



Benalla and District Inc.

## Newsletter – February 2023

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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### President's Report

U3A Benalla has had a great start to 2023! What a wonderful vibe there was at Enrolment Day in early January. A big thank you to all Convenors for spending time with the new members, explaining about your wonderful groups. Our organisation relies on the guidance of the Convenor for each group, and the Committee really appreciate the effort you put into Enrolment Day as well as the preparation you do for each meeting of your course.



My thanks also to the Committee for setting up the tables and chairs for Enrolment morning, and for helping in many and varied ways throughout the morning.

Our very efficient Membership Secretary, Len Jeffers, told me yesterday that we had 313 members enrolled on the 24<sup>th</sup> January. That is a fantastic number of members enrolled before the groups commence. A big welcome to the 41 new members who have joined U3A Benalla for the first time. We hope that all members enjoy the groups that you have put your names down for.

We are really pleased that there are 47 courses available this year. Outdoor courses such as bushwalking and bird watching are very popular, as are garden appreciation and wine appreciation. Indoor groups such as Exercises for Fun also have had great enrolments. In the past two weeks I have heard lots of very positive comments about the courses available, many along the lines that "it is hard to choose what to do as they all seem so interesting". Thank you for all those comments.

We encourage the wearing of name badges to all meetings. This allows new members to get to know members who have been there before. If for any reason you cannot attend a group for which you have put your name down for, it is courtesy to let your Convenor know by a phone call or a text that you cannot be there.

Our Newsletter this month has reports of those groups who met during December 2022. We hope to include reports from all groups in our next Newsletter. If the Convenor of a group does not wish to write a report each month, it is quite acceptable to delegate the job to another member of your group.

To all members of U3A Benalla, best wishes for an enjoyable 2023.

Margaret Jenkins

President

## Group Reports

### A Taste of Art

Held fortnightly on Wednesdays 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm Broken River Painters, Barc Hut 11. Commencing 8<sup>th</sup> February.

Carol Perry

### Art Appreciation

At our last Art Appreciation for the year in early December we listened to a lecture by Jacqui Stockdale concerning her installation in the Simpson Gallery entitled *The Outlaws Inn*. This is a work that combines historical and fantasy. It depicts some members of the Kelly Family together with images of fantasy figures.

Jacqui gave an impassioned lecture that held everyone in its interest. The Kelly Myth is a large structure and is continually being explained by works like Jacqui's.

Jacqui spoke extremely well, and everyone appreciated her interest.



Join us at the Gallery on the 6<sup>th</sup> February from 10 to 11 am for an artist talk by Deborah Kelly, the first of the year in the 'First Monday' series.

Deborah is well-known for her collages. Her work, *The Gods of Tiny Things*, is currently on display in *Between the Details: Video Art from the ACMI Collection*, a kaleidoscopic video which "unleashes a vivid collage of animated figures and landscapes cut free from the pages of old magazines and encyclopaedias. It explores the threats of extinction and the climate crisis, the tolls of colonialism, and the global political shift to the right, while conversely revelling in the hectic pleasures and desires of life itself."

Stay after the session for coffee and catch up with friends at the Gallery's Munro and Sargent Café.

Neville Gibb

### 'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

The topic list for 2023 is almost ready! Thank you to class members who sent in ideas for new topics.

The 500 word topic for February, **'The (season) I'**, was inspired by Jenny's story 'The Summer I Saved a Life' and Michelle's 2022 member's choice topic ['Summer 1977'](#). 'Develop a title and share a story on a memorable season in your life using the season you remember it happening in as a backdrop or prompt.'

Alternative topics suggested for new class members - **'New in Town'** 'Have you ever been the new person in town, or did someone else's arrival have a profound impact on you? Share your story in 500 words.' 'The Year that Made Me' (A topic often used by ABC interviewers with Australian living treasures.) 'Write about a year which made a particular difference in your life's journey. Over to you!'

A reminder that we have moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday – our first session is on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February from 2 to 4pm. Enjoy the remainder of your break!

Bev Lee

### Australian History

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm commencing on 10<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room.

Brian Harker

## Be Connected – Managing Money Online

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month from 11:30 am to 12:30 am and commencing on the 13<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room.

Jenny Sawyer

## Bird Watching

Nine people were able to attend our extra outing in December, with a bird walk at Winton Wetlands on Thursday 1 December, followed by lunch at the Mokoan Hub café. We spent a warm sunny morning birding around the boat ramp area not far from the café.

A few people were surprised to see water part way up the boat ramp. There was certainly a lot of water at the wetlands at the time of our visit. I did not expect to see many waterbirds, telling the group that the birds have half of Australia to choose from at present so could be anywhere.

To my surprise we actually did quite well with waterbird sightings. We had excellent views of groups of White-necked Herons and Australian White Ibis, plus two White-faced Herons and a Yellow-billed Spoonbill, all close to shore. There were a few ducks; Grey Teal, Pacific Black Duck and a pair of Hardhead, plus 2 different cormorants. And we saw one Black Swan. Brown Quail were calling loudly in the long grass near the boat ramp, but they stayed well hidden, as did the calling Little Grassbird. We had good views of Sacred Kingfishers and Red-rumped Parrots.

Other animals seen were Grey Kangaroos and a Black Wallaby. We were surprised to see a large Eastern Bearded Dragon in the middle of the walking track. This reptile is listed as Vulnerable in Victoria, so we were lucky to see one.



We recorded 28 bird species on our walk. Here is a link to the eBird list:

<https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S123583827>

The lunch at the café was enjoyed by all. A good way to end the year.

*Birdwatching is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month from 9.30am to 12.00 noon in March, April and May and will recommence on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Details in the next newsletter.*

Kathy Costello

## Brain Games

Held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 2 to 4 pm commencing on the 28<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room 1.

Elsbeth Maconachie

## Bushwalking – Easy Walks

Welcome to everyone for our 2023 walking year! Despite the best efforts of heat, flood, storms and covid, we have over 40 people enrolled and a calendar of interesting and enjoyable walks. While Glen has retired from the shared convenor role, she has been busy organising our first walk for 2023. It's a lovely walk for those of us returning, and an easy introduction for our new members.

### **Wednesday March 1st: Corowa/Wahgunyah and Rutherglen**

Meeting in Corowa at Bangerang Park, we will head onto the Willows Reserve trail along the Murray at Wahgunyah. Leaving the river, we go through bush land enjoying the flora and listening for one of the forty

seven species of birds. After a short drive to Rutherglen we will enjoy a picnic lunch at the Lake King Wetlands, and then walk around the lake where there are some interesting installations and sculptures. About 7km in total, the walk will provide a gentle test of our fitness after the Christmas break.

We meet for the day at 9am at the Seniors' carpark, Fawkner Drive, leaving at 9.15am. Please confirm with Julie by text, email or phone message on 0407823031 or [juliemcneill55@gmail.com](mailto:juliemcneill55@gmail.com).

Remember a hat, drinks, a picnic lunch and comfortable shoes. Walking poles can be useful. Car sharing is usually available for a small contribution.

At this stage the calendar includes the Plain Creek loop at Merrijig for April, and a trip to the autumn leaves at Bright in May, with the Cherry Walk. As always, our walks can be impacted by weather extremes and novel viruses, so keep an eye on the newsletter and emails for any changes.



*"Here's to another wonderful year of Easywalks in 2023!" Tatong Tavern, December 2022*

Julie McNeill

### Cards '500'

This year, Cards '500' has moved from alternate Saturdays to the **3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday** of the month from 2.00 to 4.00pm, commencing on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February in the U3A Room.

Doug Smith

### Chat n' Chew

Chat and Chew will take place at the **Royal Hotel** on **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February**, commencing at 12 midday.

Members who have enrolled in Chat and Chew do need to let Lorraine know each month if they wish to attend. If Lorraine isn't available to answer the phone when you call, please leave a message—also, don't forget to include your name in the message, not just the phone number. If you wish to attend the February Lunch at the Royal, please contact Lorraine on 0427 376 991 by Tuesday 14th February, 2023.

Lorraine Knox

### Coin Collectors

A reminder that Coin Collectors has moved from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the **4<sup>th</sup> Monday** of the month from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm, commencing 27<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room.

Doug Smith

### Collectors

The first get together for 2023 will be at 10.00am on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> February.

Following on from the success of "Books" at our meeting last October, the theme will be **"Recipe Books"** be they old or favourites; or, even just a single recipe.

We look forward to you joining our fun group.

Dorothy Webber and Janet Gourley

### Community Singing

Held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday from 10.00am to 11.30am at the Cooinda Hub.

Margaret Jenkins

## Creative Writing

We managed to keep our final class for 2022 shorter so we were able to head to the North Eastern for Christmas drinks.



Still, we did manage to cover the full program -

**Hints:** This month we talked briefly about the value of editing our writing. This can mean a lot of rewriting to make sure that the work flows, has no grammatical errors, and in general is a complete story.

**Our challenge:** We had ten clues to words all beginning with the letters DEC – after all it was DECember – as our challenge. One example was “This kind of art was popular in the 1930s. (4)” with the extra clue that the word contains only four letters, the answer was DECo.

### Our stories:

For our written work to share with the class there were three prompts:

- **She/he stood on the balcony**
- **She sat staring at the screen. The words of betrayal sliced into her like a blade. An intimate and intense email meant for her boyfriend but mistakenly sent to her.**
- **The rain was so heavy she/he could not see to make the right-hand turn, so she/he turned left**

We enjoyed discussing the wide range of ideas that had inspired our writing this month. There was one poem from a class member who claimed it was not a strong point, but was found interesting and fun by the class.

We are looking forward to coming together again in 2023. In the meantime, we have a writing challenge for the break. We will endeavour to write every day for a month. This can be just a few sentences or a paragraph. Then in January, the idea is to choose one of the paragraphs and turn it into a full story to share for our first class in 2023 on 13 February.

Joy Shirley

## Demystifying Psychology Discussion Group

Held on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the North Eastern Hotel commencing on the 16<sup>th</sup> February. As storm damage needs to be repaired at the Northo, Jane will keep you informed if the venue for the first session changes. If you have any questions, contact Jane on 0437 621 575.

Jane Rushworth

## Enjoying the Internet

Held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, ‘Enjoying the Internet’ commences on the 21<sup>st</sup> February in the U3A Room. A welcoming email with a draft summary of the program, which will take place monthly from February to June, has been sent to class members and is available on the ‘Enjoying the Internet’ page on the website.

Dawn Stephens

## Exercises for Fun

Held each Monday morning from 9.30 to 11.30am in the Seniors Auditorium

Helen Jeffree

## Exploring the Universe

### Last year in retrospect and the year ahead of 2023.

Astronomy: *"The branch of science which deals with celestial objects, space and the physical universe as a whole."*

Last year we were faced with the challenge of introducing new members to the concepts of the Cosmos, with those who had already studied it for years.

While we waited for the revolutionary James Webb Space Telescope positioned 150 million km away to come on line; we viewed the theories of the evolution of the universe and the birth of the first stars and planets.

Rupe Cheetham, our resident amateur astronomer, taught us about the dynamics of our nearest star 'the Sun; the seething mass of nuclear energy that gives us light, heat, energy and life. We viewed the sun through a solar scope. That very day the sun produced a flare that travelled millions of km, but it was on the far side of the Sun!

We saw the planet Mars as we had never seen it before, through images taken at ground level by the NASA Perseverance Rover.

In April we travelled across our Solar System with the light, heat and energy of the Sun, following the Solar Wind all the way to its boundary, to the Heliopause and Interstellar Space. Hitching a ride with the Voyager 2 Spacecraft launched in 1977, studying the 4 outer planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, to where the Sun's influence is only one five thousandth of what it is here on Earth.

Years of work synchronising 8 Radio Observatories in distant places on Earth yielded the "Event Horizon Telescope". A telescope as big as Earth! Their quest was to film the infamous Black Holes. It took a team of 300 scientists 5 years and a pandemic to produce the image they presented in May. It shows that 'Sagittarius A Star' in our galaxy 'The Milky Way' is undeniably a Black Hole.

We had a guest speaker who gave us a grounding in spectroscopy. Every atom and natural element in the Universe has its own fingerprint. This portrays the characteristics of celestial bodies. We became conversant with the electromagnetic spectrum, the different forms that light takes. We delved into asteroids, including our own Murchison meteorite. These were just some of our activities

And then there was Webb! Its images beyond scientific expectations that will revolutionise Astronomy.

A telescope is like a time machine. Webb with its technology and huge mirror looks further back than the great Hubble Telescope. Webb's images of nebulae, star nurseries and strange galactic collisions are scientific and fantastic. It can detect elements in the atmosphere of planets in other solar systems. Will it discover life on other planets? This, amongst other fascinating things, is what awaits us to Explore in 2023.

Bev Morton

## Family Research

It was so pleasant to be made a fuss of at the Family Research 'tech savvy' group's end of year morning tea at 'The Northo'. Not only did we have a warming fire to start, but a table spread with a delicious lemon cake to accompany our coffees. We had such a relaxing and enjoyable time!



The topic for our first session on Thursday 23 February is 'In Search Of...' Have you found yourself needing to search extensively for someone who holds a fairly central place in your family tree? Begin by describing the details you had at the beginning of your search. How did you apply yourself to get a better sense of their

lives and their relationship with other people? What did you find out? Choose someone you haven't written about before.'

An alternative topic .... '**Time Travelling!**' Have you ever felt that you have been time travelling into the lives or your ancestors, or that you have grown very close to a particular person or family in your family tree? Share this experience with the group.

Bev Lee

## Family Research – Beginners

2022 was a most interesting and rewarding year, with a final session in December featuring Maggie Hollins as guest speaker providing a chance to share some Christmas cheer, shortbreads, mince tarts and more!

During Term 1, we are allocating our scheduled days to enable us to work with both new and continuing students. New class members will gather on the first Thursday – Thursday 2 February - from 1 to 4 pm for an introduction to the course, mapping the four sides of their family (grandparents - maternal and paternal sides), identifying the side of the family they would like to focus on to begin and the setting up of one to one appointments. The 'one to one' sessions are important in the early part of the year as some class members will be completely new to setting up their family tree and/or using ancestry, others will have done some work on their family tree however lack confidence in using computers.

The continuing small group is meeting for coffee and catch up with Judy Barry at Rambling Rose on the 2 February from 2 to 3, followed by a hands-on session on the second Thursday - 9<sup>th</sup> February -from 1 to 4 pm.

Bev Lee, Judy Barry, Barry O'Connor

## Film Discussion Group

At our December class we discussed the film "**Mrs Harris Goes to Paris**". This was a comedy, drama about a widowed cleaning lady in 1950s London who falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress and decides that she must have one of her own.

There are a range of different characters, but Ada Harris played by Lesley Manville was the main character in the film. Her performance was excellent. Even though the remaining characters were subsidiary, it was her interactions with them and their performances that made the film. Isabelle Huppert is fantastic as Claudine Colbert; her uppity character is the perfect foil to Lesley Manville's kindly approach. Lambert Wilson is great as Marquis de Chassagne, who helps Ada when she first arrives at Dior. Alba Baptista is outstanding as Natasha, a Dior model. Lucas Bravo is excellent as Andre Fauvel, the company accountant. Ellen Thomas (Violet), Rose Williams (Pamela) and Jason Isaacs (archie) are superb.

There were some scenes that were a bit unbelievable, such as Mrs Harris marching into Dior's office and telling him to listen to his accountant's advice as to how to save the company. But there were underlying moments of kindness and compassion. And there were some interesting contrasts brought out between the working and upper classes of the 1950s.

It was rated as 4/5. It was an entertaining down to earth film that we all enjoyed.

We look forward to watching and discussing more films in 2023, with our first class on 8 February.

Joy Shirley

## Garden Appreciation



A warm welcome to our members new and old!

On February 23<sup>rd</sup> we will meet at the U3A car park at j9.30am to car pool to go to the first garden which is at my place, 2/67 Arundel Street, **Holy Trinity Close**.

After morning tea and a walk around the garden we will visit the gardens at **St. Joseph's Village**, Bridge Street, Benalla West, for a walk through with some of the court-yard gardens open to us, including the court-yard garden of Shirley and Dan Kearney.

Morning tea will be at my place. Please bring small plate to share - tea, coffee, milk and hot water will be available. Please bring your own cups.

Lunch will be at the **Royal Hotel** Benalla.

On March 23rd we will visit **Concepts Garden Works (CAOS)**, Crosby Lane, Mansfield. Lunch will be at the Delatite Hotel, Mansfield followed by visit to Mansfield Nursery. Morning tea details later.

Please let me know if you are attending the February outing as I need numbers for hospitality, etc. Phone or text me on 0438 627 010 or email me at [gwenturner243@gmail.com](mailto:gwenturner243@gmail.com). Looking forward to seeing you all.

Gwen Turner

## Garden Team

In December we rested on our well pruned, weeded and mulched laurels with a festive gathering at Marcus and Kirsten's place.



Our first Garden Team session for the year will be at Rupe's on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February from 2 to 4 pm. I'll send the address details in an email later, especially to our newcomer, Karen.

Elsbeth Maconachie

## German

Held each Tuesday from 12.15 to 1.45pm commencing 7<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room.

Horst Gunther

## In the Lap of the Gods

Held on the 1st Friday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm commencing the 3<sup>rd</sup> February in the U3A Room.

John Barry

## Investment

At the December meeting of Investment, we announced the winners of the two competitions that have been run each month. John Hanlon won the Monthly Selection competition and Nola McDonald won the Long-Term selection. Both were awarded the usual jar of marmalade plus the applause of the other participants.

We looked at the Bank Reporting Season Scorecard by Hugh Dive which analysed how Westpac, ANZ, CBA, NAB and Macquarie had performed during 2022.

We then touched on a light-hearted topic of "Why our financial abilities peak at age 53" by James Gruber, before considering what sectors of shares we would include in a portfolio constructed for 2023.

Malcolm Sanders showed us the long-term results of the portfolios which had been selected by John, Malcolm, Wende, Les and Bill in 2021. He then awarded Bill a prize of a loaf of bread for his portfolio increasing by 22% in 2022. There was much hilarity at this award.

Margaret Walshe on behalf of the group thanked Margaret Jenkins for her efforts as Convenor of Investment for the past nine years and presented Margaret with a Certificate of Appreciation which all the members of Investment signed. There were more speeches by Malcolm Sanders and Pauline Bailey. Margaret responded saying that she had enjoyed her time as Convenor of Investment, and that they were a wonderful group to be part of.



Our thanks to Bev Lee for coming to take photos of the group again at the end of the year.

The first session for 2023 will be on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of December at the new starting time of 2pm. It will be led by new convenors Malcolm Sanders and John Hanlon.

Margaret Jenkins

### Jane Austen Book Club

Held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm commencing on 14<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room. The focus in our February session will be on developing an understanding of Jane Austen's life, where she lived at various times and the different views that critics have of how she viewed her society and the Country Gentry class to which her family belonged. In March we will focus on 'Sense and Sensibility'.

Meg Dillon

### Let's Talk Books

How exciting to be gathering again on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February to talk about all the books you have read over the holiday period. With some new members this year it would be a good idea to limit the number of books for each person to talk about to two books, then everyone gets a chance to discuss their books. Looking forward to the lending, swapping and laughs about all that is good or mediocre about reading.

Geraldine McCorkell

### Lifeball

After a couple of false starts due to heat, floods and holiday absences, we finally returned to the court and enjoyed a fast-paced game full of hilarity. The enforced rest seems to have done wonders for our skills and reminded us how much we enjoy playing. With numbers slightly down as some long-term players retire, we are keen to welcome anyone interested to come along on Monday mornings and see what Lifeball is all about.

We play at 10am at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre. Lifeball is a team sport at a walking pace, based on basketball and netball, so if you would like to find a new way to keep fit, welcome! The game is always followed by a cuppa and a chat and lots of laughter. Convenor Marlene Pitts can be contacted on 0428210944 for more information.

Julie McNeill

### Meet and Mingle

The guest speaker for Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February from 10 to 12 in the U3A Room is **Charlene Donovan from the National Broadband Network (NBN)**. Charlene will speak about '**Connectivity in Benalla**'. I imagine that there will be many questions for her.

A reminder that our **Annual General Meeting** is held at the March Meet and Mingle meeting, which this year falls on Wednesday March 15<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary, Geraldine McCorkell M: 0408 522 662 Email: [gmccorkell@activ8.net.au](mailto:gmccorkell@activ8.net.au) and on the website.

Margaret Jenkins

### Music Appreciation

Held on the 2nd & 4th Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon commencing on 10<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room.

Bill Squire

## Page Turners Book Group

Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month from 10.00am to 12.00 noon at Meg Dillon's home. The book to be discussed on February 7<sup>th</sup> is **The Zookeeper's War** by Stephen Conte – 'Keepers help Jews escape the Nazis and struggle to keep their animals alive'. An email containing the 2023 program has been sent to group members and is also available on the Page Turners page of the website.

Meg Dillon

## Patchwork and Craft

Looking forward to seeing you all on Thursday 2nd of February from 1 to 4 pm.

New and long-time members of the group, bring along the work you've done over the summer break for "Show & Tell".

As March has 5 Thursdays, our all Day 10 am - 4 pm session is on the Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> of March.

Dorothy Webber

## Photography

For our first class, on Thursday 23 February from 10 to 12 noon in U3A Room 1, I would like you to bring in your photographic devices (phones, point and shoot, SLR, DSLR etc) so that I have a better idea as to what you all have to work with. Bring a pen and paper (just in case you want to write something down). Bring your smiles and enthusiasm as well.

Rene Martens

## Play Reading

We had a full class for our final play reading for the year. This was a fun short one act play called "Continental Customs: A play in one act for women" by Leonard de Francquen.

The play is set in a Customs house somewhere in Europe in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Five ladies are ushered into an office like room and left while their "captor" heads off to seek further orders. All the women seek to find out why they are being kept captive and each of them has a guilty conscience about something they have done while in Europe.

The five ladies are from very different backgrounds. The characters are Irene (on her honeymoon), Ruth (a lady on a business trip), Caroline (travelling with a man who is not her husband), Nell (who inherited some money and is out to see life) and Edwina (who is a dance teacher). After being caught up in revealing their secrets, each is worried.

Their captor (Petrina) returns to tell them they will be kept until an important government official is found. Before leaving them, Petrina adds that the Captain of the guard would like one of the women to join him in his house. The women assume the worst about why the captain would want a 'visit' by one of the women. It is only at the end after the official has been found (locked in a building bathroom) that Petrina tells Nell (the other women having already left the room) the captain's reason for wanting a visit was quite innocent – he wanted his wife to learn how to make English tea.

As this was a short play (only 30 minutes) we were able to discuss how well the playwright had developed the different characters well. Finally, we headed to a café to celebrate another year of Play Reading.



We recommence on Wednesday 1 February at 9.30 am – our first play for 2023 is '**Hotel Sorrento**' by Hannie Rayson.

Joy Shirley

## Politics and Current Affairs

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 10am to 12noon, commencing on 14<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room 1.

Brian Harker

## Recorder Group

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday from 10am to 12 noon commencing on the 8<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room 1.

Janet Douglas

## Singing for Fun

What a great finish to our year! Three successful concerts. The first was at Meet and Mingle on 16<sup>th</sup> November, then at Cooinda on 1<sup>st</sup> December and the last one at Royal Freemasons on 8<sup>th</sup> December. All three concerts were good, and we got invited back to both Cooinda and Royal Freemasons in 2023.

My thanks to Kieran Smith, Brian Greed and Margaret Merriman for Leading the group in their set of songs. Each of you have done a wonderful job putting together a varied program which has been really appreciated by each audience.

A special thank you to Gwen Barnes for accompanying us at all three concerts. Gwen had a good idea of the piano at the Benalla Senior's Centre, but had little time to familiarise herself with the pianos at Cooinda and Freemasons. But Gwen did a superb job at all three venues.

Our Christmas lunch at the Golf Club followed the concert at Royal Freemasons and was enjoyed by all. Good food, great company and plenty of chatter.



Singing for Fun will recommence on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 at the Hub at Cooinda at 10am.

Margaret Jenkins

## Sky's the Limit

Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm commencing on 7<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room.

The speaker at our first session on 7<sup>th</sup> February from 2 to 4pm is **Mark Carr**. After a career in the RAAF and as an airline pilot for Cathay Pacific, Mark has written a book about his career '**Written in the Sky**', and locally is President of the Benalla Aviation Museum.

Claire Rudolph/David Palmer

## Stock and Land

The critical national shortage of farm harvest labour was highlighted by our December speaker, strawberry grower Nina Meiers. Nina and partner Andrew grow 15,000 certified organic strawberry plants on raised beds beside Lake Nillahcootie, at Barjarg. Production is enormous and each plant produces 180 to 200 strawberries, with the harvest season starting early last month.

However, Nina told us, with only three full time pickers, she and Alan could only actually market about 20 per cent of the fruit they produce. But she could not speak highly enough, of their three Pacific Islander employees, who are paid \$39 an hour for their work. Nina said if they could attract enough pickers, each acre of strawberry production would enable them to gross about \$200,000.

Thanks to samples provided by Nina, S&L attendees were able to vouch for the superior quality of what are branded Bimbimbi strawberries.



The guest speaker at Stock and Land on Tuesday 7th February from 10am to 12 mid-day will be **Graham Hooper from 'Clear Hills Southdowns' sheep stud** at Goorambat. The Hooper family have farmed at Goorambat for five generations, since 1928.

David Palmer

## Sustainability

Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday from 10am to 12 noon commencing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February in U3A Room 1.

John Lane

## Tech Advice

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday from 12.30 to 1.00pm commencing 13<sup>th</sup> February in U3A Room 2.

Robyn Lukey/Jenny Sawyer

## Tech Savvy Apple – Pages

Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday from 2 to 3:30 pm commencing on the 8<sup>th</sup> February in the U3A Room 1.

Jenny Sawyer

## Tech Savvy Beginners – Android

Held on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday from 10am to 12noon commencing on 2nd February in the U3A Room.

Robyn Lukey

## Tech Talks

The next Tech Talks will be held on the Tuesday 14th February from 2 to 4 pm in U3A Room 2, opposite the main U3A Meeting Room. I hope we can continue with a mixture of the practical and theoretical. For instance, it is interesting to note that science is still debating just how electricity works. We will continue to investigate such subjects. Attendees will be encouraged to bring any subject that interests them to the table, and it is hoped much discussion will ensue.

Neville Gibb

## Ukes4Fun



Weekly sessions of Ukes4Fun commence on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 12.45pm to 1.45pm in the Seniors Auditorium. Remember to bring along your Ukes, stands (recipe stand, music stand, Ipad cushion), tuners (if you have them), and most importantly yourself. It is a fun course, with lots of laughter and eventually lots of singing and the tapping of feet.

Just a suggestion, do not use hand lotion before you play your Uke. It will affect the strings and you will eventually have residue up and down the fretboard.

Aldi have music stands and tuners in the Specials area on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February. They also have advertised other accessories, so it may be handy to have a look if you wish to get a Tuner etc.

Until we all get confident in our Ukes (and have practiced), there will be handouts each week. Also, there will be song sheets given out for you to practice prior to our next activity so that we can build up our own song books to bring along each week. I am so looking forward to meeting you all and having an enjoyable hour together.

Heather Wallace

## Wine Appreciation

Hello everyone and welcome back to our adventures in wine, food, friendship and fun.

Our first winery visit for 2023 is on **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February to Pennyweight Winery**, a certified organic and biodynamic vineyard that have been crafting fine wine spanning four decades and three generations. They are located at 13 Pennyweight Lane, Beechworth.

This will be followed by lunch at the **Stanley Pub**, 6-12 Myrtleford-Stanley Rd, Stanley.

Meeting at 10.00 in the Barkly St car park behind Aldi.

Please let me know by Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February if you will be coming. You can RSVP to [nicnakmac90@gmail.com](mailto:nicnakmac90@gmail.com) or ph/text 0428 696 408.

Look forward to catching up!

Nicole McFarlane

## Wise Guys Book Group

Held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm commencing on 22<sup>nd</sup> February in U3A Room 1. Bring along two favourite non-fiction books to discuss at the first session.

David Palmer

## Other News ...

### U3A Benalla and District Annual General Meeting 2023

A reminder that our **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the March Meet and Mingle meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup> at 10am. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary, Geraldine McCorkell M: 0408 522 662 Email: [gmccorkell@activ8.net.au](mailto:gmccorkell@activ8.net.au); from the website, and have been emailed with this newsletter.

### It's Not Too Late to Enrol!

If you (or someone you know) could not get to Enrolment Day, it is not too late enrol! The [Membership Application Renewal Form](#), [Program Guide](#) and Timetables for 2022 are available on the [Join/Join Us](#) menu on the website or from the RedB4 Bookshop, Bridge Street (next to Hide's Bakery). Return the signed form, with required fee or evidence of EFT\* payment noted, to **RedB4 Bookshop**; post to **U3A Benalla, PO Box 674, Benalla 3671** (cheque only) or scan & email to [len.benalla@gmail.com](mailto:len.benalla@gmail.com).

### Apple iPads and Android Tablets available for loan to U3A members

Do you lack confidence in using modern devices? We have Apple iPad and Android Tablets available to lend. If you are interested in pursuing this offer, please call Heather on 0418 353 244. Support from the Be Connected and Tech Savvy Beginners (Android or Apple) courses is also available.

### Orientation to the U3A Benalla Website and Facebook Pages

Would you like some assistance in learning to use the U3A Benalla Website and Facebook Page? The website is a great way to keep up to date with what is happening, with the calendar on the home page used by many members to remind them of classes and other information. It's also a great way to reminisce about experiences at U3A over time. We are taking names for small group sessions to be held in U3A Classroom 2. Contact Bev on 0478 607 838 to put your name down!

## Thank you – retiring Investment Convenor Margaret Jenkins



As U3A President, Margaret Jenkins regularly thanks retiring convenors and others for their contribution to U3A. This time it is our chance to thank Margaret for her contribution by sharing of news of the particularly warm thank you the Investment Group organized to celebrate the nine years Margaret has spent as Investment convenor. Unable to enrol in 'Investment' in 2013, as it had become a closed group, Margaret set up 'Investment Group 2', which over time became our current Investment group.

Thanked warmly by Margaret Walshe, presented by Malcolm Sanders with a Certificate of Appreciation signed by all group members and bottle of wine; and given a beautiful arrangement of native flowers from her garden by Pauline Bailey, Margaret's contribution was clearly valued very highly by her group.

## Member News - Sad News

**Mel Jeffree** passed away on 2nd December in Benalla. Mel for three years organised the music for his wife Helen's Exercises for Fun class, which has been conducted on a Monday morning since 2018. Mel always had a great smile and a few words for all the participants of Exercises for Fun, and readily joined in the frivolities of being saluted by the group as they went through the marching exercises. Due to ill health Mel had not been in charge of the music for the past 18 months. However, he did come to the Get Online lunch in October and enjoyed seeing everyone there. Our sympathy is extended to Helen on her loss of Mel.

**John Ellis**, a member of the Play Reading Group and past member of Coin Collectors, Collectors and the Armchair Traveller, passed away in Melbourne on November 30th. John was involved in many organisations in Benalla including Legacy and the St Vincent de Paul Society. He also had many friends within the Catholic Church in Benalla. John loved the theatre and was involved with the Benalla Theatre Company. He had written the newsletter report for the Play Reading group's November reading of 'A Garden of Grand Daughters' and attended the U3A Christmas Lunch at the King River Cafe less than a week before he died. Our sympathy is extended to John's wife Janice, who is also a member of U3A Benalla.

## Community - 'Come and Try' Croquet Days at the Benalla Croquet Club

An invitation has been received from the Benalla Croquet Club who are holding Come and Try days at its venue at the Tennis Courts, Ackerly Avenue, Benalla on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, commencing at 9.00am. All you need to do is turn up wearing flat, comfortable shoes. All the equipment that you will require will be supplied on the day. When playing croquet, apart from the social aspect and being with friendly people you will get exercise walking around the courts, exercise your brain by learning to judge where to hit the balls, whether you use jump shots, removing your opponent's ball out of the way, as well as lining up and placing the balls in and through the hoops. Another benefit is the exercise obtained when using the upper part of your body and arms when hitting the ball. It is also a lot of fun. Contact: Irene Clift 0475 200 427 or email [benallacroquet@gmail.com](mailto:benallacroquet@gmail.com).

## Community –Benalla Art Gallery's Schedule of Events – February/March 2023

The staff of the Benalla Art Gallery, under Gallery Director Eric Nash, offer a unique selection of quality and diverse events during the year. Coming up: [First Mondays: Deborah Kelly Artist Talk](#) – 10am Monday 6 February; [Masterclass with Deborah Kelly: Make a diminutive deity](#) – 9am- 4.30pm Tuesday 7 February; [Exhibition Celebration: Daniel O'Toole – Voices from the Void](#) – 6pm Friday 17 February; [Collective Discussion: Giacomo Boschi explores 'What it means to listen'](#) – 3pm Friday 3 March; [Concert: Alyce Platt presents 'Someone's Daughter'](#) – 6pm Saturday 11 March; [Exhibition Celebration: Tony Lloyd – High Plains Drift](#) – 6pm Friday 17 March; [Film Screening: Journey Beyond Fear](#) – 6pm Sunday 26 March. To register to attend phone 5760 2619 or email: [gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au)

## Enrolment Day 2023



There are more photos on the website – go to [Enrolment Day](#) or look under 'NEWS':

# What's On

## Wednesday, 1 February

09:30 Play Reading – 'Hotel Sorrento' Hannie Rayson

## Thursday, 2 February

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Family Research - Beginners

13:00 Patchwork and Craft – 'Show and Tell'

## Friday, 3 February

10:00 Sustainability

14:00 'In the Lap of the Gods'

## Monday, 6 February

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Collectors - 'Recipes' - Old and favourite recipe books and recipes

10:00 Lifeball - Marlene 0407 240 943

10:00 Art Appreciation – 'First Monday' speaker, Deborah Kelly, 'The Gods of Tiny Things'

12:45 Ukes4Fun

14:00 Investment

14:00 Let's Talk Books

## Tuesday, 7 February

10:00 Page Turners – 'The Zookeeper's War'

10:00 Stock and Land – Graham Hooper, 'Clear Hills Sundowns' sheep stud - Goorambat

12:15 German

14:00 Sky's the Limit – Mark Carr, pilot and author

## Wednesday, 8 February

10:00 Recorder Group

13:30 A Taste of Art

14:00 Film Discussion Group

14:00 Tech Savvy Apple 'Pages'

## Thursday, 9 February

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Family Research - Beginners

13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

## Friday, 10 February

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Australian History

## Monday, 13 February

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball - Marlene 0407 240 943

11:30 Be Connected - Managing Money Online

12:30 Tech Advice

12:45 Ukes4Fun

14:00 Creative Writing

14:00 Garden Team – 'Rupe's'

## Tuesday, 14 February

10:00 Politics and Current Affairs

12:15 German

14:00 Jane Austen Book Club

14:00 Tech Talks

## Wednesday, 15 February

10:00 Meet and Mingle – 'Connectivity in Benalla', Charlene Donovan, NBN

14:00 Cards '500'

## Thursday, 16 February

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Patchwork and Craft

14:00 Demystifying Psychology Discussion Group

## Friday, 17 February

10:00 Wine Appreciation – Pennyweight Winery, Beechworth

10:00 Sustainability

12:00 Chat 'n Chew - The Royal Hotel

## Monday, 20 February

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball - Marlene 0407 240 943

11:30 Be Connected - Managing Money Online

12:30 Tech Advice

12:45 Ukes4Fun

14:00 As Time Goes By - Memoir Writing

## Tuesday, 21 February

10:00 Enjoying the Internet

12:15 German

14:00 Exploring the Universe

## Wednesday, 22 February

10:00 Recorder Group

13:30 A Taste of Art

14:00 Wise Guys Book Group – 'Two Favourite Non-Fiction Books'

## Thursday, 23 February

09:30 Garden Appreciation – Holy Trinity Close and St Joseph's Village Courtyard gardens

10:00 Photography

10:00 Community Singing

13:00 Family Research 'In Search of'/'Time Travelling'

## Friday, 24 February

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Australian History

## Saturday, 25 February

17:00 Newsletter reports due today

## Monday, 27 February

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball - Marlene 0407 240 943

12:45 Ukes4Fun

13:30 Coin Collectors

## Tuesday, 28 February

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs

12:15 German

14:00 Brain Games

## Wednesday, 1 March

09:00 Bushwalking - Easywalks - Corowa/Wahgunyah and Rutherglen

09:30 Play Reading

## Thursday, 2 March

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Family Research - Beginners

13:00 Patchwork and Craft

## Friday, 3 March

10:00 Sustainability

14:00 'In the Lap of the Gods'

## Monday, 6 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Collectors

10:00 Lifeball - Marlene 0407 240 943

10:00 Art Appreciation

12:45 Ukes4Fun

14:00 Investment

14:00 Let's Talk Books