



Benalla and District Inc. Newsletter – June 2016

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PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Despite the cold weather we had a good turn-out for the June Meet & Mingle when Carol & Godfrey displayed some of the many flags used in Canada and its provinces. Comparing our state flags it seems the Canadians had a bit more flair when it came to flag designs!



John Barry’s two sessions of Legal Matters were quickly filled and have been a great success. John is an informative and entertaining speaker who explained legal complexities and entertained with his anecdotes. I have asked John to do a guest spot in one of our Armchair History classes to look at law through an historical perspective and hope we can entice him to run a few more sessions next year. Thanks John!

I would like to remind members that John and the ANZAC Commemorative Working Party have a regular column in the Benalla Ensign. The recent topic was the promise by the Prime Minister Billy Hughes to send a draft of 50,000 troops in June 1916 followed by monthly drafts of 9,500 men per month. This would lead to one of the greatly divisive issues of the period, Conscription.

Whilst we do not have a tutor for Australian History the Ensign column is a good way of reviewing this period, together with its local news from the time it gives a glimpse of the previous century.

Can I remind you that if you are going to be absent from classes it would be appreciated if you would inform your tutor. This is the time of year when many people suffer from colds and some travel north. Tutors put in a lot of work to run classes and they can be left wondering if it is worthwhile when class sizes drop and they get no feedback.

*Terry Case,
President*

An Important Message for Tutors/Convenors.

Tutors/Convenors Meeting

Friday 15th July from 2 pm to 3.15 pm in W4

Afternoon tea provided.

Normally we hold our meeting early in the year, however we held back this year as we have been holding discussions with Benalla Council Officers and members of the Seniors’ executive.

We will provide you with an update and discuss plans for 2017. I hope all groups will be able to send a representative, especially those of you who use W4.

Terry Case

GROUP REPORTS

Armchair History

Our DVD for the first session in June challenged the description of the period known as the Dark Ages claiming it was a time of great creativity and a period notable for the spread of Christianity. The narrator was one of the new wave of art historians challenging the usual label and showing us some splendid architecture and decorative arts. He showed how early Christian art and sculpture portrayed Jesus and the overlaying of pagan gods with new beliefs. It was startling to find that the first such images were not created until several centuries after the death of Christ and how the images portraying Christ and Mary have changed over time. We were also shown some of the early Christian codes that enabled believers to advertise to others that they were Christian whilst preserving their security.

We will finish the June sessions with a more traditional approach to history with a look at the early Saxon rulers of Britain

Armchair Traveller

The next meeting of Armchair Traveller is scheduled for Tuesday 19th July at 10 am in W4.

Art Appreciation

The June U3A Art group were fortunate to be able to attend a lecture given by local super realist painter **Tony Flint** during the recent *Vista – Artists from NE Victoria* exhibition.

Tony's paintings might be described as in the style of brutalist realism – in part maybe magical realism. All are portraits of aspects of the Australian Landscape. One is a landscape of the Andamooka town area, two are mountains and streams from the North East and another is a display of asteroid like rocks circling close to the ground. There is also a scene of mountains and streams. All have rocks prominently displayed with some also featuring abandoned cars. They all have a deserted, devoid of life feel about them.

Tony explained that like other super realist painters his aim is to manipulate the finished image to give an impression, not a precise copy, of the landscape he is attempting to portray. He may include several landscapes into one or he may overload several different landscapes into one image. His aim is to make

a painting that portrays all aspects of what he considers to sum up the landscape. This is not his idea alone, of course all painters do this to a greater or lesser extent. He gave examples of other realistic landscape artists – such as **Hans Heyson** – who manipulated several landscapes into the one finished image. A finished painting is a work of art and stands by itself.

In two of Tony's painting he has used the same image of water flowing over rocks. This is not immediately obvious on first viewing, but in the course of Tony's lecture this was pointed out and it immediately became obvious. Indeed Tony's lecture made his paintings even more enjoyable and interesting. Our understanding of each painting was enhanced and of course this made the experience more enjoyable.

Bravo Tony Flint. We hope he will give more lectures about both his and other people's art in the future.

*Next gathering will be on Monday July 4th 10 -11 am in the Bennett Gallery reviewing the **Doug Moran Portrait Prize** exhibition.*

Astronomy

On a cold winters afternoon what's better than to ponder Astronomy and take our thoughts out of this world for a while. Dick brought us an article from CERN - European Organisation for Nuclear Research that did just that. "*That invisible dark matter makes up most of the universe - but we can only detect it from its gravitational effect*".

Martin has been delving into the dense star cluster of M67 which shows more Jupiter like planets than usually found in such a location. This inspired Jan and Bev to talk about the **Planet Hunting Telescope, Kepler**. Only the size of a rubbish bin, it was launched in 2009 and found hundreds of new exoplanets. This telescope was designed to focus on one patch in space, which it did for four years until "the wheels fell off!" Well - they didn't actually fall off. Two reaction wheels broke which affected the telescopes focus.

In 2014 spacecraft engineers found a way to reboot Kepler in space. Kepler was relaunched as the K2 mission and is now more mobile and a 'Jack of all trades'. It is looking at targets in our own cosmic backyard, planets only tens of light years away and has found hundreds of them! It's estimated that there is at least one planet orbiting each star up there.

This brought us to a Planet made of diamonds, forty light years from Earth. It was originally a star but a companion pulsar star sucked all the gas from it. Its internal nuclear fusion died causing it to become a small planet made of carbon. 55 Cancri is now a very large diamond orbiting the star.

So the song line
Like a diamond in the sky is true after all!



Bird Watching

Ten members of the group visited a sheep property 5km west of Benalla on Thursday 9 June. After days of wet weather, we were lucky the rain held off for our morning walk.

As we drove in, there were two White-necked Herons and a White-faced Heron in a nearby paddock. In the garden we saw an Eastern Spinebill, a few Superb Fairy-wrens, and a small flock of Red-browed Finches which flew into a shrub beside the driveway.

A short walk took us to a high point on the banks of the Broken River, with a sandy beach below and great views along the river. We continued our stroll through some massive River Red Gums, looking at White-plumed Honeyeaters, Eastern Rosellas, White-browed Scrubwren and a Grey Shrike-thrush on the way.

In the distance we identified two Australian Shelduck (used to be called Mountain Duck) and a large flock of Little Ravens in the paddocks. A flock of about 70 Galahs flew into the River Red Gums as we made our way back to the house for a late morning tea under the carport. Some of us had close views of a female Scarlet Robin along the driveway as our cars left the property, making a total of 25 species for the morning.

Thanks Carole and Godfrey for organising our visit. It was a great spot to finish the birdwatching program for the semester.

A detailed list of birds recorded at each outing is being put on the U3A Birdwatching web pages. Please ring Kathy Costello if you would like a printed copy.

What's happening in Semester 2?

There will only be three monthly outings, on Thursday 8 September, Thursday 13 October and Thursday 10 November, as Kathy is unavailable in July and August. *More details will be provided in later newsletters.*

Brain Games

The small group at our June session took a variety of challenges including elementary juggling which, while it stimulated neuronal pathways, won't see any of us joining the circus just yet!

A note from Elspeth - Please don't imagine you're not missed and let me know if I'm preparing material that's too easy/hard/ or in some way could suit you better if I had your input.

The next meeting of Brain Games is scheduled for Monday 4th July at 1.30pm in W4.

Bushwalking

Easy walk – Wednesday June 1



Five walkers arrived at the Spit car park on Winton North road for morning tea overlooking Bill Friday Swamp (no water), then headed over the road to walk the Western side of the Spit. The Spit is actually a lunette, a crescent-shaped dune, built up over the centuries by the prevailing westerly winds. Most of the track is quite sandy. It was a very pleasant walk with interesting animal tracks, many bushes packed with Tumbleweed, and weird tree stumps where the lake water has washed the soil away to reveal the roots. We walked 3km before having lunch, then retracing our steps.



You may remember I said it was too cold for snakes –wrong – we met a beautiful Red-bellied Black snake.

It was about 2 metres long and wasn't too worried as it continued to sun itself as we continued on after taking some photos.

We drove back to Boggy Creek road to view the Wall to Wall Art work, then drove past the Hub to see if there was any water in sight – no, we need lots more rain yet.

The mid-week walk to the South Blue Range near Mansfield was cancelled due to a threatening weather forecast.

Easy walk - July 6 will be on the Sunrise track, Warby Ranges. On the sunny side of the range, there is a climb for a start, with good views. *Ring Vaughan Cowan 5762 1980. We will leave Benalla at 10.00am. .*

Mid-week walk – Wednesday July 13

We have done the loop walk along the Seven Creeks in Euroa several times with the easy walkers, and it is very enjoyable. This time we extend the walk by climbing Balmattum Hill as well. It is fairly steep, but we can take our time and enjoy the view. *Please ring Vaughan beforehand on 5762 1980. Assemble at the Centre car park at 9.15am for 9.30 departure.*

Easy walk – Wednesday August 3

Last year we explored the Dave's Hill area near Mount Meg. There were only three walkers, so I hope a few more will enjoy the interesting area this year. *We will leave the Centre car park at 9.45am. Please ring Vaughan 5762 1980.*

Chat n' Chew

Chat n' Chew is scheduled for Friday 15th July at 11.45 am at the Commercial Hotel, Benalla. Please phone Shirley on 5762 6768

Collectors

At our June meeting of Collectors we had as a guest speaker Mr Graydon Johnston (pictured below) from **W. B. Gadd of Avenel and Chiltern.**

W. B. Gadd is an antique shop which also sells a range of possum and merino knitwear from New Zealand.



Graydon spoke of how he first became interested in antiques at about aged 7 when he rescued his grandfather's clock which was unwanted by family members and in danger of being thrown in a dam. He still has the clock - which he treasures - and it still goes.

Graydon also spoke of his younger days as an industrial chemist who also played in a band. When the band was offered the chance to be back up group to Johnny O'Keefe they jumped at the chance and toured with Johnny O'Keefe for two years. He said he could tell some stores about that, but he didn't. Eventually Graydon opened the W B Gadd store in Avenel and retained the name of the original business which had existed at the site for many years.

We were privileged to see Graydon's personal collection of Carlton Ware antiques some of which were very valuable and very old and he spoke about each. He also brought along a range of knitwear from his shop which caused a lot of interest.

Following morning tea Graydon looked at items brought along by members of the group and gave an approximate valuation on each.

Our July meeting will follow the usual lines of members bringing along some of their collection to 'show and tell'.

Comparative Religion

A small group of four watched the DVD about the BBC production **Sacred Sites of Britain** presented by the excellent guide Neil Oliver. This topic was prepared by Joy Shirley and promoted much discussion about the whys and wherefores of such religious activities. What thinking could have caused communities to put in so

much time and energy shifting and geometrically placing sometimes huge stones in the ground or digging vast mounds, flint mines and ditches with only antler horns and flint tools?

Looking at historical sites such as Stonehenge allows us the luxury of hindsight and we can become bemused by the strange things that people will do in the name of religion. At the time no doubt it was intensely sacred and serious for those involved, with their limited knowledge compared to today.

Fervent passion followed by inevitable decline is an observable historical pattern for all religions of the world. As scientific knowledge plus experience replaces superstition and traditional belief, and new ways arise to bond communities, the need for religion as we now know it diminishes. (Please note that we are discussing institutional religions and not the existence or otherwise of God.)

When considering the establishment of what could be called a "religion" on a large scale today the movement which sprung to mind during our discussion was "Climate Change". Similarly, but on a lesser scale, football is often referred to as a religion because it incites great passion and draws fans together into "clans", many of whom spend lots of time and money in pursuit of the "heavenly" grand-final win.

Our June session also discussed the agenda for the rest of term 2.

Our main topic for July will be pilgrimages with a presentation from Jenny Geer who has walked the Camino trail in Spain and recently walked a pilgrimage trail in Japan. We may also discuss the modern SBNR (Spiritual But Not Religious) phenomenon, as suggested by Joy, if time allows.

In August Linden Hilgendorf will visit us from Chiltern. Linden, a Buddhist practitioner and teacher, will talk to us about Buddhism and answer questions.

Anyone from U3A interested in Buddhism is welcome to attend as we are a small group and I would like to make it worthwhile for Linden. We would appreciate a donation towards Linden's travel expense.

E Book Group

The next meeting of E Book Group is scheduled for Tuesday 5th July at 10am in the Benalla Library.

Film and Literature

A small group of people met this month to watch *Tootsie*, starring Dustin Hoffman. It was interesting to see how he was able to use makeup to turn himself into a woman. There was some discussion about his hands in the movie, assuming that in fact they were not his hands as that is one feature that would be hard to "feminise". The character he played showed him relating to the treatment of women, with a telling line from the film at the end being his comment "I was a better man with you as a woman than I ever was with a woman as a man."

Next month we will be looking at an episode of *Talking Heads* written by Alan Bennett, who also wrote *The Lady in the Van* and either *Bed Among the Lentils* with Maggie Smith playing a vicar's alcoholic wife, or *A Lady of Letters* with Patricia Routledge playing a single woman who is not afraid to write her mind.

These are short pieces, hopefully leaving time for anyone attending the session to talk about a movie, not necessarily recent, that has had an impact on them, either good or bad, and why.

Everyone, whether enrolled or not, is invited to join us on 13 July.

Garden Appreciation

Thursday July 28th

We will have our meeting at Benalla's Sir Edward Weary Dunlop Learning Centre.

Guest speaker **Janice Mentiplay-Smith** will talk on Birds, Plants and much more. Morning tea at 9:45am. Lunch at Rustick Cafe. Park in the car park near the Library.

August – Our winter break.

Thursday September 22nd

Meet at 9.30am at **Rosie Archer's**, 28 Walker Street, Benalla for a cuppa. We will view the garden and then leave from 10 to 10.30am to go to 27 Kay's Lane, Glenrowan, home of **Jess Kay**. Lunch at Glenrowan.

Thursday October 27th

Meet at the Flexible Learning car park at 9:30am, to travel to **Karn Station** to view the garden and enjoy morning tea. Lunch at Tatong Tavern.

Thursday November 24th – To be arranged

All morning teas - coffee, tea, milk and hot water will be supplied. Please bring your own mug and a small plate to share. For more information phone Gwen - 0438627010 or 57627017.

Garden Team

There were several apologies but Jane and I were still pleased with our progress in the Tulip St garden making inroads on overgrown ivy and a few smaller tasks. Our mid June afternoon was rained out and we'll try again to assist in the Cheetham garden in July.

Investment

At the June meeting of Investment we looked at the performance of some Mid Cap stocks over the past twelve months. Mid Cap stocks are those ranked by the ASX as between 51 and 100 on the Stock Exchange. We found that several had performed better than the ASX 200 over that time.

We also considered some stocks associated with Lithium production and found that they had also performed well over the past few months.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Friday 1st July at 1.15pm in W4.

Let's Talk Books

Ten brave readers descended on the Library for Let's Talk Books. While it rained and blew we sat in comfortable chairs and chatted on all manner of things, including the Four Corners program highlighting the plight of our Indigenous people. We also did some book talk.

Cheryl Turner found an original book written by Edna Walling in her bookcase, this was handled with care as it was passed around. A novel set in the 1800's called *The Girl in the Photograph* by Kate Riordan, the same author who wrote the *100 Year Old Man Who climbed out the Window and Disappeared*.

Heart and Soul by Maeve Binchy was enjoyed second time around. Another book of interest was *Garden of Stones* by Sophie Littlefield, a story of a Japanese mother and daughter living in Los Angeles when Pearl

Harbour was bombed. The ever popular Patricia Cornwall was read in *Silent Death* and a book of short stories by Kate Atkinson, *Not the End of the World*.

Shirley told us about *A Rose for the Anzac Boys* by Jackie French, which she felt the younger generation would benefit from reading. The *Biography of Charlotte Bronte* along with *The Alchemist* were both bought along by Alice. The books on the table for lending included *The Beekeepers Secret* by Josephine Moon, *The Soldiers Wife* and as Rhonda and Dave are moving house a selection of pre loved books were there for the taking.

See you all on the 5th of July at 2.00 pm in the Library.

Lifeball

Lifeball is played every Monday at 10 am at the Indoor Recreation Centre.

Why don't you help us to enjoy ourselves by coming along to see how much fun we have??

Phone Marg Merriman on 5762-1404

Meet and Mingle

Carole and Godfrey Marple gave a fascinating presentation on their collection of flags at June's Meet and Mingle. Godfrey explained how he and Carole came to be collectors of flags and described the ways in which they involve the community in celebrating the flags of different nations. Godfrey and Dorothy then held up a selection of flags from Canada, Australia and New Zealand while Carole provided information about their history and cultural relevance.



Flags certainly provide a thought provoking lens through which to consider the history and culture of nations throughout the world.

The next Meet and Mingle is scheduled for 20th July at 10 am in W4. Beth Smith and her daughter Kate, dairy farmers from Tatong, will share their perspective on the current situation in the dairy industry and discuss its effects on their livelihood.

Music Appreciation

27 May 2016

Joan presented the session. We commenced with *Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto* played by the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra; followed by a short DVD of the Australian Youth Orchestra's Tour of Europe. Joshua Bell accompanied them and played the Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.

In the second half of the session, we listened to Camille Saint Saen's *Symphony No. 3 for Organ* played by the National Orchestra of France. We also listened to his composition, *La Bacchanale* from Samson and Delilah. We concluded with a portion of Saint Saen's *Carnival of the Animals* finishing with the Swan.

10 June 2016

Doug presented the session. In the first half he presented a number of Youth Orchestras of the World some of which were: *Venezuelan Youth Orchestra*, *Contemporary Youth Orchestra Cleveland State University* and the *Australian Youth Orchestra*.

This was followed by music and arrangements by George Percy Grainger (1882 to 1961) and literature regarding the interesting aspects of his life.

The Music Appreciation group also met on Friday 24th June. Notes will be included in the July Newsletter.

Patchwork

Patchwork meets at The Hub, Cooinda. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 7th July at 1pm.

Play Reading

Our Group is currently having a wonderful time reading an all time classic Australian play – *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* by Ray Lawler.

At the risk of under-estimating the play, it is about growing up and growing old and failing to grow up. Set in the '50s, it is a crucial period in the development of the Australian identity. It was a time of post-war reconstruction and immigration, of materialism, a wool

boom, of suburban comfort and conservatism. It was also a time new skills were needed to administer our new found prosperity. Industry began to answer the call of art, literature, music and drama; and among others Ray Lawler emerged.

The play, set in the Melbourne suburb of Carlton, details the events in the lives of six central characters in the summer of 1953. The structure of the play is such that the nature of these characters and their situation and history is not revealed immediately, but rather gradually established as the story unfolds. By the end, the story and all its facets have been indirectly explained.

The summer that the story spans marks the 17th year of an annual tradition in the lives of the characters, wherein two masculine sugarcane cutters, Barney and Roo, travel south to Melbourne for five months of frivolity and celebration with two city women, Olive and Nancy (Roo bringing with him as a gift for Olive a kewpie doll hence the name). One of the women, Nancy, had apparently married some months ago. In her place Olive has invited Pearl Cunningham to partake in the tradition. The other women present in the play are "Bubba" Ryan, a 22-year-old girl who has been coveting Olive and Nancy's lifestyle from her neighbouring house almost all her life, and Emma Leech, Olive's cynical, irritable, but wise mother.

As the play progresses, it becomes obvious that, for many collective reasons, this summer is different from others; it is full of tensions, strains to recreate lost youth, and from what is said of previous years, not a fraction of the fun that others have been. Steadily things become worse; Roo is revealed to be broke and is forced to take a job in a paint factory. He is disillusioned with his age and weaknesses, while relations between Barney and him are in doubt, due to a recent question of loyalty. The situation is agitated in part by Pearl's uptight indignation and refusal to accept the lifestyle she is being presented with as "proper" or "decent".

Our group will read the final sections of the play at our next meeting so all readers will have to wait until the next Bulletin to discover the climactic outcome.

Members of our group are enjoying the various characters they play and some really fit into the characters they read. It is a fun play read by a fun group.

Politics and Current Affairs

Australia still seems lucky when I reflect on events in Britain and America. This week was marked by the murder of a British politician, who was called a traitor for advocating that Britain remain in the E.U. A number of us in the Politics class have been wondering if Trump's divisive politics in America would result in someone shooting him, and now someone has tried.

I believe the last attempted murder of an Australian politician was in 1966 when Arthur Calwell the ALP leader was wounded. Peter Kocan was 19 when he was given a life sentence for the attempted assassination. He spent years in penal and psychiatric institutions. His book *The Treatment and The Cure* shows people can be redeemed and mental illness can be treated, even if it was by the brutal methods of electric shock treatment in vogue at that time. For me his book ranks with *One flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* as a compelling and disturbing account of prison life.

Politics in western democracies is meant to allow people with different views to be able to discuss and decide how as a society we proceed. Let us hope that murder continues to have no place in our political life. Murder and violence though seems to be all too common each weekend when (usually) women and children bear the brunt of men who are out of control. As the poster outside the library reminds us there is an undeclared war happening in our suburbs that rages on. Isn't it time we did something more to bring this to an end?

Rail and Tourism

At our last meeting on 7th June, we started our Rail journey in the Canadian Rockies - going west from Calgary to Field. Bill has been there 4 times from 1960. He considers Rogers Pass as probably the most beautiful place that he has visited – however, these days the area is completely overwhelmed by tourists.

Bill told the story of *Nicholas Morant* - the long time photographer of the Canadian Pacific Railway – for whom Morant's Curve on the Bow river is named. He had his own sleeping carriage, which was placed in any siding he requested. He could spend a week awaiting the desired light for a special photo. In 1960, these sleeping carriages were available for general hire and could be placed into any desired siding. Bill told some stories on the difficulty of building the Railway through

this very mountainous area and how Kicking Horse River got its name. The Surveyor - *James Hector* was badly injured when kicked by his horse. This area contains the famous Spiral Tunnels.

The DVD shown was *The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railway* which runs along the Colorado/New Mexico border. It is the most beautiful trip – done twice by Bill and also visited by our course member – Jan Andrews.

Note - There won't be a class in July – Bill will be away on holiday! Around that time he should be riding Queensland's "Gulflander".

Next course day is Tuesday 2nd August – we will travel further into the Canadian Rockies from Field to Revelstoke. The DVD to be shown is about another famous Tourist Railway in Colorado *The Durango and Silverton*.

Singing for Fun

The next meeting for Singing for Fun is scheduled for Thursday 7th July at 10am in the Baptist Church, Benalla.

Tech Savvy

A video based catch up on the development of 'Google Glass' set the scene for our June session. Terry Dillon then discussed Windows 10 (which he considers it among Microsoft's best releases to date) and the possibilities offered by free and accessible programs/apps to produce a high quality photographs.

After the coffee break we broke into 'Tech Savvies' and 'Mentors' working groups. 'Tech Savvies' continued to share news and reading on current issues in IT – with Les later adding three articles to our Dropbox folder – "The Death of Firefox", "[Aging at Home 2 – Some Tech to Watch Over Me](#)" and an article which led to discussion about Samsung's decision not to install Windows 10. 'Mentors' had a productive catch up about the 'Drop In' and discussed mid year as an appropriate time to review the program, either by questionnaire or personal contact. Areas suggested for review include attendance patterns and the level of understanding and 'IT context' at home (eg. with/without WiFi, in 'blackspot') of people who begin the Drop In. Geraldine demonstrated a WiFi Networking device that sits beside her iPad which has increased her capacity to use her iPad at home, which is in a 'blackspot'. Margaret's report on these discussions has been added to the [Mentors working group's web page](#).

At our next session Terry Dillon will conclude his presentation on features of Windows 10 and programs/apps which produce high quality digital photography. Windows 10 has now been installed on the W4 computer!

Tech Savvy Drop In

Our sessions in June continued with topics from the [‘Grandparents’ resources](#) on the [Tech Savvy Drop in website](#)—including sharing news with family and friends via Facetime and Skype. Sending photos via messaging and learning to use GPS on mobiles were among topics explored in small group work. Individual problem-solving requests included help with recording music on an iPad and iPhone and help in changing the formatting from one to two columns in a Word newsletter formatted document.

Margaret Walshe is continuing to provide one to one and in class mentoring for a number of members and is thrilled with the progress they are making. ‘Show and Tell’ included Dorothy proudly showing us her new iPad bought after trialling one of the Drop In’s iPads and Bev her new Chromecaster. A number of members have now purchased their own tablets, freeing iPads for circulation. Please let Bev know if you would like to be on the waiting list to trial an iPad.

There will continue to be separate two hour Android and Apple sessions in Semester II until mid-September, when there will be a change to a shorter combined Drop In followed by the opportunity in the second hour to take a ten week course in Google Apps.

Towards a Sustainable Future

Which strategies related to living in a sustainable future do you follow? We suspect that many U3A members, with parents who experienced the depression if we did not experience it ourselves, learnt lots of strategies to reduce our energy use as we grew up. ‘Turn the lights off’ was a common refrain in most households. Many of us wore hand me downs and remember learning how to darn our own socks and returning milk bottles to earn pocket money. However we became used to plastics in the second half of the 20th century and began to accept plastic bags to load our groceries into our cars rather than take our baskets & shopping jeeps. The impact of single use plastics on our environment is becoming a major concern. France is currently making the transition to being single use plastic bag free. A

number of our states and local council areas have decided to become plastic bag free and an action group of Benalla Sustainable Future Group is advocating for a plastic bag free Benalla. ‘Plastic Free July’, a campaign which began in Western Australia and has begun to spread worldwide, encourages us to think about and set challenges in relation to our use of single use plastic bags and bottles.

In terms of ‘acting locally’, W4 performs rather well, with up to 30 china mugs being used six or more times a week and very rare use of plastic cups. Towards a Sustainable Future class members typically bring their books to class in calico bags or baskets. However there is still room for all of us to set challenges individually, as U3A member Jenny Geer is doing during ‘Plastic Free July’, and to support reduction in the use of single use plastic throughout the year. Why not see the website: www.plasticfreejuly.org

Wine Appreciation

Wednesday 27 July 2016

Meet at car park at 10.30 am to go to Moyhu and hear from Glen about his new label *Merkel Wines* in a limited range before lunch in his hotel.

Wednesday 24 August 2016

Meet at car park at 10.00 am and travel to Magar Hill winery. Lunch at Seven Creeks hotel Euroa. Yet to be confirmed.

For more information phone Noel Meagher (5762 3149) or Keith & Heather Rogers (5762 4086).

Writing Workshop

At our June café catch up we welcomed Pat, who shared a beautifully written, moving story on the upcoming topic ‘Advice’; shared individual writing projects and brainstormed ideas on responding to June’s topic, ‘Faking It’, for class two weeks later.

Like another tricky topic ‘A Friendship Tested’, ‘Faking it’ resulted in a thought provoking session as we dissected the meaning of the phrase and speculated as to whether a degree of faking, or ‘fudging’, is necessary to smooth the workings of society, our working lives, family life and friendships. We heard stories of faking it when listening to people at election time with different political values; of faking it to disguise emotional reactions during a nursing career; stories from two of

our aviators of 'fudging' (if not faking) it related to flying an aircraft, and more.

Our topic for July 18th 1.30 to 3.30 pm is '[Advice](#)' - Tell us about one piece of advice that's stuck with you. It could be a famous quote or proverb, something your mum told you, or helpful words from a stranger. Did you follow the advice, or wished you had? Did it help or lead you astray?

Our next café catch up, on Monday July 4th between 2.30 and 3.30 pm, will be at the Northo, as Somewhere has closed for a winter recess.

Program News

➤ **Opera – Come over to the dark side!**

Murder and mayhem; lost love and death! Yes, Opera takes the dark themes and weaves beautiful music around the fanciful stories. Join us to listen to four popular operas. You will recognise some of the music and get to see and hear some of the great performances on recent DVDs.

This program will be held on 2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings 21 Warana Court, starting at 7pm.

Dates: October 12 and 26; November 9 and 23.

Presenter: Meg Dillon **Maximum participants 10.**

Enrolment: Contact Meg on 5762 6558 prior to July 25 and after September 1st to enrol.

➤ **'Google Apps'**

'Google Apps' is an extremely versatile application, incorporating many free features including Chrome (web browser), email, contacts, docs (word processor), sheets (spreadsheet), calendar, photos, sites (create and maintain your own website). This course is applicable to Windows, iOS and Android users.

Participants will be required to have their own tablet, phone or laptop, should be competent in basic use of their device and have a gMail account. Notes on creating a gMail account will be sent to participants on enrolment.

Days: 1st, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays and 3rd Wednesday

Dates: September 21 & 27; October 4, 11, 19 & 25; November 8, 16, 22, 29 **Time/Venue:** 2.30 to 3.30 pm in W4 (NB - Tech Savvy Drop In sessions will be held from 1.30 and 2.15 pm on these days)

Presenter: Terry Dillon Enrolment: Contact Terry's mobile 0419 343129; email terry@greygypsies.com.au, or add your name to the list on the W4 notice board.

Around the Traps

Margaret Brooke Memorial Concert

Sunday July 24 at 4pm at the Benalla Art Gallery

Join Friends of the Gallery for a delightful chamber music concert by Michael Johnson and his trio. Michael is the resident harpist at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens and is presenting a concert based on the theme of Water. Expect some beautiful music with harp, piano, cello and violin. Join in afterwards for drinks and nibbles.

Only 70 seats are available. Buy your ticket at the Gallery. Only unsold tickets will be available at the door. \$25 [\$20 concession] Young people at school are free but will need a ticket.

Newsletter/Website News

- Last month's newsletter included the Semester II timetable. The timetable can also be downloaded from the 'Join Us' page on the website or contact the Secretary, Lorraine Knox, on 5762 1531.
- The Newsletter and the regularly updated calendars and group reports on the website contain important information regarding scheduled meetings. Please check to ensure that you are aware of any changes.
- A reminder to convenors – if reports are not received by the newsletter deadline it will be assumed a report is not required for that month.
- The next newsletter deadline is on **Monday 25 July** at midday.
- Newsletter reports will be uploaded to the website at the end of that week. Additional photographs for the website can be sent as attachments to bevelee47@gmail.com.

*Freida Andrews, Newsletter Editor
Bev Lee, Website Manager*

Our thanks go to Steph Ryan MP and the staff at her Benalla Office for printing this newsletter.