



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – November 2020

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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Please send all items for the newsletter to newsletter@u3abenalla.com by 25 Nov 2020

President's Report

The morning get-together in the Gardens was most enjoyable. We plan to continue these social gatherings, with the next gathering to be held on Tuesday November 10th from 10 – 11.30, again in the Benalla Gardens near the Art Gallery.

We are continuing to work with Council and are looking at possible venues for sessions next year while the air conditioning is being renovated at the Seniors Community Centre.

With changes in Covid-19 rules happening all the time, it has been hard to plan additional sessions with any degree of certainty. Convenors are encouraged to organise end of year meetings/celebrations for their groups in line with social distancing regulations.

My thanks go to all our Convenors for being positive and keeping in touch with the Committee and Members. To the Convenors who have been able to run their groups - Congratulations.

The Committee will be meeting soon to discuss next year's program. We hope in the New Year we can once again offer our Members the wonderful selection of courses U3A Benalla is known for.

Dorothy Webber

President

'Meet and Mingle' over morning tea in the Benalla Gardens!

A chance for U3A participants to catch up with friends in the beautiful gardens next to the Art Gallery! **Tuesday 10 November** from 10.00 to 11.30 am.

'BYO' morning tea; tea/coffee/beverages, cups, chair, cushion.

Covid-19 regulations and weather permitting!

Group Reports

'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

The theme for October was 'This Life', the brief - to submit a 500 word story of own choice, developing a title for it using the title 'This (.....) Life'. As always it was a great delight to open up and read the stories as they came in, with titles including '*This (Blessed) Life*'; '*This (Adventurous) Life*'; '*This (Extraordinary) Life*'; '*This (Working) Life*'; '*This (Writing) Life*'; '*This (Downsizing) Life*' and '*This (Milk of Human Kindness) Life*'. With downsizing often a topic of conversation when U3A members meet, Margaret Nelson's story '*This (Downsizing) Life*' has been included later in this newsletter.

Our theme for November is 'Triggers' - Keep a notebook close at hand this month in which to note any 'triggers' which led you to reminisce about a time in your life. You may have been talking to someone, watching television or a film, driving somewhere, reading a book. Choose one to three of these and write about the memories evoked – keeping the total words to 500 – 750 words. Send your stories in for our online collection beforehand and bring them along to share in person at our end of year afternoon 'coffee and cake' session at the Northo, (North Eastern Hotel, near the Railway crossing) from 2.30 to 4pm on Monday 23rd November. Hope to see you there - - if you get a moment, e-mail me at bevelee47@gmail.com to let me know you are coming.

Beverley Lee

Bird Watching

Birdwatching outing Thursday 12 November 2020

Our final activity for 2020 will be a morning visit to the natural features reserve on the Broken River, off Farrell Road just south of Benalla. Please meet at the car park behind the Seniors' building at 9.30am on Thursday 12 November. You will need a hat and sturdy footwear, a water bottle and binoculars if you have them.

We first visited this location in November 2019 and thoroughly enjoyed the visit and the birdlife to be found there. I hope the weather will allow us to get there this year, as our last 2 activities have been cancelled because of wet weather. But the countryside and our gardens have flourished with the rain.

At the moment, COVID restrictions require outdoor groups like ours to be limited to 10 people, but I am hopeful this restriction will be eased by 12 November.

Kathy Costello

Bushwalking

Easy Walks

Friend's Track, Warby Range, Wednesday, 7 October 2020

Due to the BOM forecast and the safety of members, this walk had to be postponed.

2020 has been a magnificent season for wildflowers. Whilst observing COVID-19 Protocols, during late winter and spring, a few members and I have been going out to Reef Hills to check the wildflowers and have fascinated by the emerging and blooming of numerous Reef Hills indigenous plants. Around 90 plants have been recorded over the decades.

Margaret Walsh

El Dorado - Wednesday 21 October 2020

On Wednesday 21 October 2020, 14 people travelled to El Dorado to complete two walks around the town on a fine pleasantly warm day.

One group met at the large dredge near the entrance of the town and after exploring this huge very interesting historic structure, followed the sealed trail into town. Along the way there were lots of interesting snippets of information on appropriately located interpretive boards. There were many colourful gardens to view along the way too with some vibrant colours abounding.

The second group met at the centre of town and, after reading the detailed boards that outlined the history of the town and the local area, proceeded along Reid's walk to the old swing bridge. This walk traversed a lot of the area the dredge had excavated when it first commenced operations in 1936. It also followed the course of Reedy Creek which the group were able to access in a couple of places. At the swing bridge, the group then returned to town via the road, once again viewing the interpretive signs.



Lunch was had at Victoria's smallest pub, the McEvoy Tavern. Two tables were set out on the lawn under a beautiful shady tree and everyone ordered from a lovely menu (the chips were 'to die for'). Saw one decadent dessert too!

After lunch the groups set out on the two walks in reverse. Both groups walked approximately 7 kms in total over the two routes.

Once the walks were completed, everyone returned to the pub and enjoyed an ice cream before returning to Benalla.

This was the first group booking the tavern had taken since Covid restrictions were eased and full credit to our hosts and their staff on making it such an enjoyable occasion. This town has quite a few other walks for walkers of all abilities to explore and the dredge is something not to be missed. At present the museum is not open due to Covid restrictions.

Wendy Sturgess

Coming Up:

Wednesday 4 November: Myrtleford - Ovens River Scenic Trail; Myrtleford Historic Walk and the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail

Myrtleford, nestled in the Ovens Valley with Mt Buffalo providing a dramatic backdrop, offers many interesting places to visit. Julie McNeill will take us on these diverse walks with something of interest to all walkers and abilities. The Ovens River Trail, also known as Myrtleford's Mosaic Trail, is a treasure cove of hidden art! This sealed path closely follows the Ovens River between Rotary and Apex Parks, passes through native bush and crosses the river twice. The Township Walk of Discovery highlights the significant historical aspect of Myrtleford's fascinating life ... settlement, war and industries. The Murray to Mountain Rail Trail - an opportunity to walk a section of this 95km trail that goes through the town!

We will be observing the relevant COVID-19 Protocols. Participants please contact Margaret Walshe Ph: 57623906/0427005202 or mwalshe20@gmail.com by Monday, 2 November 2020. Meet at the Seniors/ U3A car park, Fawcner Drive, Benalla, 9.15am for 9.30am departure.

Wednesday 18 November – Australian Botanical Gardens, Shepparton – (Late news) - Meet at 8 am for an 8.15 am departure start. Lunch at the Billabong Garden Complex and Kitchen Café, Shepparton. Members wishing to join us, contact Margaret on mwalshe20@gmail.com or 0427005202/57623906 by Monday, 16 November. More details on the [Easy Walks web page](#).

Wednesday 2 December – Christmas Gathering at a Winery

Please check your emails and the website for updated details of these walks as they are confirmed.

Margaret Walshe

Mid-Week Walks

Wednesday 14 October – SAWMILL SETTLEMENT

Gwenda Tait was our capable leader on our 7.4km walk on October 14th along the very scenic Plain Creek Track at Sawmill Settlement, on the road between Mansfield and Mt. Buller.

Signboards pointed out items of historic interest along the way. The gently sloping track followed the burbling fern-fringed creek, through the tall forest and up to the waterfall viewing platform, where we marvelled at the stunning sight of large volumes of water tumbling down the rocky slope - a bonus after the wet season. We were able to listen to the Creek as we sat on damp logs for lunch.



Afternoon tea in the Picnic Ground gave some of us a chance to cool our feet in the Delatite River. Bliss.

Thank you so much Gwenda for a really lovely walk.

Bev Thornell

Coming Up:

Wednesday 11 November MT TIMBERTOP S-4-3

The walk begins at the car park and follows a narrow path up to the summit. There are spectacular views of the Victorian Alps and the Delatite Valley.

Meet 9.15 am Leave Benalla - 9.30 am

Leader: Helen Spinks. Phone 0488 013 059

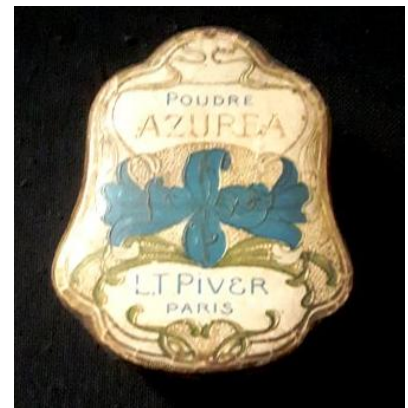
John Boehm

Collectors

Collectable chocolate, cosmetics and hosiery boxes are a rare find.

Antique or vintage cardboard often deteriorates over time, ripping, staining or rotting, so I was pleased to recently discover a small face powder box in good condition up for sale

I'm a vintage tin person but I keep an eye out for boxes as well and have a tiny collection - a 1950s Cussons Damask Rose box with a woman wearing a rose hat and holding a rose, a Cussons Spring Blossoms bath cubes box (age unknown) with flowers and two bath cubes inside and a 1960s Kolotex Clings hosiery box, with a man in a suit and a woman in a dress from the hips down and a black poodle looking up at them, containing unopened "seamless mesh nylons".



My new acquisition is a Poudre Azurea L.T. Piver Paris box, age unknown, although it has an art deco look.

Azurea was a perfume of rose, jasmine and iris, launched by L T Piver in 1897 and it came in a variety of other products including face powder, talc and soap.

In 1813, Louis Toussaint Piver took over a Paris perfume business which had been founded in 1774 and risen to become the official seller to the court of Louis XVI and the royal families of Europe.

The 1800s saw L T Piver grow to more than 100 branches around the world and loyal customers included the Bonapartes. Sculpted crystal bottles by Lalique and Baccarat were provided for L T Piver scents.

Jacquie Schwind

Creative Writing

Our Creative Writing class has continued with members selecting from a list of topics to write a story and then share with the class. After reading the stories, the members are providing feedback to the authors.

The topics for our October class were:

- **He pushed on, his head and shoulders bent against the unforgiving wind.**
- **She sat in silence waiting for the impending knock at the door.**
- **The tall figure emerged from the shadows.**

As often, the stories are varied, but at the same time there are some common themes. There is an element of sadness or stress, even while using the different prompts. There is one that was pure fun, called "A Homonymous Tail", where the idiosyncrasies of the English language are highlighted. Here the author has mixed up words having the same pronunciation but different spelling and meanings – and it started from beginning with the title using "Tail" in place of "Tale".

Our next class is scheduled for **9 November**. I have tried to provide prompts that are more open and can lead to stories of a happy or fun nature. The choices are:

- **[We] walked slowly down to the edge of the trees.**
- **She turned an excited gaze upon me**
- **At eight [Edwina] brought [me] a cup of tea**

We will continue to share our stories and feedback via email. If anyone else would like to write on any of these topics, please send them to me at jshirley@internode.on.net and I will forward to the class, and also share the stories from the class with you.

Joy Shirley

Demystifying Psychology

Thanks again to Deb and Bev for guiding us through impromptu and interesting discussions last month about the topics of the Trump brand, and similarities between Trump and cults. (See Cult criteria at <http://cultresearch.org/help/characteristics-associated-with-cults/>).

In February 2020 BC (Before Corona), we looked at links between Psychology and many other fields, for example, politics, law, and education. The link with politics has been very evident as we investigated the psychology of the President and voter behaviour.

So, it almost seemed the natural order of things to look at one of the most frequently cited presidential “facts” (after “great again”) - Fake News.

Here is what we chatted about.

President Donald Trump regularly warns against Fake News and will not cooperate with journalists he believes are peddlers of such news. At the same time, he uses social media to promote his views (facts) in a way that no previous President ever has. He likely would not see himself as a peddler of fake news.

“Fake News” is not new. In the era when newspapers and radio were primary sources of information it was generally understood that the views of the owners of these enterprises influenced the angle of the “facts”. Fast forward to 2020 and internet’s almost instant access to a myriad of information and sources (most purporting to be reliable, scouts honor), then add Trumps focus on social media, and voila “Fake News”.

Fake News is untrue information presented as news. The aim of fake news is to damage the reputation of a person or entity or make money through advertising revenue.

Fake News is not viewed as good news. “Fake news poisons the atmosphere that we all operate in. Because fake news exists, audiences are now doubtful about all news. It has really damaged the relationship between audience members and the media.” (Verashni Pillay, Editor-in-Chief, Huffington Post, South Africa. The UNESCO Courier, 2017)

To tease out the notion of Fake News we looked at:

1. Three types of Fake News
2. Media literacy amongst Australian Children.
3. Sources of news for Australians aged 14+years
4. How to tell fake news from real news
5. Examples of the influence fake news:
 - 2016 US Elections where fake news articles outperformed real news
 - On-line dating

Checking the veracity of news is complex. Parents, teachers, and the wider community have a daunting task ahead as children/grandchildren learn to filter fake from reliable amongst a huge swathe of information - which is available at the touch of a button at any hour of the day.

As always, if your interest has been piqued, there are references on the website and in the PowerPoints.

Nearing the end of the year has stirred my reflection on the phenomenon called “2020” and the zillion unexpected opportunities that have arisen. I’d like to give a huge shout out to everyone who has ever joined in this experimental class format, suggested discussion topics in the absence of a content plan, and who have helped us iron out crinkles as we mastered Zoom (relative to previous experience). Who would have thought?

Jane Rushworth

Exploring the Universe

The Orion Nebula, our nearest Star Nursery.

A Nebula is an enormous cloud of dust and gas in space. The Mayan culture believed that the glowing Orion Nebula was the cosmic fire of creation. Its light is visible to the naked eye as a fuzzy patch but can be viewed as a distinct shape through a good telescope.

In the night sky, the constellation of Orion the Hunter is easily identified by the group of stars we call the saucepan. The three bright stars that form the base of the saucepan are Orion’s belt and the handle is his sword. Orion is high in the sky during summer months.

In the Southern hemisphere we view the constellations upside down, so Orion is standing on his head. Half way up the handle of the saucepan is the Orion nebula, also known as the Great Nebula. (Catalogue: Messier 42) This is our nearest star nursery, some 1,334 light years away from Earth

This is an emission nebula and the light we see is from gas that has been illuminated by ionisation from ultraviolet radiation from very hot stars.

Here massive stars shed their light illuminating their surroundings; young protostars cocooned in dust can be discovered by the powerful infrared telescopes that probe these areas. There are stars of all descriptions including the brown dwarf stars that we wrote about last month.



In 2016 an International team used the Hawk-I instrument on the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope for the deepest and most comprehensive study of the Orion Nebula (pictured above.) It revealed an abundance of brown dwarfs and planetary mass objects.

Leading scientist Holger Drass said, "Our result feels to me like a glimpse into a new era of planet and star formation science. The huge number of free-floating planets at our current observational limit is giving me hope that we will discover a wealth of smaller Earth-sized planets." The technology to study these planets is not available yet but is the goal of the European Extremely Large Telescope which is still under construction in the Atacama Desert in Chile and scheduled to operate in 2024

Not all dwarf stars are classified as brown. They come in different phases of halted evolution, restricted by the amount of gas they have absorbed in their infancy.

Bev Morton

Film and Literature

We watched another wide range of films during October, although a couple of themes are apparent. Many of them are biographical with two relevant to recent occurrences – the deaths of Helen Reddy and Ruth Bader Ginsberg. And there are a couple of Australian films included. I have included the ratings that members of the group have given for the films, although not everyone may agree with these as each of us looks for different things from the films we are watching.

Skin (2008): a biographical drama, a fictionalised retelling of the life of Sandra Laing, born to white Afrikaner parents, but classed as black in the apartheid era because of her dark skin. Rated as 3-4/5.

I am Woman (2019): This is a biographical drama, telling the story of Helen Reddy's life as she moves to the US to start her recording career. Rated as 3 out of 5.

Julie & Julia (2009) Julia Child's story of her start in the cooking profession is intertwined with blogger Julie Powell's 2002 challenge to cook all the recipes in Child's first book. Rated as 4/5.

Miss Fisher and the Crypt of Tears (2020): Australian mystery adventure film based on the Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries television series and the series of Phryne Fisher novels written by Kerry Greenwood. Rated as 3/5.

Two hands (1999): a 1999 Australian Comedy/Crime movie starring Heath Ledger, Bryan Brown, Rose Byrne, David Field and Susie Porter. A 19-year-old finds himself in debt to a local gangster when some gang loot disappears and sets him on the run from thugs. Rated as 3/5.

On the Basis of Sex (2018): The true story of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, her struggles for equal rights, and the early cases of a historic career that lead to her nomination and confirmation as U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice. Rated as 3.5/5.

And one member of the class provided some comments on a book read recently – **"The French Photographer"**, the story of a war correspondent during WW2. A great read.

We are continuing with this approach for the class as the group is enjoying the variety of films and comments. We would welcome anyone who wishes to participate by sharing thoughts about films they

have watched and interested in hearing comments about films others have watched. You can send me a message on jshirley@internode.on.net. Contributions are due by **11 November** for our next “class”.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation



With Mother Nature at her best this spring, Benalla's roses are looking fantastic. A must see are the roses at Rambling Rose café's car park garden and Benalla's Rose Gardens.

With the end of year coming up we can look forward to next year. Hopefully we can visit many lovely gardens once again. I have missed meeting up with you all.

Happy Gardening!

Gwen Turner



German

As I write this, the group are looking forward to meeting up as a whole for the first time in person since February. We will be taking parts in reading the 4 act play 'Romulus der Grosse' by Friedrich Dürrenmatt. Such an ambitious venture would not have occurred without the social deprivation of the pandemic, but we have been gradually preparing between May and August at a rate of one act per month.

It will be good to meet our new member, Graham Pickering, but sad to farewell Bronwyn Forman. Bronwyn has been a conscientious participant since the inception of the group. Notably, Bronwyn was one of the main people to open our eyes to the volume of the material on the internet and to typing and proof-reading the play. Her pleasant and friendly personality will be missed and we wish her all the best for her new life in W.A.

As the final contributions regarding our personal experiences coping with coronavirus come in, Janet will shortly collate them and deliver them to each contributor's inbox in November.

Pauline Bailey

Investment

During October we had two enjoyable Investment meetings using Zoom. The benefits of a group such as ours is that the less experienced can ask questions about aspects they need help with, while the more experienced can discuss financial aspects which are necessary to conform to various legal requirements but can be irritating in their implementation. We have seen both these aspects demonstrated in the last month, and both make our meetings more beneficial and enjoyable.

In our second meeting we discussed a group of 16 shares which had made new highs this month, and which may provide inspiration for the investor. We also looked at a very popular stock during the last month which had incredible gains, but also posed large risk.

Using Email to distribute information before our meetings allows members to raise relevant questions when we meet. Our group has certainly maintained our interest in the share market during 2020 by using Zoom. However, we appreciate that Zoom does not suit all our members, and we look forward to resuming face to face meetings when we are allowed back into the Seniors Complex.

Our next Investment meeting using Zoom will be on Friday 6th November 2020 at 2pm

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

I haven't done a book report as such this month, apart from me reading *The Butterfly Room* by Lucinda Riley, **BUT** I would like to have a final LET'S TALK BOOKS for 2020 in December. The plan at the moment is to meet under the Library on **Tuesday 1st December at 2 p.m.** Bring your own chair and a drink if required. It would be really nice to just meet and have a chat and talk about plans for next year. I will contact you all personally before then, please don't feel you have to come if you are still uncomfortable being among others.

Geraldine McCorkell

Meet and Mingle



The 'Meet and Mingle' get-together in the Gardens on the Wednesday 21st October was most enjoyable. We plan to continue these social events, with the next gathering to be held on Tuesday November 10th from 10 – 11.30, again in the Benalla Gardens near the Art Gallery. We hope to see you there – bring your own chair and morning tea.

Music Appreciation

After the smorgasbord of music provided by the MSO in the month of September, October was more like having a set menu, with only a handful of composers represented in the month's offerings.

To continue the analogy: appetisers courtesy of Francis Poulenc, and Benjamin Britten, entrees by way of Johannes Brahms and Richard Strauss, Mains per Gustav Mahler and Antonin Dvorak, and desserts in both sessions provided by Beethoven (of course) comprised the menus. Two diverse programmes on each occasion with music stretching from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. It's all on the Music Appreciation page of the U3A website with YouTube links to the performances where I'm sure you will find something to satisfy your musical taste if not your appetite for more. Bon appetit!

Bill Squire

Page Turners

After considerable thought, I have decided to resign as convener of our group. Fortunately, Meg Dillon has agreed to take over, and her experience and expertise will ensure the book group continues to prosper. Seeing that we still have a book list from this year, it is proposed that we use it in 2021, when, hopefully book group will resume, and we will have the pleasure of discussing the remaining books, which hopefully you will have read. Our first book will be: *Instructions for a heatwave*, by Maggie O'Farrell.

I hope you have all survived this period of isolation and are fit and well.

Helen Scheller

Patchwork

Photographs have started to arrive for the 'Online Exhibition' of patchwork to be launched on the website on Wednesday 18th of November.

Pre-Covid, our quilt exhibition would have been on show at November's Meet and Mingle. This year it's online!

If you need help with photographing your work; or are happy for a photograph to be taken of you working on your patchwork if your quilted work isn't finished in time, please contact Dorothy on 0412 263 071 or Bev on 5762 8171.

Dorothy Webber

Politics and Current Affairs

Such an amazing year and such frustration that we cannot share our views. U3A is working on access to a venue next year whilst the Seniors' is revamped to provide us with an extra room, see the president's report, it's not political!

Daniel Andrews forced a Minister to resign over the Hotel debacle, she went protesting that he also was at fault. The Public Service Head of the Department also resigned. Surprisingly Andrews seemed to take little political damage, on the other hand his daily lengthy news conferences must be taking an enormous toll on him.

The NSW Premier also took some political hits as her personal life became public as a secret relationship with MP Daryl Maguire became headline news. Maguire's deals were exposed by the NSW ICAC (anti-corruption commission) exposed his financial deals. Gladys Berejiklian survived no-confidence motions and relentless probing by the press. She survived, but possibly will stand down before the next election in a few years' time. It should raise the issue of whether MPs can have second jobs or business interests.

A NSW land purchase for the new airport drew cries for a Federal anti-corruption body to investigate why this land was so overpriced. Morrison seemed to think that the Government was doing all it could tackling the virus and could not deal with this as well. The draft bill was with the A.G. before the virus erupted. Stunning to think such an enormous organization cannot perform multiple tasks especially as the States do much of the work. Things changed when the head of the Post rewarded her executives with watches. She told the Senate investigation were valued at \$3,000 each, in fact they were worth double that. Morrison demanded she stand down immediately. Then the newly appointed head of ASIC was found to have massively overspent on his allowances, he says he will pay it back. This is the head of the corporate watch dog, how about dismissing him for his failings and fine him?

America continues to astound and if you think it will be all over soon think again. Trump has his 3rd Pick for the Supreme Court almost in place. If he is not declared the winner expect him to challenge in the Court. Even more frightening are some of the militia groups who parade with their heavy weapons outside polling stations as they try and intimidate voters. One group was busted by the FBI for planning to kidnap a State Governor who displeased them and kill some of her police chiefs. At least the debate between Kamala Harris and Mike Pence was reasonable if you don't mind the tactic of talking over your opponent, now where is that mute button?

Terry Case

Singing for Fun

I have spoken with several Singing for Fun members and have heard about three members who have been on the sick list.

One of our leaders, Faith Hicks told me quite enthusiastically about her plane ride down to Essendon airport on route to the Royal Melbourne Hospital. Faith had a pacemaker inserted there, and returned to Benalla after a few days. Faith had lots of good things to say about the follow up from Benalla Health, and is now being monitored by the Wangaratta cardiology unit.

Another member of our group, Jean Dyer, also received excellent follow up by Benalla Health after her recent hip replacement at Wangaratta private hospital. Jean is happy with her mobility and has received several visits from her granddaughter Emily who is nursing at Shepparton hospital.

Mary Dunnachie, who has been a member of the soprano team for many years, is also home after a fall which saw her in both Benalla Health and North East Health at Wangaratta.

Our best wishes to all members of the Singing for Fun group.

Margaret Jenkins

Tech Savvy Family Research

During the Covid period of social isolation and lockdown, Tech Savvy Family Researcher Barry O'Connor completed an extensive family research project which culminated in his being able, with his brother and some friends, to place a headstone on the previously unmarked grave of his grandmother in Manangatang and great grandmother in Swan Hill. A member of the 'As Time Goes By' memoir writing group, Barry chose to write about his great grandparents' story this month, calling his story 'This (Extraordinary) Life'. It's on the website – just type 'This (Extraordinary) Life' into the search box.

In the absence of family research classes and fresh episodes of 'Who Do You Think You Are', a number of class members have reported enjoying 'Every Family Has A Secret' on SBS. Series 1 is available on SBS On Demand until November 26, 2020; while Series 2 is available until 21 September 2021. It is good to hear there is going to be another series.

Beverley Lee

Wine Appreciation

We've heard 'around the traps' that members have resumed happily supporting the local wine industry, with enjoyable visits for long lunches over the Cup Day long weekend to Sam Miranda and Tallis Wines reported on. If the numbers in groups allowed to gather continue to be increased, it may not be too long before the Wine Appreciation group will be able meet again.

The criteria explained by Heather and Keith in our June Newsletter for the resumption of group visits to wineries—"when members can enjoy sitting at a restaurant together. We're not interested until the situation is back closer to normal. It might be a couple of months. We're not interested in social distancing when we are meeting to have a social occasion."

The situation is gradually moving 'back closer to normal'. Fingers crossed.

Covid Musings #1

'As Time Goes By' group member Margaret Nelson held high hopes of downsizing during the pandemic.

'This (Downsizing) Life'

This should be my downsizing year. As we age, we think of moving to a smaller house and garden, (or no garden), disposing of our clutter so our children won't have to cope with it. I look at my cupboards and wonder where to start. There are programs on TV about people who are compulsive hoarders—I think I'm heading that way too!

I look in my wardrobe and wonder where to start, several favourite jumpers are at least 30 years old, but they made better quality woollens then—pure wool with no synthetic added. On the next shelf I find scores of T shirts and trousers. I've got to keep old clothes for gardening and around the farm.

I've heard that when you buy a new article of clothing an old one should be thrown out. Not me! On the back of the top shelf is a case containing my wedding dress (60 years), a lace creation with a bouffant skirt. I kept it thinking one of my daughters may have worn it, but alas, they weren't the same size as me, and lace was out of fashion. Perhaps one of my granddaughters will like it?

With COVID we don't go out so we don't need anything flash to wear, and when you are over 80, comfort comes before fashion! And, some of those old clothes are comfortable!

I move on to the linen cupboard. Apart from linen, there are stacks of photo albums, vases, Xmas decorations and records, a lot of which I've inherited from my mother. I look at the photos of family and holidays and I get very sentimental and find it hard to throw anything out. The Xmas decorations must go, apart from finding it a bother to hang tinsel, there possibly will not be a family gathering here this year due to COVID isolation. Anything worthwhile on records could be transferred to CD's. Might manage to throw something out here!

Next I move to my "sewing room" (bedroom 4). Here I find two sewing machines plus my Nana's old treadle Singer machine. Sentimentality rules again, after all, that old machine has lots of drawer space! The wardrobes bulge with material scraps and craft books that only a quilter would understand. Those scraps, no matter how small, might be useful one day. Other craft gear of the past,—beads, ribbons, buttons, wool and paints I might use one day, (when I'm really old).

I wander out to the bin with a small bag of rubbish, the whole exercise was like shifting the deck chairs on the Titanic. I need a cup of tea and a sit down! Was it Scarlet O'Hara who said "Tomorrow is another day"?

Margaret Nelson

As Time Goes By, October 2020

Covid Musings #2

Over the past few months we've been following Tech Savvy Talks Les Rogers' progress using an automatic drip-fed hydroponic system to improve his strike record in successfully growing tomatoes. Here is Les's latest report:

"My tomato factory has gone crazy with the onset of the warm weather and there are lots of flowers and some tomatoes. They are about 1.5 metres high. There seems to be a bit more to it than just rubbing the flowers with the back of an electric toothbrush to set fruit. The amount of light seems to be important too and it's a bit hard to illuminate all the flowers, so the fruiting has been a bit patchy. I need to cut away a lot of the foliage below the fruit and remove unwanted growth. Cheers, Les".



We recently received a report from Les on a new covid project which began - *"Something else to do during enforced covid timewasting"...*

"I decided to grow some Banksias from seed since there is currently a shortage of stock at nurseries. Banksias require patience. This is a Banksia Hookeriana seed after 6 weeks. It was helped on its way by my son making me some smoked paper in his bacon smoker, and this was immersed in water to produce smoky water which was used to treat the seeds. Also a seed just breaking dormancy after 4 weeks using the "paper towel" in a glass method, prior to planting in seed raising mix. I had tried to grow Banksias years ago before the internet was invented with complete lack of success. Cheers, Les."



Good luck, Les!

What's On

Wednesday, 4 November

9:15am Easy Walks - Myrtleford - Ovens River

10:00am Demystifying Psychology Zoom Group

Friday, 6 November

10:00am Sustainability – Zoom

10.45am German

2:00pm Investment - Zoom Meeting

Monday, 9 November

2:00pm Creative Writing - sharing stories by email

Tuesday, 10 November

10:00am Social Gathering at the Gardens

Wednesday, 11 November

9:15am Mid-Week Walks - Mt Timbertop

5:00pm Film and Literature - Contributions Due

Thursday, 12 November

9:30am Birdwatching - Natural Features Reserve

Friday, 13 November

10:00am Music Appreciation

Wednesday, 18 November

9:00am Patchwork - Online Exhibition - Launch

8:00 am Easy Walks – Australian Botanical Gardens, Shepparton – refer email/website updates

10.45am German

2:00pm Coin Collectors – TBA*

Friday, 20 November

10:00am Sustainability – Zoom meeting

1:00pm Demystifying Psychology Zoom Group

3:15pm Investment - Zoom Meeting

Monday, 23 November

2:30pm As Time Goes By @ the Northo –‘Triggers’

Tuesday, 24 November

10:00am Politics & Current Affairs - TBA*

Wednesday, 25 November

10:00am Recorder Group - TBA*

Thursday, 26 November

10.45am German

10:00am Garden Appreciation - TBA*

Friday, 27 November

10:00am Music Appreciation

Tuesday, 1 December

2:00pm Let's Talk Books - Meeting under the library – BYO chair, drink if required

Wednesday, 2 December

9:30am Easy Walks – Christmas Gathering at a Winery - check emails & website updates

10:30am Demystifying Psychology Zoom Group

Friday, 4 December

10:00am Sustainability – Zoom Meeting

2:00pm Investment - Zoom Meeting

***TBA –To Be Advised - Please watch emails & website for updates.**

