



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter –June 2015

P O Box 583

Benalla 3672

Editor: Judith Borthwick 5762 3442

editor@u3abenalla.com

Newsletter deadline: **12.00 noon 3rd Wednesday**

President: Terry Case 5762 1700

president@u3abenalla.com

Secretary: Lorraine Knox 5762 1531

secretary@u3abenalla.com

Web site: www.u3abenalla.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President's report

As part of this month's newsletter are timetables for semester two. I hope you enjoy our courses and if you would like to offer something new for 2016 please get in touch.

I would like to thank Jenny Geer and Laurie Melgaard for their presentations to the May Meet & Mingle group. Having struggled to find speakers we found two who were entertaining and informative and were sorry we could not give them both the time they deserved.

Laurie brought in the paraphernalia that a bee keeper needs and explained the work of bees and their keepers to bring us a taste of honey! With tales of swarms and the short lives of these fascinating insects he had us captivated!

Jenny told us of her personal connections to Nepal and was preparing to lead an Emergency Team there, as part of the earthquake relief missions.

Jenny's main topic was the Silk Road. Jenny's mode of travel was with an adventure tour in a truck-bus suited to the gruelling conditions found in the 'stans i.e. Uzbekistan and other countries between China and Turkey. The photos of the people and the bazaars gave us a taste of Jenny's adventure!

Lorraine and Geraldine have produced this newsletter whilst Judith is away. We are still

seeking a newsletter editor to take over from Judith at the beginning of next year. This position does not mean you have to join the Executive committee and we really need some help in this area.

GROUP REPORTS

Armchair History: the Victorians.

Our last class watched a DVD showing some of the dangers associated with Victorian homes, ranging from steep and uneven staircases to adulterated foods. I wonder how historians in the future will view our homes? It was a change to see the homes of the lower middle class rather than the mansions of the aristocracy that seem to be all the rage in recent documentaries. To be fair SBS did screen a series about the history of various London streets and I will be using one of this series in our next session.

We are now studying the middle years of the 19th Century and will look at Queen Victoria's relationship with her many children and how the death of Albert saw her withdraw from public life. Eventually the public lost faith in the monarchy and it also led to constitutional problems that almost brought government to a standstill.

Whilst the Industrial Revolution was boosting the British economy and creating a new middle class, age old problems of disease were still a major challenge. We will **view**

DVDs showing how diseases such as typhoid, dysentery and cholera were finally brought under control in the wealthier parts of Europe.

Art Appreciation

We have had a wonderful half year of artists and are now looking forward to the line up Shanley has organized for us for the second half year. Please note that our July gathering is not until **July 20th Art Gallery 10:00 am** for Bindi Cole "We all Need Forgiveness" I am lead to believe this is not to be missed. All other gatherings will be the first Monday of the month.

Thanks Carole and Godfrey Marple

Chat n' Chew

June

Our lunch for Friday 19th June is at Hot Million, Benalla at 11.45 a.m. For bookings or cancellations contact Shirley on 5762 6768

July

On July 17th Chat n' Chew will be held at Hollywood Pizza Restaurant. Please contact Shirley before Tuesday 14th July. All welcome

Comparative Religion

We started our session reviewing the homework from our session in May. The discussion included a question about spirituality compared to religious institutions. As a result of the discussion our homework for this month is to define each the following in a single sentence:

- What is religion?
- What is spirituality?
- Are we religious, spiritual, or something else?

We went on to look at a documentary on the story of Buddha. This gave some insights into the background of Buddhism, including some of the myths behind his birth and early life. It was interesting to compare these to the record in the Bible re the birth of Jesus. For

example, there was a story of a mother's dream of a child becoming the Buddha, and in Isaiah there is a prediction of the birth of Jesus. Mike shared some thoughts from his study of the Gospels, bringing together some of the learning from our previous sessions, and also highlighting some similarities between Buddhism and Christianity. This brought in an extra question to look at as part of our homework – what is Gnosticism?

A reminder for students that we are now commencing the session at 1:00pm.

Easy Walks

Short Walk Violet Town Wed. 3-6-2015

The sun was shining and the frost had thawed as we parked in the Violet Town Recreation Reserve for morning tea. Eight walkers then ambled along the track beside Honeysuckle Creek. The track and surrounds are very well maintained, with frequent information boards, and revegetation areas.

We headed east, went under the railway line and crossed the bridge on the old Hume Highway, to return on the northern side. This area featured some magnificent old Red Gums. We went as far as Mitchell Street before recrossing the creek and returning to the cars for lunch. We were pleased to have Jean with us for the first time.

Midweek Walk Wed. 10/6/2015

Sixteen of us, in four cars, left Benalla at around 8.45a.m. on a sunny wintery day headed for the Cheviot Rail Tunnel. The Tunnel exists today as a tourist attraction that you can walk or bike ride through. The tunnel is 200 metres long and constructed of half a million hand made bricks. The bricks were made on site, out of clay from a local clay deposit. The tunnel was once an important part of the Mansfield rail link from Melbourne, which operated from the early 1880's to 1978, when it was decommissioned. We walked through the tunnel trying to imagine busy scenes from days gone by. Our walk leader was Brian, and after a little snack brought along by Brian's wife Gail, we were ready to commence our nearly 10 kilometre walk into Yea. Rail trails are great to walk along, and of course also super for bikes. The walk to Yea was good with wonderful views and when we arrived, Gail was there to greet us. She had kindly driven into Yea to take the car

drivers back to the Tunnel Car Park to get the other three cars. A late lunch was then enjoyed in the Yea Wetlands and we walked one short circuit before heading back to Benalla. Many thanks to Brian and Gail for the lovely day.

Short Walk for Wed. 1-7-2015

We will walk a short version of the Sunrise Track in the Warby Ranges. This is on the Eastern side of the range, thus the name, and gives good views of the snow clad mountains. There is a steady climb for a start, but not as steep as the Mount Samaria ascent. We will stop frequently to admire the view or any early greenhood orchids. The distance is about 3.5km. As usual we leave the Centre car park at 10.00am.

Midweek walk Wed. 18-7-2015

The Paps consist of 2 hills. The walk starts up a gravel road, continuing past a road junction to the first hill for great views over Mansfield, Nillahcootie and Bonnie Doon. Then we come back to the junction and walk to the second Pap for views over Mt. Buller, Lake Eildon and as far as the eye can see. The Leader is Sue Pendergast 5768 2403 or 0429 866 162. Meet at the Centre at 9am, depart 9.10 or Swanpool Store at 9.30.



Easy walkers in action

e-Book Group

E-reader book group

Our May book was *The Year of Living Dangerously*, by Christopher Koch. The year is 1965, and against a background of growing political instability in Indonesia, two characters stand out: journalist Guy Hamilton, newly appointed to Jakarta, and his cameraman, Billy Kwan, who also happens to

be a dwarf. At first their relationship flourishes, but as Sukarno's grip on power falters, so too, does their friendship collapse, as Billy's hold on reality slips. The situation is further complicated by Jilly Bryant, who is loved by both men, but unsure of her personal or political allegiances. As their personal drama plays out, violence escalates, culminating in Billy's death, and ultimately, the slaughter of thousands of Communists, as Suharto stages a coup. Nowhere is Koch's brilliance in greater evidence, than his symbolic use of the famous Hindu puppet play, to demonstrate the duality of love/hate, good/evil and the nature of illusion. Finally, his creation of the tortured, deluded Billy Kwan, marks him out as a genius

Film and Literature

In May the group enjoyed a tongue-in-cheek gangster movie, 'Prizzi's Honour', starring Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner and Angelica Huston. Suffice to say many men schemed and fought but the superior tactician got her desired outcome. The movie for June is 'The Butler'. It has many leading actors involved and has attracted many favourable reviews. Your Convenor has not seen the movie so it will be new for me as well.

Games

Wendy will not be available for the last session in June but will be back to continue the good work in July.

Wendy will contact Games participants to let them know what will happen for the June timetable.



Garden Appreciation

June 25th

Meet at The Centre car park at 10.00 a.m. B.Y.O morning tea to share. We are going to Corrie Witlox 3 Ibis Court Benalla. We will car pool as there is not a lot of parking in Ibis Court. We will probably park in Rivergum Ave. If the day is wet Corrie will put out a display of her patchwork and quilts. Thanks Corrie. Then we will go to Winton Wetlands Café for Lunch.

July 23rd

Meet at The Centre **Room W2 not W4** at 10.00 a.m. for a floral arrangement demonstration by Melissa Mounsey from Bloom's on Bridge B.Y.O. morning tea. Lunch at North Eastern Hotel in Nunn Street.

August

Winter break.

Gwen Turner 5762 7017, mobile 0438627010.

Garden Team

It was lovely to have an almost full strength task force at Jane's in late May. We kept the dates shown in the last newsletter but made a few people-swaps with Carmel taking July 20th, Jane Aug 30th and Val Oct 12th. Let's hope the settled program makes it easy for our finely tuned green thumbs to perform their amazing feats for the rest of the year. (If we must miss a session we might decide on a fill in on Dec 14th) By the time you read this we'll have been at work in Lois's garden (15th) and be tuning up for a trip to Violet Town on the last day of June. Elspeth Maconachie

Investment Group 1

At last months meeting of our group, the monthly exercise and friendly competition "Pick the spec" which is conducted by one of our experienced members attracted the usual keen interest. This segment provides our members with the opportunity to select a "Spec Stock" which shows the best price

improvement for the month. While all members score an occasional win there are some who exhibit consistent skill in this elusive search for the monthly best! Immediately following our June meeting our members will be having lunch together with any partners wishing to attend to celebrate the approaching end of the financial year! Ralph Stone.

Investment Group 2

At the meeting of Investment Group 2 in early June we looked at some shares which had been trending upwards during May 2015. This was against the overall market movement which had been declining since mid-April.

The next meeting of Investment Group 2 will be on Friday 3 July in W4 at 2pm. Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

On a chilly Benalla winter afternoon there was nothing better than sitting in a sunny corner of the Benalla Library chatting books with 17 enthusiastic readers. Our interests are wide ranging from *Golden Fiddles* by Mary Grant Bruce, *The Hills is Lonely* by Lillian Beckwith to a lovely book bought along by Louise called *Kitchen Table Memoirs of Notable People*, the proceeds from the sale of this book go to Food Bank. Some recommended reads were *Carry a Big Stick* by Tim Ferguson, *The Broken Shore* by Peter Temple, *The Necessary Aptitude – a biography* by Pam Ayres, *The Hare with the Amber Eyes*, by De Waal. A book written up in the Age from the previous week *The Mothers* by Rod Jones tells the story of Rod finding out he was adopted at the age of 17, a good discussion followed about adoption. Keep reading and come along to our next get together on Tuesday 7th July at 2 p.m. in the Library. Geraldine and Lorraine

Making the Most of the Internet

The Semester 1 'Making the Most of the Internet' course finished on June 9. Our tutor Ian McLeod's internet knowledge has provided the basis for a great course, but he would like to 'regroup' before running another course. Ian's approach has been most engaging and he has left us with lots of ideas, handouts and Youtube links to follow up as lifelong learners. The final session included a presentation on the many features offered by Windows Club; an introduction to Windows 10; Open Office and Google Maps. Youtube videos drawn on during the session will continue to be available on 'Ian's Blog' to help us to continue to 'Make the Most of the Internet'. Thanks Ian for all your work!

Music Appreciation

22 May, 2015

John presented composer Niels Wilhelm Gade, Violin Sonatas Nos 1 and 3. Also Rachmaninoff's Symphony No.2.

12 June, 2015

Doug presented his research of three instruments. The related DVD's were:

1. The Harp - soloist with the St Petersburg Orchestra
2. Solo recital of Cor Anglais (English Horn)
3. The Tuba – solo with orchestra.

John presented Italian Composer/Pianist Muzio Clementi with a selection of his Sonatas.

Politics and Current Affairs.

In addition to discussing political issues the last class looked at the problems and costs of hospitals servicing the needs of grossly obese patients. Bendigo Hospital recently completed a new wing to house such patients. Chairs, beds, shower areas, all have to be bigger and stronger and the costs are often 3 times that of normal (already costly) hospital

equipment. We discussed and reflected on how our local hospital will fund and cope with the expected surge in such patients and how preventative action is stymied by the constant advertising of junk foods.

We returned to the issue of food labelling, which seems to be used to disguise rather than inform about the amount of salt and sugar contained in many of our purchases. We also talked about income and education perhaps helping people to follow a healthier lifestyle.

USA tries to stress healthy minds and bodies in its offerings.

Wine Appreciation

The photo says it all - a lovely day at Auldstone Winery in May.



WINE APPRECIATION

Wednesday 24 June

Meet at 10 am for visit to Lake Moodemere Vineyards at Rutherglen.

Lunch at Pickled Sisters café.

Wednesday 22 July

Meet at 10 am to travel to Whitfield and the Darling Estate Winery.

Lunch at the Mountain View Hotel.

Keith Rogers 5762 4086

Writing Workshop

The 500 words topic for our meeting on July 20th from 2 to 4 pm is 'Lost and Found' – “Write about a time you lost something you owned, treasured, or believed in - and the lengths you went to, to get it back. Maybe it was a precious family heirloom you misplaced, an adventurous toddler who wandered out of sight, or perhaps you lost your way in an unfamiliar place. Take us on the search to find your lost thing. How did the loss affect you and those around you? Were you reunited? Was it back to business as usual, or did your life change in ways you could never imagine?” Some [‘Lost and Found’ examples are already appearing on ABC Open](#). We are a small group and would welcome new members in Semester 2.

News Items

- Margaret Merriman from Lifeball is in hospital with a broken leg after a fall at home.
- Kath Neander had a big birthday in April, celebrated with some friends from U3A at Winton Wetlands Café last Saturday.
- The U3A North East Regional Luncheon is hosted by U3A Kilmore anyone interested in attending please ring Lorraine.
- The Network Education Committee is running a Regional Digital Information Session in Shepparton on Friday 31st July. Terry Case, Bev Lee and Ian McLeod are demonstrating supported by Lorraine Knox. Everyone is welcome so please ring Lorraine if interested.
- The ‘official launch’ of our new website is planned for the July Meet and Mingle meeting. Thanks go to members on the email list and in the ‘Making the Most of the Internet’ class who responded to our requests for feedback. The pilot website address is <http://u3abenalla.weebly.com> – there is still time to give provide feedback using the ‘Contact Us’ or ‘Suggestions’ pages on the website.