



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – February 2018

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to newsletter@u3abenalla.com by Wednesday 28 March

President's Report



One month in and wonderful to see and hear that all groups are doing well. We still have a noise problem. My hope is next week's meeting with Council will get a solution (Fingers crossed).

Changes are still happening in our room with the installation of the Overhead Projector, bought and paid for by U3A.

The AGM is in March at our Meet & Mingle. This is an important meeting to attend as this is when the election of your office bearers will take place.

Dorothy Webber President

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will be held on 21 March during Meet N Mingle. Some positions will be open for election. Nomination forms are available [HERE](#) or from RedB4 Bookshop. The following positions are being vacated and nominations are called for:

- General committee member
- Publicity Officer
- Treasurer

A nomination form is available for download from our website. Follow this link to download the form: [Nomination Form](#). Return your nomination forms to the Secretary or leave at RedB4 Bookshop next door to Hides Bakery. A copy of the form is also attached. Please note that only current financial members of U3A Benalla are eligible.

Group Reports

Armchair Traveller

We resume our travels at 10.00am on Tuesday March 20 at the U3A room. Jan will complete her

group travel in rural UK. We hope also to do some bush-bashing in outback Australia with Rupe and Gwen. With 8 new members and 12 continuing from last year we hope for a lively year. However we desperately need more volunteers to tell us about their travels. If you do not have slide shows, DVD, or PowerPoint presentations to support your story don't be put off. Just contact me on 0418 576 155 and I will help by working out some visual support

John Avery

Art Appreciation

A full house arrived at the Simpson Gallery to hear artist, Ray Hearn, talk about his exhibition "True Ned" a mixed media display of paintings, wall sculptures and ceramics. Ray spoke about the background to his exploration of the Kelly legend.

Facts, myths, memories and visual interpretations by Sydney Nolan have all informed his views of Kelly. In effect a huge tangled web of all these influences has caused Ray and a new generation of post-Nolan artists to reinterpret the complexity of our responses to Kelly.

Nolan, who created the most iconic image of Kelly – the black slitted mask – has been appropriated by Ray and reworked in new images of Kelly with peripheral events that may be either fact or myth. Ray originally trained as a ceramic artist and his painted and glazed pottery covered with Kelly images is particularly fine and worth a close inspection.

People interested in the Kelly legend attended the opening of this exhibition at the Gallery on 25 February at 3 – 5pm. John McQuilton, one of the most respected historians of the Kelly legend spoke at the opening and answered Kelly questions. His book, The Kelly Outbreak 1878 –

1880: The Geographical Dimension of Social Banditry, 1987 is well known amongst Kelly enthusiasts. Earlier in the afternoon McQuilton gave a talk about the early colonial works in the collection – a noteworthy event.

Meg Dillon

Bird Watching

Lake Benalla Thursday 8 March 2018

Our first activity for 2018 will be a gentle stroll around part of the lake, looking for water birds and bush birds. Please meet at 9.30am in the car park behind the Seniors building. We plan to finish around 12 o'clock.



Binoculars make bird watching much more enjoyable, so if you have a pair please bring them. Feel free to ask me if you would like help on how to adjust the focus for your eyes, so you get a clear picture. You may want to carry a water bottle, a snack and a sun hat. Comfortable walking shoes are advisable.

Kathy Costello

Brain Games

It was lovely to have such a large brains trust for our initial meeting and hopefully we'll be as smart and versatile in the March gathering where there'll be another range of challenges!

Elspeth Maconachie

Bushwalks



Mid Week Walks

Wednesday 14 March Harrietville

A day in Harrietville walking along the river where the branch divides and where there are many mining features in the landscape. This walk is to be led by Susie Buykx. The contact person for U3A members is Vaughan Cowan 5762 1980. We will be leaving from the Barkly Street tennis court car park behind Aldi at 8.30 am.

Easy Walks

The destination for the first Easy Walk for 1918 on Wednesday 4th April is still to be confirmed. More details in the next newsletter and on the website.

Vaughan Cowan

Chat n' Chew

Benalla Art Gallery Café

Friday Mar 16 at 11.45am

All welcome. Contact Shirley 5762 6768

By Tuesday 13 March if you are attending



Shirley Kearney

Collectors

The first session was one of interest and fun and was enjoyed by 18 members including several first timers.

The theme was 'Kitchenalia' and a diverse range of goods was displayed. Carving knives, steels, an ice pick, even a walnut opener were shown as well as a chestnut roaster, canisters and much more.

The Willow hanging meat safe took us all back and we could remember our mothers mincing the left over roast by turning a handle of a mincer attached to the kitchen table.

Of particular interest was a copy of Mrs Beeton's cookbook which included a personal message to a young Shirlie thanking her for being kind to a lady in church and May showed a tea towel which depicted the church she was married in.



At the end of the morning Bev showed us a slide show of the two previous years, and we all decided that we really are avid collectors.

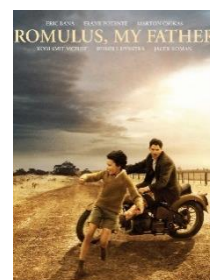
Next month is the Labour day holiday but it was decided to meet regardless. There is no set theme, bring whatever you fancy.

Judith Borthwick

e-Book Group

Romulus, My Father by Raimond Gaita.

Gaita writes a heartfelt tribute to his father, a Yugoslavian migrant who established his family in a bush shack near Maryborough Victoria. Romulus, the blacksmith, is seen as a peasant saint by his son who, as a child, absorbed the hard lessons of his father's stiff morality. Gaita's German mother, Christine, was a deeply troubled woman who suffered periods of mental instability



punctuated by her unfaithfulness to her husband and child.

Gaita blames neither of his parents for his harsh upbringing but instead claims he learnt both compassion and self-sufficiency from his parents who lived life more intensely than their Australian neighbours. The bush around Frogmore is beautifully described and a solace to the boy.

“Does any child truly know his father?” was one of discussions the group followed as we tried to understand the complex family relationships Gaita explores. Some group members found their empathy for this type of child rearing sorely tested as the novel progressed, but no-one can doubt Gaita’s sincerity to this panegyric to his childhood.

Meg Dillon

Exercises for Fun

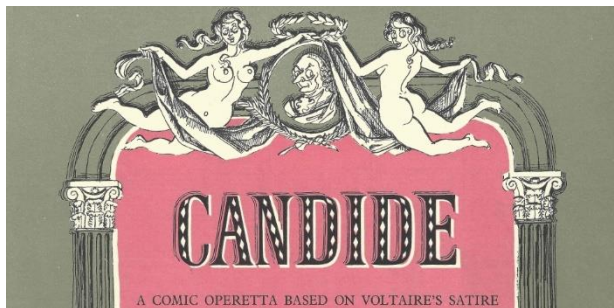


Exercise for Fun has started off with an enthusiastic group of people, of varying fitness, enjoying exercising to old-time music. If you would like to join us at 9:30am each Monday you are welcome.

Helen Jeffree

Exploring New Operas

An enjoyable evening was spent viewing Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*, 1989, [American]. This DVD is of a recording session made by Bernstein himself and is regarded by some as the best recording of the work.



The presentation of it is different from most operas we have seen so far. Bernstein presents the work with the orchestra on stage and the singers presenting it as an oratorio instead of as a drama.

Bernstein chose an eighteenth-century novel “Candide” by the French philosopher Voltaire as his subject matter. This seems unusual for the mid twentieth century composer. In the novel Voltaire savagely satirises Optimism. Dr Pangloss is the eternal optimist who believes that everything that

happens, happens for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Voltaire tests this by putting Candide, the innocent young man, through a series of wildly improbable events all of which are increasingly unpleasant. Monarchy, the churches, war, greed and betrayal were savagely attacked by Voltaire and turned into some marvellously amusing arias by Bernstein.

Born in America, Bernstein was quintessentially European in musical tastes and outlook and had been greatly affected by the events of the holocaust and the concentration camp orchestras in the Second World War. Composer and conductor (New York Philharmonic) he was one of the key musical influences in America in the twentieth century.

Meg Dillon

Exploring the Universe

At our first session for 2018 we welcomed new participants Brian Feeley and Graham McNutt.

There has been a lot of publicity lately about what seems to be a race to the Planet Mars. Why Mars? It’s the nearest planet that is the most similar to Earth. Every 26 months the orbits of Earth and Mars around the Sun bring them close enough in space to offer a short window of opportunity for a more efficient mission. Since the 1960s only 38% of the 42 missions have succeeded. Technology has improved. In 2020 NASA will launch another exploratory rover to Mars. The UAE will send their first spacecraft to study the Martian atmosphere and China will launch an orbiter and a small rover.

This month Elon Musk’s Space X launched the heavy Falcon rocket carrying his Tesla sports car as payload into space. He has announced that Space X aims to launch 100 people to Mars by 2024. There is still no way of slowing and landing a heavy crewed mission that is travelling faster than the speed of sound; but they are working on it, so stay tuned!

Back here on Earth we viewed film from NASA’s in space Solar Dynamics Observatory which takes constant images of the Sun every second 24/7. The aim is to improve space weather forecasting. Many of these images are in wavelengths that humans can’t see, but SDO filters them into colours that we can view. So first a crash course on light and colour of invisible light, then we were able to appreciate the spectacular activity of the Sun’s surface.

Much of this film was edited for U3A and can’t be viewed on U-tube but SDO’s ‘Jewel Box of the Sun’ can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kS57VH3QN1g>

Next month weather permitting; we will view the Sun through Astronomy Benalla's solarscope.

Bev Morton

Film and Literature

This month we watched Appointment with Death.

Genre: Dramatic crime mystery

Plot: Emily Boynton, step-mother to the three Boynton children and mother to Ginevra, blackmails the family lawyer, Jefferson Cope, into destroying a second will of her late husband which would have freed the children from her dominating influence. She takes herself and the children on holiday to Europe and the Holy Land, where she is murdered. Hercule Poirot investigates.

Key Characters: Hercule Poirot (Peter Ustinov), Lady Westholme (Lauren Bacall), Emily Boynton (Piper Laurie), Nadine Boynton (Carrie Fisher).

Review: we rated as between 3 out of 5.

Most of the attendees found the movie enjoyable. It was noted that the facial expressions were striking, which was possibly due to the stage experience by many of the actors. With the camera focussing in on the faces on some occasions, this was not always found to be a positive. Mostly we found Ustinov's performance was good, although not all agreed. We discussed how Poirot's moustache portrayed by different actors we had seen in the role – Ustinov's was perhaps underplayed, with Kenneth Branagh's well overplayed; David Suchet's was somewhere in between.

The talent of some of the actors was displayed, with it taking some time to recognise the actor as seen in other movies. One example was Carrie Fisher playing Nadine Boynton.

Further: Our March movie will be the 1970 version of The Railway Children, based on the novel by E.Nesbit. We aim to start watching the movie promptly at 1:00pm so that we have time to discuss the movie.

With all the movies we watch, we look at them as literature – literature in a different medium, the medium of film. This helps to focus the discussion, covering ideas around genre, characters, plot, but also adding the aspects that relate to film, such as cinemascope, music and atmosphere.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation

Wangaratta Nurseries 22 March

Meet in U3A Carpark. We will visit Linga-A-While and Park Lane Nursery, lunch at Vintage Hall Café in Glenrowan. Please bring morning tea to share, thermos flask and hot water. Tea, coffee and milk will be provided.

Ballarat Day Trip 26 April

Ballarat Botanical Gardens

Lambley Nursery, Ascot

Coach day trip. Lunch at Pipers By The Lake at own cost. Coach \$30 per person. Phone Gwen Turner 5762 7017 or 0438 627 010

Gwen Turner

Garden Team

We worked so well we were allowed to stop before much more than an hour had passed. Wasps also had some influence on proceedings! it was a tasty and well-deserved afternoon tea which was as fruitful as our labours.

I hope the secateurs were claimed and that the same energy is available to Lois at our next meeting on March 19 (though Elspeth may be a non-starter that day with Tai Chi training in Melb)

Elspeth Maconachie

Investment

At the first meeting of Investment for 2018 we welcomed two new members Janette Knapper and Meg Johnson, and also welcomed back Judy Stewart who was a member of Investment 2 a few years ago.

We commenced the year by looking at a comparison of conditions that could affect investing in the Share Market as compared with February of 2014 to 2017. The variation in the all ordinaries, iron ore price and Australian dollar fluctuation were all interesting. However, the increase in the American DOW index was perhaps the most remarkable of the conditions we looked at.

As it was the start of 2018 we also looked at the ASX 200 winners and losers for 2017. Commsec had published some Economic Insights into the Big Issues of 2018, and we studied a précis of these Issues.

The final Topic for the afternoon was Medical Cannabis and the changing scenario behind several companies listed on the Stock Exchange. Changes in State and Federal Government legislature is encouraging these companies, which are still in

their infancy, to develop both medicinal and other products for the Australian market and to export these products if appropriate.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Friday 2 March 2018 at 1.30pm in the U3A room at the Seniors Complex, Faulkner Drive, Benalla.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

Our first meeting held in 2018 was very well attended and we welcomed quite a few new members.

Reading was a priority for many during the hot weather. A variety of books were shared which included 'What the Dead Know' by Laura Lippman, Anne Holt a Norwegian author who wrote the mystery The Death of a Demon, The Shetland Series by Anne Cleave, and The Music Shop author Rachel Joyce.

A book that evoked some discussion was The Man Who Loved China by Simon Winchester. The book launched at the Library by Glenna Thomson 'Stella and Margie' is being read by a few in the group and author Lucinda Ryley's books are being enjoyed all over Benalla, Lucinda has written the Seven Sister series. Song of a War Boy and Finding Gobi tugged at the heartstrings.

Hope to see you all at 2pm on 6 March at the Library.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball



Lifeball this year began midway through January, because all the players wanted to recommence our season early, such was the enthusiasm remaining from last year!!

We began with two more new players, and another new player joined just this week, so our weekly numbers are hovering between 15-18 players - a very satisfying increase on last year. Two players regularly come from Mansfield, occasionally more, but the Mansfield girls are such a welcome addition, as they add to the jollity and laughter of each game. We would like to call this wonderful game "LAUGHBALL", as this is how we spend the bulk of our time when playing - laughing!!

Our Fun and Friendship day this year will be on 16th April. We decided March was still too hot

in our hall to comfortably play for a day, so this year we decided to move to a later time. We will be inviting Mansfield, Eildon, Rutherglen, Myrtleford, Albury, Wangaratta and Deniliquin to join us for a day of Lifeball, Fun, Food, and Friendship. We cater for our guests for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea, before teams return to their home clubs.

Despite the game being "non-competitive", it is usually very competitive, but can be difficult, as any physical contact between players is deemed a "barge", and the ball goes to the opposition.

The game is primarily very safe, and every aspect of the game is directed towards that end - safety. That's why it's a walking game, no running, and no going backwards....it is too unsafe!

However, as the years have passed, the skill levels have increased, and some players have refined these levels brilliantly.

But, for us, the game is just great fun, as well as increasing our fitness, mobility and balance.

Come along any Monday morning at 9.30 (at least in the summer, we will revert to 10am when the weather cools significantly) to the Recreation Centre in Arundel St, and gauge for yourself how great is our game. You will be made very welcome, as all our newcomers will attest!

Marg Merriman 5762 2967

Meet and Mingle

We had a presentation by representatives of Benalla Health who spoke about Heart Attacks and Strokes covering why they happen, their treatment and how to prevent them occurring. Some influences can be modified these being exercise, weight reduction and low level alcohol consumption while the gender influence is fixed.

Next month's Meet & Mingle we will feature Frank Reeves from Wangaratta with his electric car(s) who will bring us up-to-date on electric vehicles and, in particular, the Tesla vehicle.

Wednesday 21 March

**U3A Benalla Annual General Meeting
will be held at this Meet N Mingle**

Bill Parris

Moments in Australian History

Captain William Bligh, Hero or Villain, was the subject of our first session as we tried to decide to what extent he was responsible for the mutiny on the Bounty in 1789.

Bligh was always an ambitious, parsimonious man given to violent tempers and abuse of his crews. Despite this he was not a flogging Captain and controlled most of his sea voyages successfully. Bligh's early experiences as a merchant navy captain taking his father-in-law's ships to the British slave colonies of the Caribbean; his naval service under James Cook; and his later service in the war with the French all passed without serious incidents.

The Bounty voyage however presented a number of problems that were different from any he experienced on other voyages. The Bounty was seriously overcrowded even by C18 standards



Picture from Wikipedia

because a great portion of its lower deck was made over as a nursery for the breadfruit plants that were to be obtained from Tahiti. Bligh had taken on a lacklustre crew of midshipmen, many of whom were not fully competent as able seamen and so could not control or teach skills effectively to the common sailors. Bligh was parsimonious with rations as he was purser in addition to being Captain, a most unusual combination. Bligh had agreed to a huge reduction in salary from £500 to £50 for his services as he expected to make money from the plantation owners when he delivered the breadfruit to the Caribbean. These and other issues including his vicious outbursts and demand for perfection from his crew created an atmosphere of uncertainty that infected the ship, finally resulting in the mutiny after the ship left Tahiti after a five month stay to collect the plants.

The film "Rogue Nation" demonstrated the amazing feat of navigation he performed in getting the small cutter crowded with eighteen loyal crew to Timor after the mutineers cast them off from the Bounty. Finally, most of us agreed that a complex mix of circumstances was the likely cause of the mutiny along with his temperament and inability to keep the respect of the crew.

Next session we will look at the development of the young colony of New South Wales, its increasingly complex social mix and the staging of the Rum Rebellion against Bligh as Governor. Here Bligh met his nemesis, the invincible John Macarthur. The clash of the two inflexible and opinionated men brought the young colony to its knees and was the first of several rebellions as the

colony started to develop in ways unanticipated by the British government.

Meg Dillon

Music Appreciation

On Friday Feb 9 we listened to a varied selection of music picked by John Avery.

In keeping with John's policy of bringing lesser known composers to our attention we listened to several dances and some marching music by Mikhail Mikhailovich Ippolitov-Ivanov.

Mikhail studied in Moscow but then spent some time in Georgia and his music contains influences from this area of the world. He was also able to incorporate Turkish sounds into his music. He returned to Moscow in 1905 and stayed there until he died in 1935. His music has a stirring aspect to it and was very enjoyable to listen to.

From a lesser known composer, we then moved to a very well-known composer - Wolfgang Mozart - and we enjoyed listening to Quintet in A Major for Clarinet and Strings. K581.

In this case the clarinettist was Benedict Goodman - better known as Jazz musician Benny Goodman. This was recorded on 25 April 1938 and caused a little controversy in its day. Can a Jazz musician play classical music? Should a Jazz musician play classical music?

We finished up by listening to the exquisite Violin Concerto in D Major Op61 by Beethoven. This is one of the great pieces of music and was the perfect way to finish the morning even though there were complaints about the noise.

It was also disappointing that we were not able to get all the equipment to work.

Neville Gibb

Over There

The new course of 'Over There' commenced on January 16th with the screening of a revisionist BBC documentary that suggested that Britain fought the Great War in self defence. This view is at odds with all historical writing and research. The documentary also suggested that the British generals, no matter how incompetent they were, were doing their best when they sacrificed thousands of lives in futile and repeated frontal attacks.

As the documentary only dealt with the outbreak of war on the Western Front, John then led the class through the events that led to the Ottoman Turks allying themselves with the Central Powers of Germany and Austro-Hungary. He then

explained why the Australians and New Zealanders ended up landing in the Dardanelles.

John also sought details of class members' family members who had served in the Great War. This raised issues like enlistment of Australians in Britain and the disaster of Kut during the Mesopotamia campaign, both of which John hopes to explore in the next class. He will also cover the work of local Recruitment Committees and the experience of British Pals Battalions.

At our next session, after exploring war strategies of the various powers, John anticipates playing the first in a series of French Canadian documentaries that show the Great War as we have never seen it – in colour and with people moving at normal speed. These documentaries, based on French film, also show a different aspect to the Great War.

John Barry

Patchwork

We had a great start to the new year of stitching and continue to enjoy seeing what the others have achieved.

Dorothy Webber

Play Reading

'Alive and Kicking' by Judy Bierwith was the play chosen for our group of play readers in February. Synonymous with the title, the chosen cast took on the character roles enthusiastically. An off-beat comedy, the play revolves around recently widowed Alan, whose daughter decides he is to go into care. Alan refuses and the antics and personalities that become involved reflect the dilemma of ageing and the choices available. We all took note! We welcomed several new members and always have room for more – no specific talent required! Next month we will complete 'Alive and Kicking', then begin 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie', which features an unconventional teacher, political intrigue and scandal. Previous U3A groups who have read it rate it highly. Our first choice, '84 Charing Cross Road' was unavailable, but will be obtained at a later date.

Jenny McKenna

Politics and Current Affairs

It seems out political class are so self-absorbed that they forget the struggle against poverty and homelessness that many in Australia face. The issue over Barnaby's flat does nothing to help the growing numbers of very young and old now facing life on the street. How can we condone the advert showing a young woman sleeping in a swag

under a bridge, leaving her vulnerable? How can we condone people begging and living rough in a wealthy nation like ours? Surely it is time that our governments intervened, or are we so sucked into capitalism we believe it is the fault of the homeless and nothing to do with us? This is politics in 2018.

Terry Case

Recorder Group



Plastic recorders, wooden recorders, mostly descant with a couple of trebles. Recorders newly bought, some old friends and several rescued from the cupboard that stores long ago school gear. Mix in some people who could play, people who could play a little and some who had barely chance to take their new recorder out of the plastic sleeve. Add a skilled, and surely magic, music teacher. Learn some basic music concepts, practise the recorder notes B, A and G and viola! - at the end of the first session we have complete beginners playing Hot Cross Buns and more experienced players tackling accompaniment pieces. And all in two hours!

For the next session, 4th Wednesday, beginners will take the 10-11 time slot and the more experienced players, 11 -12.

We will all keep practising and for motivation we might watch FM's video via Seldom Sene - A Vivaldi concerto played on plastic recorders and a 1980s Casio keyboard. Fantastic!

1st Wednesday is now scheduled from 12 midday to 1 pm; (Changed from 12.15 to 1.15 pm).

Pat Treleaven

Singing for Fun

Our convenor, Joyce Borschmann welcomed everyone to the first meeting in February, telling us that over 50 people had enrolled for Singing for Fun this year. Joyce also welcomed back our three leaders Margaret Merriman, Brian Greed and Faith Hicks for 2018 and also our pianist Gwen Barnes.

Joyce encouraged everyone to wear their name badge so that the new members of the group could get to know everyone very soon.

At our first meeting the leaders started gently by having songs which we were reasonably familiar with. At both of the Singing for Fun meetings in February we had forty members in our U3A room

which is more than last year. The Harmony group continues not to have so many members.

However, it is also an integral part of Singing for Fun where we practice the harmony used in many of our songs. So, we would encourage everyone to come to Harmony as well.

At our third meeting for the month Lois Jackson filled in as two of our leaders were away. Lois introduced us to a three-part version of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" which some had not heard before.

Margaret Merriman started us with the popular John Denver song "Take me home, Country Road" Considering the number of voices we will make an impact with this when we have sung it a couple of times.

The next Singing for Fun meeting will be on Thursday 1 March 2018 at 10am in the U3A room at the Seniors Centre.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

While livestock auctions are no longer regular fixtures of Benalla business life, up until the 1970s, agents yarded up to 20,000 cattle, 15,000 sheep, 7000 pigs and 1200 calves a year in the city's yards, former stock and station agent Ray O'Shannessy told the inaugural Stock and Land U3A session on February 6.

In fact in the late 1950s, five times as many sheep, half as many pigs but only about one third the number of cattle were yarded on a yearly basis. New cattle saleyards were built in 1990 and regular sheep sales finished in the mid 1990s.

Benalla livestock sales started in 1860 at the corner of Bridge and Carrier Streets and in September 1888, 60,000 sheep were advertised for a quarterly sale. Ray, who worked for 16 years with Victorian Producers before becoming an accountant, said there were about 90 stock and station agents operating in Benalla over a century and a half; in his time, from 1950 to 1966, there were about nine. In 1942, the mid-point in the Benalla yard's history, bullocks sold for about \$60, wethers for \$6 and lambs for \$5. But that just indicates a point in time; prices leaped up and down before and after that.

A lively discussion followed on the reasons why sale yards such as the Benalla saleyards are gradually disappearing, although David noted that a new regional saleyard in his childhood town of Mortlake is set to invigorate the town.

At our next session on Tuesday March 6 at 10 am from paddock to plate entrepreneur Sandy Latham will explore the challenges faced in running the unique Benalla business 'Hook and Spoon'.

David Palmer

Tech Savvy

iPad for Beginners

We have lots of new students who want to be better acquainted with their Apple iPads, Apple iPhones or learn how to use an iPad on a borrowed U3A iPad.

In our first session we learned about the buttons, ports and the camera lenses on iPads. We also discussed WiFi and got ourselves connected to the U3A WiFi.

In the second session our main focus was 'surfing the web' which we did via Google.

One of the Quiz questions asked was, 'When did the Queen visit Benalla?' Interestingly there were two differing answers; 1953 and 1954, depending upon which website you went to. So beware! 'Fake facts' are out there.

Thank you to Bev Lee for coming along each session and helping the absolute beginners in setting up email accounts and helping to solve computing problems.

Also thank you to Pat Treleaven, Margaret Walshe and Helen Jeffries for being wonderful mentors to other iPad beginners.

Next month Tech Savvy Beginners iPad sessions are on Wednesday 7th March and Wednesday 21st March.

Jenny Sawyer

Tech Savvy Projects

Our Tech Savvy Projects have now been clustered into three sub groups, 'Family History', 'Other Projects' and 'E-Shed'. With diverse devices, systems, applications, learning needs and project ideas, members within the groups are making valued input to class discussion and informally clustering, encouraging and assisting one another. Our aim is to come to each new session having achieved something on our projects since the last session, however small. Lots of challenges are being faced, not least the difficulties with the WiFi internet in the U3A meeting room. A family history group member was to start a recent session trialling a new ancestry.com account with us all watching via



the overhead projected screen when the internet froze. It was unavailable for the remainder of the class. Members, ever patient and enterprising, set to using their phones and other methods to do as much as they could. Is it impact of the NBN works nearby? Are we in a black spot? Is it a combination? Divided into subgroups, we do not have more than 10 in each subgroup and the modem is supposed to cater for 20. Don't be surprised if you find us sitting as a group on the other side of town trialling the use of the U3A modem at the Royal Hotel or Golf Club next month!

Meeting times – 2nd and 4th Tuesdays: Family History 1.30 to 3 pm/Other Projects 3 to 4.30 pm; 4th Thursday 1 pm to 2.30 pm 'E-Shed'.

Bev Lee

Tech Savvy Talks

Artificial Intelligence has become a hot topic in recent times. It was an agenda item at the World Economic Forum at Davos earlier this year. It was also a major item for discussion at the recent World Government Summit in Dubai, where it was addressed under the title of Human Augmentation.

The Talk Savvy Talks meeting this month had an in-depth look at what Artificial Intelligence is and found that it is now considered to consist of several parts:

- Artificial Narrow Intelligence A(NI). Generally refers to intelligence required for a specific task. eg. Siri on an iphone or ipad.
- Artificial General Intelligence A(GI). Generally refers to the whole range of intelligence of the human brain.
- Artificial Super Intelligence A(SI). Generally refers to intelligence beyond the capacity of the human brain.

A(NI) is very much in use at the present time and has the capacity to take over high level repetitive tasks currently carried out by humans, which is why it is a topic of conversation at World Forums. It can have a major impact on society and is considered by some to be as significant as was the Industrial Revolution.

We looked at several relevant videos, including 'What is Artificial Intelligence – for People in a Hurry'; 'Google's Deep Mind Explained' and an interview with educator and entrepreneur Sebastian Thrun, 'What AI is -- and isn't', which highlights the way in which the new generation

of computers is programming itself (subtitles/closed captions available) ([link to transcript](#)).

Next month we will consider the impact and potential future impact of AI.

Les Rodgers

Towards a Sustainable Future

A synopsis prepared by John of the multitude of issues relating to a sustainable future which appeared in the papers in January formed a fertile base for discussion during our first session. Issues raised by members added to the mix, with 'local interest' generated during discussion of the recent rejection of recycled waste from regional municipalities in Victoria by China. Class members who have lived in Benalla for many years reported that some decades ago a furnace was built in Benalla for just this purpose and that the building, long unused, is still standing.

A major focus at our second session was the Murray Darling Basin and the government's plan to reduce by 70 billion litres the amount of water that irrigators must return to the environment in the northern part of the Murray Darling Basin. The plan was blocked in the senate by Labour supporting the Greens. A lively discussion followed about the pros and cons of the Murray Darling Basin.

We are always keen to discuss positive stories and are sure many will emerge as a result of the work of the Renewable Energy Benalla group. Among other strategies, Renewable Energy Benalla is promoting a session by Mondo Energy in early April regarding a bulk buy offer to the Benalla community of panels, monitoring systems and eventually batteries, with the potential to develop microgrids throughout Benalla. Many U3A members resident in the Ascot Court area have solar panels, at least one of whom has expressed interest in being part of a microgrid.

The Benalla Sustainable Future Group quarterly Newsletter is now available on the BSFG website, a great place to catch up with the ideas and work of the local sustainable futures oriented community, including current concerns about the future of the Greater Glider with the intended logging of the Barjarg coupe in the Strathbogies.

John Lloyd and Bev Lee

Travel Club

Our first meeting was well attended with 22 present. We are a diverse age group with different requirements when it comes to travel. The aim of

this group is therefore to organise a range of trips which will ensure everyone's needs are addressed. Our activities will include day trips as well as longer and may be by bus, train or ship. We may also consider international cruises.

We all appreciate it takes many months to organise a trip and to assist with this a questionnaire was distributed with an "overview of suggested activities" for the near future.

Your completed questionnaire may be handed in at next meeting or left at the Red B4 bookshop in an envelope addressed to U3A Travel Group.

Cath O'Connor volunteered to be secretary/treasurer when available. Rhonda and Dave Barry will convene the next meeting on 21 March assisted by Stella Wharton standing in as secretary. Many put up their hand to help where required and thank you to those people.

We had some discussion on travel insurance and some terrific ideas from around the room.

Samantha Riddell, a local travel consultant, attended to meet our group. Samantha will be guest speaker at our April Meeting. Her knowledge will be invaluable on the subject of insurance and she will outline how she can be of service to our group.

We are setting up a group email system to get information out in a timely manner. It is your group and your input is vital to its survival. Your input is much appreciated.

Judy Perry

Wine Appreciation

Wednesday 28 March

We have reached a milestone and celebrate 21 years of U3A wine appreciation. Our founding convener was Louise Doddrell who led the way for many years. A few of us can remember that first visit in February 1998 to Auldstone winery when we took a picnic lunch. We will meet at the car park at 10.00 am and travel to Gracebrook vineyards for wine tasting and 21st Anniversary lunch. All U3A members are welcome to join us.

Keith & Heather 5762 4086

Writing Workshop

The 2018 Writing Workshop 'menu' of options is now in operation. Creative writing enthusiasts met first, with Jenny McKenna and Joy Shirley agreeing

to guide the group as Helen Treloar Duggin has decided to focus on her own writing this year and is unavailable. Thank you Helen for your work in releasing the creative powers of group members last year - we do hope you will pop in to our pub sessions and share your writing journey with us! The creative writers are now working on 'a bed time story for children set in North East Victoria' for sharing in April.

Our 'catch up at the Northo' option was well attended and most convivial, with holiday topics 'Lost in Music' and 'Things I left behind' shared and ideas and drafts of some upcoming topics discussed.

The next Creative Writing and Northo Sessions will be in April. Labour Day falls during the Benalla Street Art Festival this year, so the Northo could be rather full!

The sharing of stories about treasured, occasionally feared, grandparents at our regular session was a delight. We heard beautiful descriptions of grandparents who somehow reminded us of our own and of country life in bygone years. We reflected on the impact of depression, war and the loss of grandchildren through divorce on grandparents and were intrigued by stories including long held, often colourful, 'family secrets', finally revealed now it is safe to do so.

The topic for our March 28th session is 'A Friendship Tested'. The brief - 'A true friend is there through thick and thin, but not all friendships survive under pressure. Tell us about a time when a friendship was put to the test. Did it strengthen your relationship or push it over the edge'. A challenging brief! At our last session Jenny shared her story of the testing of a highly valued friendship, stimulating those with 'writers block' to think of possible 'angles'.

Bev Lee

Some dates for your diary:

- 14 Mar Closing date for payment of [Ballarat trip](#)
- 14 Mar Closing date for committee nominations
- 21 Mar [AGM](#) (At Meet N Mingle)

Program Notes

Please note that Monday 12 March is Labour Day. Some programs will continue on Labour Day but some are not being held. Check What's On below or keep an eye of the calendar on our website for last minute updates.



What's On

Thursday, 1 March

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 2 March

09:30 Towards a Sustainable Future

13:30 Investment

Monday, 5 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun

09:30 Lifeball

10:00 Art Appreciation

13:30 Brain Games

Tuesday, 6 March

10:00 E-Book Group

10:00 Stock and Land - Sandy Latham 'Hook and Spoon'

13:30 Membership Services Group

14:00 Let's Talk Books

Wednesday, 7 March

09:30 Play Reading - 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie'

12:00 Recorder Group

13:30 iPad for Beginners

Thursday, 8 March

09:30 Birdwatching - Lake Benalla

10:00 Singing for Fun - Harmony Group

Friday, 9 March

10:00 Music Appreciation

13:30 Moments in Australian History - 'The young colony of New South Wales'

Monday, 12 March

All day Labour Day

09:30 Exercises for Fun

09:30 Lifeball

10:00 Collectors - 'Bring Whatever You Fancy'

Tuesday, 13 March

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs

13:30 Tech Savvy Projects

Wednesday, 14 March

08:30 Mid Week Walk - Harrietville

10:00 Tech Savvy Talks - The Impact of Artificial Intelligence

13:00 Film and Literature - 'The Railway Children'

17:00 Garden Appreciation - Ballarat trip payment due

19:00 Exploring New Operas 2018

Thursday, 15 March

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 16 March

09:30 Towards a Sustainable Future

11:45 Chat n' Chew - Benalla Art Gallery Cafe

13:30 'Over There'

Monday, 19 March

09:30 (Benalla Seniors Computer Club)

09:30 Exercises for Fun

09:30 Lifeball

13:30 Program Services

14:00 Garden Team

Tuesday, 20 March

All day Travel Club - Kangaroo Island Cruise begins!

10:00 Armchair Traveller

13:30 Exploring the Universe - Astronomy

Benalla's solarscope

Wednesday, 21 March

10:00 Meet and Mingle - AGM/'Electric Vehicles'

10:00 Annual General Meeting - U3A Benalla

12:15 Travel Club

13:30 iPad for Beginners

Thursday, 22 March

09:30 Garden Appreciation - Wangaratta Nurseries

09:30 Program Services

13:00 Tech Savvy Projects - 'E-Shed'

15:00 Tech Savvy Talks @ Rustik

Friday, 23 March

10:00 Music Appreciation

13:30 Moments in Australian History

Monday, 26 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun

09:30 Lifeball

13:30 Writing Workshop - 'A Friendship Tested'

Tuesday, 27 March

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs

13:30 Tech Savvy Projects

Wednesday, 28 March

10:00 Wine Appreciation - Gracebrook Vineyard

10:00 Recorder Group

12:00 Newsletter Deadline

14:00 Membership Services Group

Friday, 30 March

All day Good Friday

Vale

Su Hughes, a long-time member of U3A and a Life Member has died recently and was cremated in a private ceremony. Thank you Su for your long and active association with U3A Benalla

Thank You

**To Steph Ryan and her office staff
For the printing of this newsletter**



Nomination Form

2018 **Executive Positions/Committee**

Person Nominated

.....

Proposed Role

.....

(President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Publicity Officer, General Member, Other)

Proposer

(name)..... (signature)

Seconder

(name) (signature)

Nominee

I am currently a financial member of U3A Benalla Inc. and I accept nomination for this position.

Address.....

Telephone/s.....

..

Signature

.....

Date

.....

Return to the Secretary, U3A Benalla Inc. P O Box 674, Benalla, 3672

or

RedB4 Bookshop (next to Hide's Bakery) by Wednesday 14 March 2018