraging to note that smaller regional and rural towns are seeking out U3A. Growth is everywhere in U3As around Qld and we fully expect this to continue.

Rhonda Weston, President U3A Network Qld

NEW SOUTH WALES

Since the last Bulletin, the NSW Network Annual Conference was held at Port Macquarie. The theme "Fountain of Age" emphasised the value of creativity in older age, promoted by a very insightful keynote address from Margaret Meagher, Director of Arts & Health Australia, and illustrated by performances of dance and music from U3A groups. All who attended found the conference inspirational. The conference was also addressed by Noeline Brown, Federal Ambassador for Ageing and Andrew Constance MP, NSW Minister for Ageing. There were also several workshops which gave U3A committee members and members generally much food for thought, and hopefully for implementation in their own areas.

In the last bulletin, my predecessor, Ron Browne, reported that we had made submissions to the NSW government's Whole of Government Ageing Strategy and while I was attending the Queensland Network's Annual Conference, Ainslie Lamb attended a follow-up meeting at the government's request and while the details of the meeting were confidential it seems something will emerge shortly.

There were some inspirational speakers at the Queensland Network conference and the workshops I attended were useful. As usual it was also a time of renewing acquaintances and meeting new devotees to the cause. Next April will be a month to mark in our calendars, as the NSW Network's Annual Conference will be in Goulburn on 4th and 5th April as well as the Queensland Network's on 23 and 24 April. Goulburn is celebrating its 150th anniversary and Canberra, an hour's drive away, its 100th. With Easter the week before the NSW conference and Anzac Day the day after Queensland's, one could manage to spend some quality time in both centres with some planning.

I represented the NSW Network at a forum on Productive Ageing at Parliament House Canberra on 19 June and received encouraging responses to a question on funding I put to a Political Panel consisting of both the Minister for Ageing Mark Butler and the Shadow Minister for Seniors, Bronwyn Bishop. In their responses, both spoke highly of the U3A movement.

Allan Haggarty President NSW Network

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



The big news is that our State Network (U3A Network WA) is now up and running. The foundation meeting was held on July 4 (An auspicious day!). At this stage seven groups have expressed an interest in joining the network. We are hopeful of more. The new office bearers are: President; Peter Flanigan (U3A (UWA) Perth), Vice-President: David Box (Armadale U3A), Secretary: Norma Vaughan (Mandurah U3A) and Treasurer Don MacDonald (Naturaliste U3A). There is plenty of work ahead to get systems up and running. Adopting a constitution so that we can apply for grants will be a major priority. It was decided to have an annual face-to-face meeting and, in between, to use electronic communications. The subscription has been set at 50 cents per member of each group as recorded at 1st July each year.

Many thanks to The Perth group who have helped the establishment of the network along. The first meeting was held in conjunction with the State Conference they ran last September and the Foundation Meeting was held in conjunction with the seminar they held on 4 July at UWA. The title of the seminar was "Publishing in the 21st Century - from Caxton to Kindle". It was well attended (150 people) and there were some very interesting talks and discussions. Conclusion: If it doesn't start with "i" then it's out of date!

Peter Flanigan, President U3A Network WA



We were all saddened by the death of Anthony Baker who had been a long time member, a Course Leader running several courses and the Secretary, a position he had held since 2004. As mentioned in the last bulletin Anthony had taken ill and had stood down from the position of Secretary but had continued on the committee until the very end. Our sincere condolences went to his wife Lillian and his family.

The Members' Lounge is now launched and the members have activities and areas that they can become involved in. Developing and/or contributing to wikis, participating in the forums, setting up a vote topic or just voting on what others have put up, enjoying a live chat with other members who happen to be on the site at the same time and enjoying some games in the procrastinator's corner --- a social hub for the members.

There has been a delay in us getting new courses up online due to the need for styles to be added to the editing tools but luckily we have many courses available to keep members happy until we manage to get some new ones developed. We do have courses to develop as soon as the styles are available.

We are back in communication with VicNet in relation to the development of a multilingual U3A Online. The aim of this being to involve the CALD communities in utilising the U3A Online courses and converting them to other languages so that older people in their communities can enjoy the benefits. From this we then hope that the communities will develop their own courses with, perhaps, greater relevance to the people involved.

Di Delchau President

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Our last State meeting was in April with insurance, funding and risk management major agenda items. The professional development topic was publicity and the discussion topic was methods of promotion which our individual U3As use. Campbelltown rather stole the show with their new video filmed by the students at Flinders University under the Community Voices programme. They particularly wanted a product which could be used to promote U3A generally. It is quite good and can be viewed on You tube or their own website <https://sites.google.com/site/campbelltownu3asa/>.

In the absence of any travel expenses, we dropped the July meeting and will go straight to our AGM in October by when we hope to have better news re funding. We have been engaged in discussions with the Office of the Ageing which took a decidedly positive turn with the appointment of a new CEO, Mr Greg Mackie, who has a real 'can do' air about him. Unfortunately Ageing is now part of the Department for Health which has a 'we are deeply in the red' stink about it as it was seriously over-budget last year and is thus watching the pennies this financial year.

One thing which instantly caught the eye of our new champion was our State Alliance tagline: "Staying active: mentally, physically and socially". He positively leapt on it, saying "That is the line to promote".

Certainly in SA, we have been a poor fit for education funding and where life-long learning is seen to finish at 65, I can see the benefits of putting the emphasis on our role as a positive aging organisation rather than pushing the education aspect.

Many within U3A think of it as just a learning organisation. The word 'university' in our name and the links many U3As have with regular universities naturally reinforce this. Some even think U3As without these links are second best. Certainly they have to work harder to find speakers, venues and establish courses, but they are frequently excellent positive-ageing organisations offering a very rounded list of activities which provide that incentive to keep active in all areas of our lives. It is this mix of mental, physical and social activity which wards off the worst aspects of ageing, and keeps us living independently in our own homes for longer, leading happier and healthier lives.

Whether our U3A activities involve learning a language, book group, walking, country dancing, or one of the various coffee and chat formats, they all involve social interaction, ranging from discussing the weather with a new face to forming lasting friendships. In case you think that unimportant, here are a few findings from recent research:

- Seniors with a high level of social activity are about twice as likely to remain disability-free when it comes to activities of daily living.

- People with extensive networks of good friends and confidantes outlived those with the fewest friends by 22 percent.
- A Mental Health Association NSW survey found that happiness is linked to spending time with friends or being a member of a club.
- The best predictor of being able to recover from a stroke is belonging to multiple groups before the stroke and being able to maintain those memberships after the stroke.
- People who lack friends and relationships are just as likely to risk an early death as heavy drinkers and smokers.

So we shouldn't fall into the rut of presenting ourselves as merely educational organisations, when we are first-rate positive-ageing organisations. Health and ageing will command larger and larger portions of future government spending.

In the past term, I'm glad I dragged myself away from the fireside to attend the Yorke Peninsula AGM at Maitland, and a winter solstice lunch with Noarlunga to celebrate their 25th anniversary. After both events, the local delegate gave me a guided tour of their normal venue. This has been a great aid, allowing me to visualise their groups in action. Despite reading their newsletters, it is easy to imagine all U3As as just variations of your own, but they really differ widely.

In the last few weeks I have undertaken a survey of how much SA U3As use the library system and if they are happy with it. It revealed many of our U3As use their local library as one of their venues. Often it is their primary or even sole venue. These are often provided at little or no charge and in some cases include meeting rooms fully equipped with whiteboards and digital projectors. It is beginning to look as if the Libraries Board of SA is currently the major supporter of the U3A movement in this State.

Claire Eglinton Secretary, Alliance of U3As in South Australia Inc.

From the Editor

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue and also for the promptness in responding. Please forward the Bulletin as widely as possible.

The next issue will be in October with a deadline of October 15th. News and ideas from members of the various U3A groups that make up the state networks will be welcome.

Peter Flanigan u3apeteraa@bigpond.com

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