



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – November 2022

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Please send reports for the newsletter to newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com by 25 November 2022

President's Report

When reading the last Newsletter, I was struck by the huge variety of activities that our U3A Benalla groups provide. Congratulations and thank you to all our Convenors for all the thought and effort you put into arranging these activities and outings. The fact that our members enjoy these activities so much was further cemented when a member asked me what was happening over the Christmas break.

The Program Committee, consisting of Geraldine McCorkell, Bev Lee, Len Jeffers and myself, met in late October and have endorsed a number of new programs for 2023. The first of these is "The Sky's the Limit" which will be convened by Claire Rudolph who has a background as a glider pilot. Sessions will include guest speakers with a background in aviation and stories to tell.

Heather Wallace, who has a background in music, will convene "Ukes4Fun" in 2023. This weekly hour-long session will provide instruction on the ukulele including how to hold, tune and play simple chords. You will need a ukulele of reasonable quality, a music stand and a tuner. After basic instruction, the group will go onto playing tunes and jamming sessions.

"The Wise Guys Book Group", a book group catering predominantly for men's interests, will be starting in 2023. Book titles will be drawn largely from non-fiction including Biography/Memoir, Exploration, Warfare, Spy craft, Politics, Mystery and Crime. David Palmer, who has run Stock and Land very successfully for a number of years, will be convening this group.

Another group which is set to start in 2023 is a Photography group. This monthly class is for instruction, hands on participation and social fun. We are very pleased to announce that Rene Martens has agreed to convene the six sessions of this group in Semester 1.

Meg Dillon has kindly offered to convene the 'The Jane Austen Book Club' in 2023. Books will include "Sense and Sensibility", "Pride and Prejudice", "Mansfield Park", "Emma", "Northanger Abbey" and "Persuasion".

We are also pleased to announce a 'Tech Savvy Help' group. The course is meant for those participants with rusty skills who feel overwhelmed and would like access to someone to actively assist them through problem solving over a current hurdle. Jenny Sawyer and Robyn Lukey have agreed to guide participants through their particular problem.

In the last few days, we have an offer from Julie McNeill of a new course titled 'Wildflowers and Fungi of North Eastern Victoria'. Julie observed the need for this five-session course when she saw the keen interest of Easy Walk's members in wildflowers. The course will include trips to the Reef Hills and Warbys as well as the occasional guest speaker and is planned for second semester.

Jane Rushworth will also be offering the five session 'Demystifying Psychology' course in second semester.

What a line up for 2023 to go with our current varied courses!

For the immediate future can I remind you of our special Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 16th November at 10am when there will be a concert by both the Recorder Group and the Singing for Fun group as well as a

display by the Patchwork group, which is always worth seeing. Please bring your family and friends for this fun filled morning.

Finally, a reminder about our Christmas lunch to be held at the King River Café on Wednesday 23 November. A bus will leave Benalla Bus Lines at 11am for those who wish to travel by bus. Forms were included in last month's Newsletter. Money can be left at RedB4 books by November 9th – don't forget to put your name on the envelope.

Hope to see you at the King River Café!

Margaret Jenkins, President

Celebrating 'Get Online Week' in October!



Group Reports

Art Appreciation

In early October we listened to a very interesting talk, **'Curating Migrant Stories'**, where History and Art came together. The history of Sikhs in Benalla is not well known, and we were privileged to hear some of their story from the curator of the exhibition Amrit Gill. M/s Gill is extremely well versed in some of our local history, and we enjoyed every minute of her lecture. She is an extremely competent and articulate curator. We learned that a local Hawker Siva Singh organised the first complete reading of the Sikh Holy Text in Australia. This took place at Reef Hills in the early 20th century and was attended by many notable Sikh figures. And luckily a Press Photographer as well. The reading took approximately 40 hours to complete and is now treated as Historic. Siva Singh came to Australia from Singapore before Federation as a British Subject. Unfortunately, he was affected by the Federal Government putting into place the White Australia Policy after Federation and he had his citizenship and voting rights withdrawn. He would have been threatened with deportation. He objected to this and after many battles it ended in the High Court and his rights were restored. Thankfully he persisted for many years against the forces of adversity.

My recollection of Indian Hawkers in the local area was that they were always held in affection and well respected. Of course, they knew everyone, and everyone knew them. I cannot recall anyone who would have objected to them being citizens.

M/s Gill also explained the meaning behind the exhibits on show. The Art on exhibition is of a symbolic type and not normally shown in Art Galleries. The exhibits are mostly craft inspired. Punjabi women have a special skill in needlework and this method was incorporated in producing the Artworks on display. The symbols shown in the Artworks are attempting to incorporate Punjabi Culture into western understanding.

Coming up at **'First Mondays'** on **Monday 7 November** from 10-11am, **'I Wish I'd Told You'**, centres on deaf voices, identity, language and culture. In an immersive exhibition of large-scale video projections, Auslan storytellers affirm Deaf experiences and complex identities, which bring visitors into a Deaf world.

Neville Gibb

'As Time Goes By'

October's icebreaker involved chatting with another person about **memories of trains in our lives**, a topic inspired by a photograph of the Flinders Street Clocks during Melbourne (or visiting Melbourne) childhoods. Ray's memories of incidents involving trains and childhood friends at the Villa Maria Children's Home in Ballarat were quite delightful!

A delicious range of **'This (.....) Life'** stories were on October's menu - 'This (Virtual) Life', 'This (Fortunate) Life', 'This (Nomadic) Life', 'This (Dangerous) Life', 'This (Retirement) Life', 'This (King and I) Life', 'This (Number 13) Life', 'This (Reading) Life' and 'This (Long) Life'.

Thank you, everyone, for serving up such intriguing and engaging stories for our shared delectation!



In his story, **'The Sky's the Limit'**, Barry described the overwhelming response of the Swanpool community to the opportunity to host 'The Bald Archy' Exhibition and the outcomes they achieved before moving on to design and deliver the enormously successful SCRAP Art Exhibition. Marg Nelson also shared a most engaging story describing the achievement of her **'Bucket List'** item "visiting the Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Park in the USA".

Coming up in November – **'Triggers'** – 'Our task for our last session for the year is to keep a notebook close by in which we note any 'triggers' which lead us to reminisce about a time in our lives. We may be talking to someone, watching television or a film, driving somewhere, reading a book. We are to choose one to three of these and write about the memories evoked – keeping the total words to 500 – 750 words". -

The alternative topic, or perhaps one to keep for December, is **'One Moment This Year'**. The brief - 'Looking back on this year, what single moment stands out for you? Whether it be loss, love, discovery or disappointment, share your unforgettable moment.'

Bev Lee

Be Connected



On Wednesday 19th October, following Meet and Mingle, we went on to our Get Online Week function which was supported by the Good Things Foundation who run the Be Connected program. We talked about the benefits of the Be Connected program and the variety of Topics that are available in the Topic Library. Topics can be accessed through the website www.beconnected.esafety.gov.au

A paper copy of these topics was given to those who attended so that they can access any topic which they required help with at home.

The theme of this Get Online Week program was *'Try One Thing'*. Jenny Sawyer who runs our Apple Beginners class then demonstrated being able to buy books online. She went through the process of selecting an appropriate website, and then choosing the most suitable version of a children's book. Jenny walked us through the payment process using PayPal.

Jenny also talked about using Borrow Box to download books and audio books from the local library and being able to use these for up to 14 days.

After Jenny's talk we all enjoyed a delicious lunch on tables placed under the veranda of the Senior's centre.

Thank you to everyone for a very enjoyable morning.

The Be Connected regular program is not running in November due to lack of participants. However, some of the new people who attended *'Try One Thing'* are participating in Robyn Lukey's Android group for the remainder of 2022.

Be Connected will recommence in February 2023.



Margaret Jenkins

Bird Watching

Unfortunately, our October outing to the northern part of the Warby Ranges was cancelled due to wet weather. It's hard to plan outdoor activities with any confidence during our soggy spring. Let's hope we have some fine weather for our last activity for this year.

October has brought Dollarbirds back to Lake Benalla from northern Australia. Listen for their loud cackling calls, as they fly above the tree tops catching insects on the wing. In flight they have a large white patch under each wing. They are chunky birds, dark blue-green in colour and with a bright red bill. Dollarbirds are spring breeding migrants to northern Victoria and raise their young in hollows in the River Red Gums around the lake.

Next outing to Nason Springs, Warby Ranges Thursday 10 November 2022

This outing to Nason Springs on 10 November takes us to Taminick Gap Road in the southern part of the Warbys, north of Glenrowan. It is a good birding spot, where the rocky slopes of the range meet the paddocks. We'll also be looking for some spring wildflowers.

Please meet in the car park behind the Seniors building at 9.30am. Access is from the continuation of Carrier St next to the Fire Station or via the lane past the side entrance to the Seniors building. Bring any food and drink you require for the morning, wear sturdy shoes and a hat. Insect repellent may also be useful. Binoculars if you have them will add to your ability to identify birds in the field.

Kathy Costello 0447 625 755

Brain Games

Some (slightly) easier puzzles this month including tech savvy lingo (fyi) and cryptic clues with a gathering whose number was back nearer full strength.

Elsbeth Maconachie

Chat n' Chew

We had a lovely lunch at Ella Goose in October and will definitely go there again. November is, of course, U3A Benalla's Christmas lunch so our next Chat and Chew will be on Friday 17th February 2023, at the Royal Hotel. 2023! Wow! Where has 2022 gone? Merry Christmas everyone! Stay safe.

Lorraine Knox

Coin Collectors

Coin Collectors met on 17th October with seven members in attendance including a visitor. I am pleased to say that our visitor, a member of Benalla U3A got to hear about us through the Newsletter.

As usual there were a number of interesting coins presented to the Group due to their uniqueness, color, condition or rarity. These included:

- Foreign coins with a central formed hole brought along by a number of members. These coins were from PNG and Palestine and characteristically were made from a very light alloy metal. The purpose of the hole was keenly debated.
- A very nice 1986 English proof coin set was sent around the table for viewing.
- A continued flavor of foreign coins saw a two and half cent coin dated 1858 from the Netherlands. Also presented was an Indian 1958 square Rupee.
- A unique coin presented was a 50cent piece celebrating 75th anniversary of the Australian Signals Directorate. These coins contained a word code stamped into its outer edge.
- A member purchased a PNC 2021 \$1 coin celebrating Queen Elizabeth's 95th Birthday and 2022 \$1 coin celebrating The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Both coins are presented with first day issue stamps. These coins purchased in early 2022 from the Benalla Post Office for \$17.95 each are now advertised on e-bay from \$150 to \$200 each.

A number of very high-quality coins were circulated for inspection, contained in individual sealed and marked cases. This is to protect the integrity of the classification. The scale is called the Sheldon Scale with MS70 the highest rating denoting a perfect uncirculated coin.

Our new members are keen to learn about coin collecting and gaining interest in old family coins they have in their possession. The Group has a number of authoritative books on Australian Coins and Notes that can be borrowed.

If you have coins you would like to show the Group or get advice on, then we welcome you to join us the third Monday in the month commencing at 1.30pm.

Doug Smith

Collectors

It was an engrossing time at our meeting on October 3rd discussing a collection of books brought in by members. It was noted that many of the older books did not have the date of publication recorded and we often identified their age by the names/gift inscriptions inside.

School: - Junior one-act plays performed at Speech Nights; Nelson's Highroads Dictionary from about 1925 and used subsequently by two other family members; 50th School Reunion from Our Ladies College, Heidelberg

Craft: – many publications related to spinning and dying methods; "The Art of Annemeike Mein" a beautifully illustrated book of her work

Home/Cookery: - Mrs Beeton's Cookbook 1923; Martha Gardener's Book of Household Hints (featured on radio and TV); CWA Handy Hints; trees and shrubs

Biographies: Kidman – the Forgotten King; Nothing Over Half a Crown – re founder of G. J. Coles

Bibles: 1953 issue given to British School Children on the occasion of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II; a Bible with a Mother of Pearl Cover given as a wedding present; another from 1926 on becoming a member of the Box Hill Masonic Lodge

Novels: - Seven Little Australians (about 1912 Ethel Turner); Time Machine (H. G. Wells); The Prophecies of Nostradamus; The Tower Rooms (about 1926 Mary Grant Bruce); Arthur Conan Doyle

Poetry/Other: Robbie Burns poetry with a tartan cover; 1870 A Casquet of Gems; 1956 Melbourne Olympics picture book; Cotswolds Berkshire 1859 - The Scouring of the White Horse

Children: Black Beauty (Anna Sewell – gift from grandparents); Winnie the Pooh (a beautiful and much loved pop-up book); The Black Lamb (Elisabeth Macintyre – Leicester saves his white lamb sister Mollie from the dingoes' camp).



Janet Gourley

Community Singing

At the October Community Singing Brian Greed chose our regular Book 1 for the first session. This has a great lot of Sing a Long songs which everyone enjoyed.

For the second session we used Sammy Song Book No 2 which has several Australian, Irish and Scottish songs which everyone knew.

At the end of the morning everyone gave Brian a spontaneous round of applause to thank him for his great playing of all the songs.

The next Community Singing will be on Thursday 24th November at 10am at the Hub at Cooida. All welcome.

Margaret Jenkins

Creative Writing

A variety of structures and genres this month for Creative Writing - monologues, poetry, reflections on a time spent in isolation, plays on words, visual descriptions, answers to questions, and a 'did she or did she not do it' poser.

And all this from prompts that talked about "magic," "beasts" and "spring!"

As always plentiful discussion as to the hows and whys of writing, the roles of personal experience and imagination, and the difficulties in starting and fulfilling one's ideas in writing.

November prompts include:

- The lady with a troubled look on her face
- Daffodils danced in the breeze, their yellow trumpets exuding music to willing listeners.
- The reflections on the still water of the lake did not reveal what lay underneath.

Which would fire your imagination?

Pat Treleaven

Easy Walks

Reef Hills

The best made plans.....as we all watched the weather reports to see if our much anticipated Friends Track Walk would go ahead, it became apparent that once again the rain and uncertain forecast had the better of us.

Deciding that a walk through the Reef Hills would be a safer option, ten of us set out and enjoyed a morning of wildflower spotting before the rain set in again.

Our photographers were busy, some beautiful flowers were identified, and we even managed a picnic lunch!

Here's hoping we will finally make it onto the Friends' Track in 2023.



Wednesday 2nd November: Winton Wetlands

This is planned to be an exploration of some of the Wetlands trails, with a BYO picnic lunch at Green's Hill. Totalling about 8km, we can only hope that the weather gods are kind to us on the day, as the trails are currently...wet. Bev Thornell will guide us along the walk, including the sculpture trail, and there will no doubt be plenty to interest the photographers and the birdwatchers. The day will finish with afternoon tea at the cafe, and a discussion of walks for 2023.

We will leave the Seniors' carpark, Fawckner Drive, at 9.30am.

Please confirm with Glen on 0431201077 or gchess@hotmail.com by Monday 31 October. BYO picnic lunch, drink, hat and comfortable shoes.

Car sharing is usually available for all walks for a small contribution.

Wednesday 7th December

Time for us to celebrate the completion of another year of walking, with a lunch at the Tatong Tavern. While there is no walk planned, it will be good to reminisce about our triumphs over both covid and the weather, and the many enjoyable walks we have had.

Leaving the Seniors' carpark at 12 noon, it would be appreciated if people could advise numbers to Glen by 23rd November. Partners are welcome.

Glen Chessells, Julie McNeill

Exercises for Fun

Research shows Exercise that is completed in a social setting, or in a small group, or even with a friend, is very good for improving mental health and your quality of life. So come along on Monday 9.30am to Seniors Hall, bring a friend, and join us in our Exercise group. Come and have fun.

Our last Class for this year will be on 28th November, when we will celebrate the Christmas break with a morning tea; so kindly bring along a plate to share.

Helen Jeffree

Exploring the Universe

Asteroids and the Murchison Meteorite.

A chunk from a large, very rare carbon rich asteroid 4.6 billion years old exploded when it entered the Earth's atmosphere over Murchison in Victoria on September 26th. 1969.

The residents heard a series of sonic booms high above in the blue sky. They looked up and saw a puff of blue smoke. In those days they had no way of finding out what it was. Everywhere there was a strange smell like methylated spirits. Our oldest known material had just landed on Earth!

A pristine and primitive left over from the formation of the Solar System the meteorite had travelled more than a million miles from the outer asteroid belt. It also contained grains of stardust up to 7 billion years old that had been expelled from dying stars in the early Universe.

Chunks of a strange charcoal like substance were scattered across the paddocks. On analysis they were found to contain more than 80 amino acids, sugars, alcohols and organic molecules found in the building blocks of life. This is the prebiotic chemistry that was delivered in the Earth's early history.

We watched scientific film of the importance of the Murchison Meteorite and a Catalyst episode of 'The Asteroid Hunters' and their travels to huge craters formed from meteorite strikes in the Northern Territory. Last month in the cause of planetary defence, NASA successfully crashed a spacecraft that was travelling at 14,000 miles per hour into an asteroid! The aim was to see if it could alter and slow the orbit of an asteroid that was orbiting a larger chunk of rock. Cameras on the space craft and in space monitored the event.

The strike moved the asteroid 90 degrees from the previous orbit and changed the velocity by about 640 meters per day. This means that an object could be moved an Earth sized distance in about 30 years. A viable technique.

References: Phillip Heck, NASA, ABC, Scott Manley.

Rupe gave a power point presentation and discussion on the different types of meteorites and where they were found. Of interest to us were the slides of Wolf Crater in Western Australia and the site of the Chicxulub impact 66 million years ago that caused the demise of the dinosaurs. The crater now buried beneath the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico was 160 km in diameter and 18 km deep!

The Murchison Meteorite. The Rarest of Meteorites. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4tP7I0XA8Q>

Did asteroids kick start life on Earth? Catalyst. <https://youtu.be/NDhsYz-7tYQ>

Bev Morton

Family Research

We began the session with October's 'Family Stories' topic – '**From the Bookshelves**'. Margaret shared delightful reflections on the poetry of 'John O'Brien', Catholic priest Patrick Joseph Hartigan, writer of '*Around the Boree Log*', '*Said Hanrahan*' and '*The Trimmings on the Rosary*'. Margaret particularly enjoys the way in which he incorporates "the everyday lives of his parishioners many Irish phrases with an Australian bush setting". On reading '*The Ballad of Abdul Wade*' purchased recently, David found that it included a famous, or perhaps infamous, family connection. David shared his understanding of the role of Afghan cameleers in the development of Australia, showing us a photograph of pioneering family members with a camel train near Coolgardie, WA in 1898. Bev spoke about memorable books on her grandparents' and parents' bookshelves, from her great grandfather's three volume set of Shakespeare and her parents' '*Rubayait of Omar Khayam*', to her siblings '*Famous Five*', '*Secret Seven*' and '*Biggles*' books. Barry described four books '*Time, Tide and the Tyrell*', '*A Land Worth Saving*', '*A history of the Shire of Swan Hill*' and '*Lalor: the Peter Lalor Hume Building Cooperative 1946-2012*', which have added value to his family research. Jane described being fascinated as a child by her father's poetry book, one of few belongings from his English boyhood, titled '*There's a Famous Seaside Place Called Blackpool*'. We all encouraged her to search it out on the internet! New member Dawn Stephens observed that family bookshelves often included books with beautifully illustrated plates; books received as presents and as awards by Sunday Schools and schools. Sharing stories on a theme nearly always results in moments in which we remember similar memories and experiences. 'From the Bookshelves' was no exception!

A member story about ethical issues faced when working on records involving a murder and mental health issues set the scene for Jane's presentation "*Some ethical issues which can arise during family research*". A deepening discussion of a range of ethical issues ensued, with class members adding the dilemmas faced when venereal disease-based hospitalization is revealed in war records or when it appears possible that a forebear has been a slave trader; a culpable landlord during the Irish famine, or treated indigenous workers badly. (We always hope our ancestors are good people!)

Gains described this month included Graeme's "I've finally completed my family tree! 8,600 people and I've finished!" He explained that he's been totally absorbed, for hours at a time, for over six months, on researching and writing up his family tree. Another highpoint - received with spontaneous applause – Marg has finally received her grandfather Percy Watkinson's death certificate from France! We were fascinated by this document, which was written in beautifully handwritten French.

Next month's topic '**Heroes, Villains, Leaders, Visionaries, Eccentrics, Victims, Survivors**'* The brief: "Somewhere in our family tree is a person of some fame or infamy! They are the person often first identifiable in discussions with people also working on your family tree. Choose such a person from your family tree and share their story with the group. (*Used in the modern gender-neutral sense, as in 'Actor', for both males and female protagonists.)"

Graeme's October story, *'Shades of Altruism'* led the way, describing a 'visionary' relative, Sarah Daniels, who showed foresight and fortitude in bequeathing her property in Merrylands, Sydney to Holroyd Municipal Council to be used as an open space for the elderly. Now a functional rest area in the middle of a shopping precinct, it is known as Sarah Daniels Court.

Beverley Lee and Jane Rushworth

Family Research – Beginners

Our first session in October featured guests, Graham Jensen and Margaret Jenkins, who spoke about researching, writing, printing and sharing their family histories.

Inspired by finding a journal in a rarely opened trunk in a rarely opened room in an old family home, Margaret's absorbing record of her great grandfather's life, *'A Press Missionary--the life of Thomas Allard Pettit'*, has found a home in libraries in Gippsland and on the bookshelves of family and friends.

Graham encouraged us all to reflect on why we undertake family research. He described his own reasons for doing so, his two year immersion in researching and writing, and his rationale for titling his book, *'Leaving the Shore'*. Each chapter features a key person listed in order of 'leaving the shore' and arriving in Australia; with the first, James Weavers, a particular favourite.



Gains this month included the arrival of Julie's eagerly awaited DNA results containing news of Nordic genes passed on by her Scottish great grandfather; Val's adding photographs to the stories she is writing; Robyn's resolving an issue she has been struggling with after making contact with a relative in Southampton, and Helen's pleasure at being able to trace a branch of her family back to the 13th Century. Bev's gain was being sent extracts from *The Diaries of Ethel Freame*, a first cousin of her great grandfather George Hooper. The extracts provide a disarmingly honest account of two decades in the daily life of George's mother, sisters and brother in England after George's migration to Victoria in search of gold.

With the imminent flood affecting numbers at our 'hands on' session on October 13, we added an extra session on October 20. This busy session was supported by mentor Judy Barry and incorporated enjoyable time spent chatting about family research (floods, earthquakes and more!)

On a final note, beginners worked with during one-to-one sessions earlier this year are being contacted to tie up loose ends and, where possible, provide a My Heritage genealogical report of progress to date.

Bev Lee

Film Discussion Group

With many of the class out of town (and I was one of them), and others put off by the weather, the class was very small this month. Still a small number did manage to have a conversation about the film *Good Luck to You, Leo Grande* and I have been sent a few comments. Thank you to the people who attended.

Nancy Stokes (played by Emma Thompson), a retired schoolteacher, is yearning for some adventure, and some sex. And she has a plan, which involves hiring a young sex worker named Leo Grande (played by Daryl McCormack).

This was an unusual film which in the bulk of the film involved only two characters, Nancy and Leo. There was one short scene in a café with a former student of Nancy's. Nancy felt she had had a dull marriage and had missed out on excitement and romance in her life. She hired the services of Leo to spice up her life. It was certainly a "different" type of film, but one could find some good points in it. The actors were excellent in their demanding roles, there was a lot of humour, and nudity was part of the story (though rather explicit at times). This odd couple did form a friendship eventually. Leo confided in her of his estranged relationship with his mother and brother, and how he told people he worked on an oil rig, not as a sex worker. Nancy gradually gained confidence in herself, and a better understanding of her children. The name of the film came from one of the final statements of the film where Nancy says to Leo "Good luck to you, Leo Grande".

It was rated as 3/5. Thought provoking whilst still being very funny.

Our next film class is on **9 November**. We will be discussing the film "Ticket to Paradise" starring Julia Roberts and George Clooney.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation

The next Garden Appreciation activity will take place on November 24th. Please meet at U3A Carpark at 11.15am to travel to Mokoan Hub Cafe (WintonWetlands) for lunch and a presentation on the History of Wetlands Bird Life and Flora.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you are attending this event and if you have any dietary requirements.

Thank you for your get well wishes. I had Covid and now I have a virus. I should be OK soon. A speedy recovery to all the other people who are unwell.

Contact Gwen on 0438 627 010 or Email gwenturner243@gmail.com



Gwen Turner

Garden Team

Made an impression on the jungle at Elspeth's but it's looking robust again because the mower broke down with heavy demands made on the rare sunny, dryish days since. Shirly's kind offerings bedded in and the pup both admired and laughed at. Thanks crew - a pleasant degustation followed as usual.

We hope to finish the year at Bill's on cup eve Monday, Rupe's on November 14th and Marcus and Kirsten's on Dec 12th.

Elspeth Maconachie

German – Advanced

Our German group is making good progress. The wealth of German vocabulary obtained throughout the year is now enforced by translating English into German which was initiated by a member of the group. I always appreciate suggestions of the group members. It shows great interest and willingness by the members to learn and further their pronunciation and vocabulary. The group continues to be a happy group, at times creating a most humorous atmosphere.

Horst Gunther

Investment

Shares during the month of September had declined by 5.5%. So, we started off by looking at a short article by Don Hamson, published in First links on 21 September titled "*The best of times, the worst of times*". This informative article led into a discussion about the possibility of the Federal Government changing the laws on Franking credits, and the possibility that the new law could be retrospectively applied to December 2016.

Following this we had an in depth look at some shares in the Materials and Energy Sectors. We looked at the different type of mining shares such as lithium, iron ore, rare earth and coal miners, and how they had fared over the past three months. We were struck by the positive results of both some coal and lithium mining stocks.

Malcolm Sanders showed us a great XL table on the various world indexes which he has kept for the past 20 years, and also how it was linked to important world events.

After the break we looked at how the top ten Australian Agricultural businesses had fared during the past 12 months. We also checked how the price of their shares had risen/fallen over that period. Agriculture is an important industry in Australia, and these businesses provide an ongoing aspect of the share market which need to be appreciated.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Monday 7th November at 1.30pm in our U3A room.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

I am always impressed by the pile of books read and the variety of literature consumed by this group. *The Wedding Dress Sewing Circle* by Jennifer Ryan was inspired by true events during World War 11 in London. A renowned London fashion designer loses her home and workshop in the blitz and flees to the family manor

in the countryside, an easy read and most enjoyable. Lorraine had a busy month - her reads include *James Patterson NYPD 2*, *Wild Wood* by Posie Graeme Evans, *The Model Wife* by Tricia Stringer, *Cold Fear* set in Antarctica, author *Mads Peder Nordbo*, this was a thriller, *Ruth Druart* wrote *The Last Hour in Paris* and last but not least *The French Agent* by Belinda Alexander, well done Lorraine. Wilma enjoyed *The Last Train* by Sue Lawrence whilst Rae read *Stalker* by Lars Kepler - the author wrote of women who received a video of themselves at home, scary stuff. Noelle pointed out that some of the small books for coffee tables are really worth looking at, so here are a few Noelle bought along to show us *Animalphabet* a delightful book from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Murakami and all his T shirts* – the T shirts from where and how and those he loved, *Very California* by Gessler lively stories and sketches a lovely book, Noelle also read *The Bookseller at the End of the World* by Ruth Shaw a funny, heartbreaking memoir of a bookseller who runs two tiny bookshops in remote Fiordland, a short biography by Jill Roe of *Miles Franklin* was worth the read. Joan read *Perfect Murder/Perfect Town* by Lawrence Schiller and *Deaths Acre* by Bill Bass and Jon Jefferson was enjoyed. Heather looks for *Dick Francis* novels and included in her reading was *French Spirits* by Jeffrey Greene. Other books read were *The Almost Perfect Murder* by John Suter, *The Spider and the Fly* by Claudia Rowe, this book was not recommended. *A Patchwork Planet* by Anne Tyler whose books have been read by many. Another interesting author is Kate Morton, whose rich historical drama *Forgotten Garden* was recommended. Mention was also made of Hilary Mantel, author of the Wolf Hall trilogy who died recently, a speech about Hilary was made at Huntingdon Hall and can be viewed on YouTube. We will catch up in November with many more 'good reads'.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball

Just as we were warming up and welcoming back our travellers, we had the news that the Indoor Rec Centre is closed pending assessment after the town's recent flooding. Luckily, we did manage a couple of games in October before this happened, and hopefully there will be more games before we break for Christmas.

In the meantime, we have decided on a return date of 14th November, so that all necessary safety checks, including the effect on flooring, can be completed.

For new and returning players, we meet at 10am weekly at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre. Coordinator Marlene Pitts is available on 0407240943, and will keep current players updated by email of any changes.

Julie McNeill

Meditation

Meditation is held in the U3a room in the Seniors building on 1st and 3rd Monday of each month.

Caroline Sims

Meet and Mingle

Eric Nash, Director of the Benalla Art Gallery, was the guest speaker at the October Meet and Mingle. Eric gave us a comprehensive talk on events which had been successfully held at the gallery in the early months of 2022, and also talked about forthcoming events. Some of these are being held in conjunction with the Benalla Festival on the week-end of November 5th and 6th.



It was pleasing that several members of the Benalla public who were not U3A members were able to join us for this Meet and Mingle.

The November Meet and Mingle will be held on Wednesday 16th November in the main auditorium of the Benalla Senior's Centre, 18 Fawckner Drive Benalla. There will be a display from the Patchwork group as well as a concert from the Singing for Fun Group and the Recorder Group. Members of the Benalla community, who are not U3A members, are welcome. Please come and enjoy what should be a fun morning.

Margaret Jenkins

Music Appreciation

According to legend enshrined in a piece of English doggerel: "if it rains on St Swithun's Day, it will rain for the next 40 days". While October is well past St Swithun's day, it certainly has felt like it has been raining for that that length of time. Whatever, the volume of water that enveloped our town earlier in the month saw us having to cancel the first of our two sessions, inspiring one of our number to suggest a recording of Handel's Water Music be sent out to all instead.

The music planned for that session was held over for the following session with fingers crossed that the curse of St Swithun wasn't going to stick around. It didn't! So we were able to appreciate a stunning recording of Dvorak's Cello Concerto (Mischa Maisky with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra). Part of Debussy's Bergamasque Suite and Shostakovich's 3rd String Quartet made up the rest of the programme.

The recordings and session notes can be accessed for further enjoyment on the Music Appreciation page of the U3A website

For those curious about St Swithun, he was Bishop of Winchester from 852-862AD. Unlike other religious figures, he asked not to be buried in a prominent place within Winchester Cathedral, but outside in a simple tomb "where the sweet rain of heaven may fall upon my grave".

In 971 the Bishop at the time moved Swithun's remains to a new shrine, commissioned by the King, inside Winchester Cathedral. The legend says after his remains were moved inside there was a great storm and it rained for many weeks. St. Swithun's day falls on the 15th July. It is reputed to be on this day that the great flood started (Noah etc), hence this day being associated with the weather forecast for the English summer.

Bill Squire

Page Turners

'The Labyrinth', Amanda Lohrey

Erica Marsden had her life torn apart when her son was jailed for accidental homicide for burning down his apartment building and killing two people in the fire.

She sells her house and shifts to a small beach community near his prison. Here she builds a labyrinth in her garden engaging with neighbours and Jurko, a Serbian stonemason camping out in the national park.

This job changes a number of fractured lives of her neighbours and gives her a purpose while she visits her son who blames her for his predicament. All seek some sort of redemption in this project, and although the labyrinth is never quite finished many lives improve for the better.

Generally enjoyed by our group. Lohrey writes novels with psychological explorations and endings that leave the reader to make their own conclusions.

November 1st **'The Great Circle', Maggie Shipstead**

Meg Dillon

Patchwork

The display of our work will be at the November 16th Meet and Mingle. Drop off at 9:30 or if you are not able to be there give me a call and I can arrange to pick up in the days before. We are continuing in December Thursday 1st and Christmas lunch on Thursday 15th.

Dorothy Webber 0412263071

Play Reading

Four intrepid play readers tackled Tom Stoppard's, "The Real Thing." Written in 1982, the play focuses on the relationship between Henry a playwright and Annie, an actress/ social activist. The play examines the nature of honesty and infidelity and explores the theme of reality verses appearance.

With the tricky structure of a play within a play and some complex dialogue we had to keep our wits about us. We did! And we did it well!

Pat Treleaven

Politics and Current Affairs

At our first Politics group at the beginning of the month, Liz Truss, the British Prime Minister had just released her new budget which caused some angst in the financial sector not only in Britain but also world-wide. The Bank of England had to come to the party, per se, and take actions to settle the markets in England. Putin was still warring with Ukraine, there were elections to be held in Italy and Brazil. President Biden was trying to make ground in the mid-term elections in USA. It was all happening.

At our next Politics group Liz Truss had resigned as Prime Minister and Rishi Sunak has been voted in as the new Prime Minister. The results of the Italian general election showed the centre-right coalition led by Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy, a radical-right political party with neo-fascist roots, winning an absolute majority of seats in the Italian Parliament. Meloni was appointed Prime Minister of Italy becoming the first woman to hold that position. Brazil voters go to the elections this Sunday, so we wait for that result between Lula de Silva and Jair Bolsonaro who were neck and neck in the 1st round.

Vladimir Putin is showing off his nuclear weapons to the world, whilst Ukraine have been winning back a number of regions in Ukraine, however Putin has his goal of winning the war itself. USA President Joe Biden is facing mid term elections in three weeks and is hoping that the Economy will improve and turn in his favour prior to the elections, though it could be a bit late now.

Heather Wallace

Recorder Group

We have been doing some concentrated practice in preparation for our performance at November's Meet 'n Mingle. Music is one of the performing arts, so many thanks for the opportunity. At our last session, we played in the hall, to help us to get used to the very different acoustics. These will change again when there are lots of people in the room! All part of the deal. Thanks to all the players for their hard work.

Janet Douglas

Saturday Cards – 500

Even though the weather has been rather inclement over the past month, we have had some interesting games at cards. We have experienced playing different formats of games which have created some fun and laughs. Saturday cards are held 1.30pm to 3.30pm on the 2nd and 4th Saturday each month.

Heather Wallace

Singing for Fun

October has seen the Singing for Fun group put together the songs they are going to present at Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 16th November 2022. Kieran, Brian and Margaret have skilfully chosen a variety of songs for the concert which we think should be entertaining. Thank you also to our pianist Gwen Barnes who has provided great accompaniment for the group.

Early in October we had a special morning tea to celebrate Brian Greed's 90th birthday. Congratulations Brian on the milestone you have reached, and thank you for the huge contribution you have made to Singing for Fun as a Leader over the last 10 years. We appreciate your efforts in choosing and introducing songs over that time. Thank you also to Joyce Borschmann and Trish Roe for providing the morning tea.

Carmyl Winkler and Brian Colman have been assisting with a segment most weeks. We enjoy the extra variety that you both provide in your segments.

The next meeting of Singing for Fun will be on Thursday 3rd November at 10am at the Hub at Cooida.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

Controlling excess water bookended the farming career of our 89 year old October speaker Horst Gunther.

An obsession with excess H₂O started in his mid-teens farm apprenticeship in northern Germany's marshy Friesland, where keeping 800mm of annual rainfall under control, with drains and canals, was all important.

Fast forward to 1980 when he bought land at Pyramid Hill and flat salty soil had to be periodically flushed and a high saline water table kept under control. An initially blackberry infested 260acre farm near Glenlyon intervened.



Two of Horst's sons continue cropping and grazing on now much enlarged Pyramid Hill farms, where irrigation water was all the go, but is largely now too expensive.

But years of laser grading to ensure efficient irrigation and getting water on and off the soil quickly, has paid huge dividends. Saline subsoil water is now more than 2m down the soil profile, Horst said.

Horst now greatly enjoys retired life in Violet Town and tutors U3A's hugely successful advanced German course every first Tuesday.

Stock and Land is taking a break on Cup Day on the first Tuesday in November and will meet again on the 1st Tuesday in December for the final session of the year.

David Palmer

Sustainability

At the first Sustainability group meeting in October, we heard from Cr Danny Claridge about the upcoming review of Council's environment and climate change adaptation plans. These plans were first prepared around 2013 and Danny suggested they were in need of substantial review. He indicated that staff working on the review would be keen to hear directly from people as the redrafting was proceeding.

At our second meeting we talked about the concept of 'community wellbeing' which has been in the news of late as the Federal Treasurer has mentioned that some principles and measures were to be included in the Australian budget. We noted that Community well-being is essentially the same as the sustainability concept. We looked at the ACT's community well-being framework and how it linked to their budget and noted some other places (NZ, Scotland and Bhutan) had already gone down this path.

John Lane

Tech Savvy Beginners – Android

During September and October, we covered:

- What is a Scammer & how to look out for signs of scamming.
- What is a GIF (an animated object) and how to use & download GIF's.
- Registering on Be Connected website.
- Travelling in Australia - being savvy when using your devices.
- Dash Camera – what does it do?
- Using the Torch on your mobile.
- Setting up Display Mode on your mobile.
- Buying on eBay - the pros and cons.
- What permissions should you allow in your Apps.
- Connecting to U3A network



We also discussed the class structure for 2023.

Classes are held every 1st 2nd 3rd Thursday of the month 10.00-12.00

Robyn Lukey

Tech Talks

We did not have a good turnout in October but still we ploughed on, examining several interesting subjects.

We listened to Elon Musk explain his ideas on how he wants his employees to act. Elon Musk is reputed to be the wealthiest man in the world and he has built a large manufacturing base within his short life. He gives a number of instructions to his employees that are somewhat different to what instructions are normally given to employees. Time will tell if any long-term conclusions can be drawn.

We watched a video that showed the development of the Silicon Chip. The Silicon Chip has a fascinating history and is now widely used in most electronic machines. The chip is always in development and is always looking for new code. It is capable of much work that has not yet been thought of.

We finished by watching a video about the development of the Boeing 787 and the Concorde.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner is a new plane that has some special features. The majority of its structure is built of composite materials. It is slightly smaller than normal jumbo jets, but it fits into a special niche which will allow it to travel long distances at less expensive rates. Another small but significant difference is that its makeup allows it to have larger windows which every passenger will be pleased with.

The Concorde was a noble concept in engineering unfortunately now confined to museums. It was developed by both the British and French governments and after some years of successful flying, unfortunately a piece of metal on the runway was picked up by a tyre and a fuel tank was ruptured. This led to a terrible crash with the loss of many lives. It was decided to withdraw the plane from service.

The Concorde was loved by passengers. The supersonic technology that made it possible was much loved by the engineering community. Unfortunately, it was a plane that only the wealthy could use. However, many problems were overcome in its development and ultimately it was a triumph. If the crash had not happened, would it still be in service?

Neville Gibb

Wine Appreciation

Our last group outing for the year and we were off to Rutherglen, Andrew Buller Wines to be exact. Andrew and his wife, Wendy, were very gracious hosts and their wines extremely enjoyable. Andrew is from the Buller family of winemakers and he and Wendy bought their winery in 2015. In their lovely old home they have converted the front rooms into a cellar door. Had the weather been co-operative we would have been sitting out under the rather grand old trees.

We started off with a traditionally made champagne, followed by a chardonnay, pinot grigio, a delicious sparkling shiraz liquored with rare Muscat – definitely a purchase - two reds and finished off with a Tawny, Tokay and a Muscat.

Most of us clinked back to our cars for lunch at Footsteps Cafe (previously The Pickled Sisters) at Cofields winery. The cafe has a very interesting menu, beautifully presented dishes and wonderful service. A great way to end our year.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bev Thornell for all her wonderful photographs and to the entire group for making each month a very happy day out.

I look forward to meeting up with you again next year.

Nicole McFarlane

In other news...-

Fortunately, the Seniors Community Centre Building was not damaged by the floods in mid-October, however it would have been impossible to park in the lower car park at the height of the flood.

Music Appreciation and Armchair History did not go ahead on Friday 14th October, while Lifeball has been adjourned until after the Ackerly Avenue facility is assessed for damage.



Photographs: Skate Park and U3A Entrance to Seniors Community Centre late on 13 October 2022 - Greer Allen (with permission)

What's On

Tuesday, 1 November – 'Cup Day'

- 10:00 Page Turners - 'The Great Circle'
- 10:00 Stock and Land - Adjourned to December
- 12:15 German - Advanced

Wednesday, 2 November

- 09:30 Easy Walks - Winton Wetlands
- 09:30 Play Reading
- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'

Thursday, 3 November

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 4 November

- 10:00 Sustainability

Monday, 7 November

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Collectors - 'Jewellery'
- 10:00 Lifeball - Adjourned to 14th November
- 10:00 Art Appreciation – 'I Wish I'd Told You'
- 12:00 Meditation
- 13:30 Investment
- 14:00 Let's Talk Books

Tuesday, 8 November

- 10:00 Politics and Current Affairs
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Tech Talks

Wednesday, 9 November

- 10:00 Recorder Group
- 14:00 Film Discussion Group - 'Ticket to Paradise'

Thursday, 10 November

- 09:30 Birdwatching - Nason Springs, Warby Ranges
- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 11 November

- 10:00 Music Appreciation
- 14:00 Armchair History

Saturday, 12 November

- 13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 14 November

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball* (0407240943 to confirm attendance)
- 14:00 Creative Writing
- 14:00 Garden Team @ Rupe's

Tuesday, 15 November

- 10:00 The News - Fact or Fiction
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Exploring the Universe

Wednesday, 16 November

- 10:00 Meet and Mingle - Singing for Fun and Recorder Group in Concert, Quilt Show
- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'

Thursday, 17 November

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 18 November

- 10:00 Sustainability
- 11:45 Chat 'n Chew

Monday, 21 November

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball* (0407240943 to confirm attendance)
- 12:00 Meditation
- 13:30 Coin Collectors

Tuesday, 22 November

- 10:00 Politics & Current Affairs
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Brain Games

Wednesday, 23 November

- 11:00 U3A Benalla Christmas Breakup Celebration– King River Cafe, Oxley
- 10:00 Recorder Group

Thursday, 24 November

- 09:30 Garden Appreciation – Mokoan Hub Café, Winton Wetlands, Lunch and Speaker
- 10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub
- 13:00 Family Research - 'Heroes and Villains'

Friday, 25 November

- 10:00 Music Appreciation
- 14:00 Armchair History
- 17:00 Newsletter reports due today

Saturday, 26 November

- 13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 28 November

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun – bring a plate to share at morning tea breakup celebration!
- 10:00 Lifeball* (0407240943 to confirm attendance)
- 14:00 'As Time Goes By': 'Triggers'

Tuesday, 29 November

- 12:15 German - Advanced

Wednesday, 30 November

- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'

Thursday, 1 December

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 2 December

- 10:00 Sustainability

Monday, 5 December

- 10:00 Collectors
- 10:00 Lifeball* (0407240943 to confirm attendance)
- 10:00 Art Appreciation
- 12:00 Meditation
- 13:30 Investment
- 14:00 Let's Talk Books

Tuesday, 6 December

- 10:00 Page Turners - 'The Return'
- 10:00 Stock and Land

Wednesday, 7 December

- 09:30 Play Reading
- 12:00 Easy Walks - Lunch at the Tatong Tavern