



## Benalla and District Inc.

### Newsletter – January 2015

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#### **PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Welcome to a New Year with U3A!

I am pleased to be report that we have a number of new courses

commencing, whilst old favourites continue.

Some tutors and convenors have retired and we have new leaders who have enabled us to continue some courses this year. U3A relies

upon you, the members offering to have a go, it can be daunting but our audience is incredibly supportive so have a think during the year if **you** could offer to help run a course in 2016.



I look forward to seeing you on enrolment day and hope you will welcome new members to courses you have enrolled in. Many new members will also be new residents in Benalla and U3A is a wonderful way for them to meet new friends and become involved in the community.

I want to thank everyone for continuing to make U3A a success story and acknowledge it is just one of a number of organizations in Benalla for retirees that make life interesting. Many of our members are also active in other voluntary organizations that contribute so much to the community; I hope you all have a rewarding year.

Terry Case  
President

*Photo: President Terry Case, November 2014*

#### **ENROLMENT DAY WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2015 9.30 – 11.30 AM SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRE**

Come along to Enrolment Day and meet up with new and old friends over morning tea. This is an opportunity to enquire about U3A activities.

Please bring your completed U3A Membership Form for 2015, and completed Course/Activity Form showing activities you wish to enroll in and your payment as per Membership Form.

#### **A Special Thank You**

The web team which guided the development of U3A's website for the first two years has decided to retire. Thanks go to Terry Dillon, Bill Parris, Doug Geeson and John Avery for their pioneering efforts in developing U3A Benalla and District's first website. The website they implemented proved to be an effective resource hub providing information and documents for members. Thanks also to Terry Dillon for maintaining the previous website during a handover period.

Do check out the website [www.u3abenalla.com](http://www.u3abenalla.com) Timetables, enrolment forms. The newsletter and general information is available on the site.

## GROUP REPORTS

### Armchair History

This year our focus will be The World of the Victorians. I would like to welcome anyone who would like to know more about this fascinating period as the British Empire expanded and the Industrial Revolution was to spread across Europe and America.

The scientific revolution saw changes in disease control and coupled with changes to sanitation, cities became safer places to live.

People continued to clamour for the right to vote, which led to outbreaks of violence such as the Eureka Rebellion; but the governments of the British Empire were determined to restrict more people obtaining the vote: especially women.

We will look at the way these people lived and their aspirations and how they came to identify themselves as "Victorians". Sit back and watch DVDs that will illustrate this period whilst I will supplement them with readings and commentary to show you why I find this period so enthralling.

### Art Appreciation

We are all looking forward to another year of high interest at the Art gallery during 2015. First gathering is at 10:00 am Monday 2nd of February when there will be an exhibition floor talk by local contemporary artist Tony Flint.



*Art Appreciation workshop at the gallery*

### Astronomy – Learning about Planets, Stars and the Universe

As we enter the New Year the Christmas Comet, Comet Lovejoy (C/2014Q2) streaks across the sky

and is bright enough to be seen with the naked eye or binoculars, south of the constellation of Orion. On January 7th. Comet Lovejoy was at its closest to Earth, at 70 million km away from us, but will continue to brighten as it moves closer to the sun. This comet and its tail stretch for more than 7 million km from end to end.

Our sun continues to give us fireworks with an unexpected geomagnetic storm also on the 7th. January which sparked brilliant auroras at both North and South Poles.

As our esteemed tutor Rupe Cheetham has now retired, we at Astronomy 2015 now face the challenge of running as a self-help group. There is so much information that we can tap into and we hope to see those who have participated in 2014 return and also some new members.

Don't forget that the first U3A Astronomy starts 2.00 pm Tuesday 3 February. Terry Case will show us how to use all the equipment including the fabulous new scanner which enables us to view text or pictures directly onto the TV screen. We will also be discussing what astronomical topics people are most interested in (if you have any preferences). A reminder that Bev and Jan are co coordinators not tutors and everyone will be required to have input. The second half of each program may be an astronomy video of which we have many.

If you have ever looked at the night sky with wonder, come and join our discussion group. We are learning together. You don't have to be a rocket scientist, total beginners and aliens are welcome. And we make very good coffee!

### Chat n' Chew

Our first lunch for the year will be held at the Royal Hotel on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 11.45 am. Please contact Shirley on 5762 6768 to book. All welcome.

### Comparative Religion

You will be challenged by this programme. A new approach to the study of the doctrines, practices and world views of selected faith traditions. We will commence with a screening of the beautifully shot film by Zefferelli, Brother Son, Sister Moon (1972). I am looking forward to wide ranging discussions during our class sessions.

Laurence Neal

## **e-Book Group**

1st Tuesday 10-am-12 noon, February to November.  
Contact Helen Scheller Ph. 5762 3937 or Meg Dillon  
Ph 5762 6558.

U3A Benalla is offering an e-reader book group for the third time. Thanks to a community grant, e-readers are available to members contingent upon a payment of a bond of \$25 (refundable), and a rent of \$33 (non-refundable), plus a discounted charge for downloads of books. Our emphasis is on contemporary literature.

We have four (4) e-readers still not taken for 2015, so please register your interest, and become a member of a stimulating and always interesting e-reader book group.

## **Garden Appreciation**

Happy New Year to all.

February 26<sup>th</sup> Meet at Centre Car Park 10 am.

We are going to Brookfield Garden and Maze. 1121 Benalla-Whitfield Road, Myrree. 5729 7507.

The garden will have summer flowers, plenty of shade trees, rare plants and shrubs. Eryl will open her private garden for us too. Will also take any of us who want to go into the maze.

Lunch – Alternate menu. \$40 per person which includes maze and garden, and private garden entry. Choose two mains and two desserts to be served alternately with buffet style tea and brewed coffee. I will need to know numbers for lunch and dietary needs by 12<sup>th</sup> February.

March 26<sup>th</sup> Meet at Rose Garden 7.30 am.

Have booked a bus to take us to the Melbourne International Flower Show, Exhibition Building, Carlton. Bus and entry will cost \$55.

Will need money and names by 12<sup>th</sup> March. Money can be left at the Centre in an envelope marked Garden Appreciation Trip – Attention Gwen.

*Gwen 5762 7017, 0438 627010*

## **Garden Team**

One of the joys of being a member of the U3A Garden Team group is seeing how much work several people can carry out in your garden over 90 minutes! It was quite a warm day on 1 December when three of us gathered in Jane's garden and quickly a pile of weeds appeared on the path and disappeared in the direction of the compost heap. There were apologies from four members who couldn't make it, which was probably a good

thing as I'm not sure there was enough weeding/pruning work in deep shade for everyone! Sadly they missed out on the Christmas inspired afternoon tea, with homemade mince pies and shortbread and fresh local cherries - a cuppa and a chat is a lovely way to reward ourselves for work well done. We look forward to seeing transformations in other member's gardens when we reconvene in February.

## **Investment Group 1**

Members of our group are thankful to look back on a happy year of fellowship and mutual learning both as a group and individually from each other. We have appreciated the opportunity to study the various aspects of the share market and have enjoyed our involvement as competitors in the "Share Race" competition which is conducted by The Age newspaper.

Following our December meeting we are celebrated a successful year with a Christmas lunch at the Golf Club.

## **Investment Group 2**

Investment Group 2 will hold their first meeting for 2015 on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February in W4 at 2pm. We are delighted to be having a guest speaker, Mr Ray O'Shannessy. Ray who is a member of Benalla U3A and a former director of an accountancy firm in Benalla will speak to us on reading and interpreting company balance sheets. We look forward to seeing all our regular members there for what will be a very interesting meeting. New members are also welcome.

## **Lifeball**

Lifeball is currently in recess, but we will commence again on February 2nd, but because of the summer, we will begin at 9.30 in the morning, with the air-conditioning on if the heat becomes a problem.

If necessary, contact me.

Please give us a try, even just to see how many times you burst out laughing!!!

Margaret Merriman. 5762 1404

## **Meet and Mingle**

Our venue for 2015 will be W4; the format is changed with only two guest speakers per semester so I rely upon you to help with entertainment. We open on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February when our own

“Jolly Rogers” ie Keith & Heather will run a quiz to get us motivated.

One of our funniest speakers last year was Claire Rudolph who with no preparation helped us cover for a late running guest speaker by describing a hilarious trip to Melbourne. I know we have got stories to tell and if we can have a few people volunteer to fill a ten twenty minute session we should have a good year.

If you have suggestions for topics or contacts for speakers please inform myself (Terry Case) or Lorraine.

## Patchwork

There will be a workshop at the Hub on 15th January to learn Foundation Piecing and/or Book covers for those who missed out last year or would like to do them again. For requirements for Book covers, please ring Heather on 5762 4777. For Foundation Piecing bring your own fabric or use some of the fabric we have to make your sample block.

Requirements for all: - Sewing Machine, Ironing Pad and Iron. Extension Cord and/or power board plus all other sewing needs. The day will run from 10am to 4pm. BYO Lunch. For any other enquiries ring Dorothy on 5762 2116

## Politics and Current Affairs

Following our summer break I am sure class members will be roaring to get back and share their angst at the state of the political scene. We have a new mayor, a new local member of parliament and a new state government, with an upper house controlled by independents; just like federal politics! Overseas news will continue to be an important part of our agenda and we will choose a new focus for the year ahead.

We welcome new members who enjoy debating and sharing their ideas on current events.

## Singing for Fun

Bring along your friends to see what our singing group is like. Leaders have been preparing for the New Year and there will be a few surprises in store. Our first session will, as usual, be the singing of old favorites.



*Singing for Fun Group entertaining USA members in November 2014.*

## Walks

The following is a preview of the February mid-week walk. Terry Sides will be leading.

### WED FEB 11 HOWQUA RIVER – RICHIE’S HUT M-3-3

Starting at Eight Mile Flat we follow the high track, with spectacular views of the Howqua River and Valley, toward Ritchie’s hut, about six kilometers away. At the junction of the high track and low track, which goes back to the Eight Mile via numerous river crossings, we decide to go on to the hut or return to the flat.

Be prepared to get your footwear wet on the return journey. Walking poles are of great assistance during the crossings.

Leader: Terry Sides; 0411 470 257 Meet at the Centre CP at 7.45am for 8am departure.

Vaughan Cowan

## Wine Appreciation

Welcome to the start of another program of monthly visits to wineries in our region. The focus is to especially represent those smaller and lesser known.

This marks the start of the eighteenth year of this pleasurable activity for members.

### Wednesday 25 February

We visit the local Silent range Estate and lunch at the Pinsent Hotel.

Meet at car park at 10.30 am

### Wednesday 25 March

Meet at car park at 10.00 am to travel to Eagle Range Estate. Lunch at Myrtleford.

Noel Meagher 5762 3149