

Benalla and District Inc. Newsletter – May 2015

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope you have been enjoying your courses. Second semester timetables will be published in the next newsletter. I have already discussed with my History group what to offer next year! If you would like to run a course or want some help in planning please get in touch. Nola McDonald sent me details of a Collectors Programme run at a couple of Melbourne U3As. Collections included: - Royal Doulton, money boxes, shaving mugs, Teddy bears, First World War artefacts and stylish hats of yesteryear. The course was run over four sessions with each collector having a chance to show and tell for 20-30 minutes. Do we have any collectors who would like to contribute to some sessions? I would like to thank Benalla Bowls Club for their generosity in giving us a Community grant for \$3,600 which we will use to purchase computer tablets and develop a unit with students from the Flexible Learning Classes (which are conducted in the room next to us in The Centre). The students will act as tutors for U3A members who want to learn how to use the tablets while the students will gain confidence in sharing their skills.

The Bowls Club Presentation Night (April 15th) enabled many community groups to describe the work they are doing. The Bowls Club deserve our thanks for their fund-raising and support for community groups; a top effort!

Terry Case
President

Notice to Tutors, Convenors and contributors to the newsletter.

I will be away for a week in June and so not available to edit the newsletter. Lorraine and Geraldine have agreed to do this while I am away playing croquet on Norfolk Island..

Please forward emails to be included to Lorraine by the third Wednesday of the month. (June 17th).

lorrain.knox@bigpond.com.

Hand delivered items to be delivered to Lorraine at 51 Bridge Street West, Benalla

I will be back in July so please forward newsletter items to me by third Wednesday which is July 15th.

Special notice for Wine Appreciation Group.

Please see notice on page 7 re change of time and venue for May 27.

GROUP REPORTS

Armchair Traveller – May 2015

Jan took us on a colourful and spectacular trek high up in the Rockies and Sierra Nevada Mountains (10,000 ft plus) in USA. We then viewed about half of a travelogue of Norway (on Toutube). Next meeting will be on July 21 when we will again visit the remainder of the Youtube travelogue.

Many members of the group have visited Norway and are urged to bring along memorabilia from their visits. We will also watch the award-winning video of the Kon Tiki expedition in 1951 – another wonderful Norwegian adventure in the Pacific Ocean.

Armchair History: the Victorians

June sessions will feature DVDs showing the changes taking place in Britain in the middle of the 19th century. Reformers were trying to change the grim life for many who lived in the new industrial cities of northern England. Disease and poverty meant many suffered a short and brutish life. Reformers had little success, the Chartist movement having one last charge at change before it died. Queen Victoria had no time for democracy: revolutions might be tearing Europe apart, but she was not for change. Democracy, she thought, was "a mad wicked folly". It was not only in the cities that Victorians were at the mercy of diseases such as cholera and typhoid. Many of you may be familiar with the beauty of Haworth, set in the hills of the northern moorland. Even here disease was a killer and the famous Bronte family its victims. It would take new scientific methods and vast engineering projects to eradicate diseases such as cholera, yet by 1900 it was eliminated from Britain.

We'll also see Scotland's Caledonian Ship Canal, which was a major Victorian engineering project designed to give ships both a safe passage and a short cut to the isles. Today the canal is a mecca for "boaties" and those who wish to see some of Scotland's fantastic countryside.

Art Appreciation

The group had a wonderful floor talk by our Art Gallery Director Bryony Nainby at a previous gathering. This was on the Dawn till Dusk: Gifts of Light and Landscape exhibition hung by Bryony. It had paintings from the Benalla collection showing various mediums and techniques.

At our last gathering we had a very informative talk by Bernard and Mary Newsome, lifelong friends of Phillip Sargeant and Colin Munro the architects of our Art Gallery. They spoke not only of their lives but of their considerable artistic talent some of which is presently on exhibition at the gallery. This exhibition is part of the 40th anniversary celebrations...

Our next session will be on 4th May at 10 am when we will be exploring the works of Ash Keating a young Melbourne abstract artist.

Astronomy – Learning about Planets, Stars and the Universe

When Benalla residents looked skywards on Anzac night some of them were surprised to see a U.F.O! This turned out to be a stratospheric, super pressure heavy lift balloon, the size of a football field. It was launched in New Zealand by NASA in late March. The balloon was intended to circumnavigate the globe two or three times on the 42nd parallel, gathering data for research in astrophysics, heliophysics and atmospheric sciences at an altitude of 33 kms, near the edge of space.

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After an eastward flight of thirty two days which almost completed one circumnavigation it caused excitement when it was sighted over Victoria. The flight was aborted by NASA over Queensland when a leak in the balloon was discovered.

We have had two very successful sessions this month. We were pleased to have Rupe Cheetham return to us as guest lecturer. He gave us a very informative power point presentation on the Sun. Outside we put our new found knowledge to the test by observing the sun through the solarscope and identifying several sunspots on the surface. Brian demonstrated the solar thermal machine that he has made. A highly reflective cone (perambulator) reflects the sun's heat to a central point; the energy from this heats water to produce steam power to drive a wheel.

On our second afternoon we turned our attention to the stars. John gave a very in depth and informative lecture on star evolution, taken from his thesis for James Cook University in years past.

Ann presented the Planet Mercury. (First rock from the Sun.) The Messenger spacecraft that has orbited the planet gathering scientific data for the last four years has run out of propellant and has now crashed onto the surface, concluding a successful mission. We finished the afternoon with a film of a news release from NASA. The" Dawn" Spacecraft that has travelled 4.9 billion km in 7.5 years has now reached the dwarf planet Ceres in the main asteroid belt and has been captured into orbit by the gravity of the planet. Dawn will remain in orbit studying Ceres for 1.5 years. This is an exciting mission as these dwarf planets are fossils in our solar system and we hope

much will be revealed on the evolution of our own planet Earth.

Chat n' Chew

June

Our next Chat n'Chew will be held on Friday 19th June at Hot Million, Benalla, at 11.45 am. For bookings or cancellations please contact Shirley on 5762 6768 before Tuesday 16th May.

July

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

All welcome at both lunches.

e-Book Group

Our book this month was The Stencil Man, by Garry Disher. The novel is based on a period of Australia's war time history, now long forgotten, in which thousands of people were interned as security risks, simply because they had come from Italy, Germany or Japan. Our fictional central character, Martin Linke, had been a model citizen for seventeen years, but suddenly found himself behind barbed wire, guarded by soldiers with bayonets. Faced with abuses of power, and bullying by hard core Nazis in the camp, he became increasingly bitter and introspective. Finally, driven to desperation by two failed appeals, and anxiety about his children, he escaped from the camp, into an uncertain future. The clear themes of this novel, anxiety, fear and alienation, are echoed in our present political landscape, in which many asylum seekers in detention centres, have become the new outsiders, denied freedom and due process.

Our group was surprised to discover that there had been a POW camp for Italians in Whorouly.

Don't forget our new meeting place is at the Library, June 2 at 10-30 am. It was suggested at last meeting that members of the group might like to bring their own mugs.

Comparative Religion

We started the session with a presentation by Joe on his studies of the Bible as an historical document as compared to a literal truth. He talked about a number of other resources that led him to believe that there was a "Great Flood" around 2500-3000 BCE. One of his references was "The Bible as

History" by W Keller. His studies have led him to conclude that the Bible can be considered an historical document.

During the April session we watched the start of the movie Ghandi – the life of Mahatma Ghandi – but as the movie was very long, we were unable to see it through to the end. This month we watched the remainder and took some time after the movie to discuss what we had learnt. A few people commented on Ghandi's view that all people were equal – he did not follow the caste system that is still found in parts. We compared this also to St Francis from the movie Brother Sun Sister Moon we had watched on February, where he also had a similar approach to people. Another comment that also applied to both Ghandi and St Francis was that they did not need personal possessions to provide happiness. We also discussed a few pages from an article "The Eternal Teaching: Hinduism" which ended by raising the question whether Hinduism is really a religion, or is it a culture. For next month's session we have been asked to look at the question: "How close is Hinduism to Islam/Judaism/Christianity"?

Finally, the group decided to start the sessions at 1:00pm. We are watching movies to get a view of different religions and the earlier start will give us more time to discuss what we have seen and concluded about the religions.

Garden Appreciation

May 28th

Meet at Centre car park by 9.15. Morning tea at Wodonga TAFE Horticulture Campus. We will view gardens with Karen Armstrong.

Then to Peard's Nursery. Plants, pots and gifts. Lunch at Borelli's Restaurant next door. Please ring me if you are coming.

June 25th

Meet at Centre car park 10 am. Still arranging a town venue.

July 23rd

Meeting at Centre room W4 10 am for a floral arrangement demonstration by Melissa Mounsey from Bloom's on Bridge.

Gwen 5762 7017, 0438 627010

Garden Team

On May 4th Shirlie and I made ourselves useful in Kathy's garden: another pleasant afternoon. Our Garden fixture has become muddled this year and there's another change approaching with June's public holiday. This encouraged me to consult my calendar which offers three fifth-Monday opportunities, in July, August and November and I've sorted a schedule of which most of you already know something. You can pencil in the dates now but please bring your diary to Jane's on May 25th where we'll see if we can confirm the following:-Lois June 15th, Elspeth June 29th, Val July 20th, Shirlie Aug 10th, Carmel Aug 31st, Kathy Sept 21st, Jane Oct 10th, Lois Nov 9th and Elspeth Nov 30th

Investment Group 1

Members of Investment Group No1 enjoyed a stimulating previous meeting with interesting discussion on many aspects of successful investing technique.

The group was also pleased to chalk up another win in "The Sunday Age Share Race" competition.

Investment Group 2

At the meeting of Investment Group 2 held in early May members had a discussion on high yielding stocks. Our thanks to Peter for developing a list of 500 high yielding stocks together with their franking status. We made this list available to all members of the group.

We also looked at a comparison of fundamentals and derived figures for assessing telecommunication stocks which was particularly relevant with the current possible takeover of iiNet.

The next meeting of Investment Group 2 will be on Friday 5th June at 2pm in W4.

Let's Talk Books

Our group met on the first Tuesday in May at the Library. The enthusiasm of this group is wonderful, if you haven't read a book recently it doesn't matter and it is great to see everyone writing down books and authors that interest them.

A good discussion was held on the book by Richard Flanagan `The Narrow Road to the Deep North', several other members of the group had read this book, we spoke about forgiveness and the futility of war. Shirley Gilmour had been to the Adelaide Writers Week in South Australia, bringing back several books of interest to show us and discuss. Everyone contributed in some way with new or very

old books to show and talk about. A most enjoyable way to spend a cold and wet afternoon, and finishing off with afternoon tea. See you all on the 2nd June 2 p.m. at the Library.

Lifeball

Lifeball is continuing with some interesting developments. Last week we were very honoured by the presence of "The Great White Chief" - the lovely Colleen Wilson-Lord, from Jindera, and the instigator of Lifeball Australia-wide, who visited us, with one protege, Mali. Mali is studying as an Occupational Therapist, and is also hoping to be selected as a weight lifter in the forthcoming Olympic Games. While we enjoyed our cuppa after the game, Mali said he reckoned he has never spent any of his training regime grinning the whole time. With us he grinned all the time - he played the game for the first time, and said he had a ball! He threw himself into the game with great enthusiasm, and his attitude delighted all of us.

Colleen also reviewed several rules where we felt uncertain about the technicalities, such that, when we played this week, we played with much more assurance, confident we were playing correctly. Thanks so much Colleen! For the past few weeks we have had a full team, sometimes with extras, which is very heartening - the more the merrier we say.

Come along - if you want some gentle exercise, punctuated with peals of laughter, we are for you! Come and try, come and look, come and join! You will be very welcome!!

Marg Merriman. 5762 1404

Making the most of the Internet

A very perceptive and comical Youtube clip 'A Senior Moment' featuring 'seniors' in a residential setting texting on their mobiles resulted in lots of laughter at the start of this month's class.

lan then introduced us to a number of additional freely available internet tools, including using a general search title in Youtube such as 'Classical Music' to stream playlists of music throughout the day; the Rainlendar desktop calendar; the Gadwin screen capture tool; Paypal (which is preferred by eBay); and Picasa3 for storage and organisation of photograph collections using the cloud. Class member Margaret Jenkin, from Investment Group 2, gave us a most informative presentation on the use of the internet when investing in the stock market. Margaret began by

ways in which the banking system works to ensure online security, then described her practice of using a separate bank for her online purchases. Using the <u>ComSec</u> website, Margaret introduced tools available for analysing trading possibilities such as indexes, charts; price; volumes; stock announcements; peer guides; comparative trading ranges; watch lists; tools for managing orders and more. Margaret explained that each of the major banks has a similar website; and Ian added that the ASX site also provides similar information. Class member Bev Lee ended the class with an introduction to developing a free website using www.weebly.com.. Neville was happy to throw his hat into the ring in setting up a website address after which a theme was selected; pages were added and moved around; a title and some text were added using the 'drag' feature in the build page, and the tool bar was used to change font colours and sizes. We finished with a demonstration of how easy it is to delete - in this case the dummy website!

reflecting on the benefits of on-line banking and the

Meet and Mingle

Meet and Mingle will be held at The Centre on Wednesday 17th June at 10.00 am. All welcome.

Patchwork

The enthusiastic members of our group continue to produce good work. Those who attend workshops bring back amazing things to show to the group. A project we have going at the moment is a string of Christmas Bunting. It is always fun to do the same thing because it all turns out so different as our imaginations run riot. These will definitely be on show in November with our quilts for all U3A members to see. With the colder weather coming and people heading for warmer climes, those of us who brave Benalla's winters will continue our friendly get-togethers in the Hub.

Politics and Current Affairs

At our first meeting in May, just prior to the new Budget being announced, I showed an episode of "The Hollowmen". This spoof on politics is getting a little old, but the class found some of the lines still appropriate. The scenario had the PM worried his soon to be announced budget lacks excitement. Back in the real world our PM told us he wanted the

new budget to be boring, having had too much excitement in the Senate with the previous one! Our class remains concerned with the ravages drugs and alcohol have on communities. Remote Aboriginal Communities featured on *4 Corners* the previous night, but we could relate the issues featured to problems we know exist in Benalla and surrounding towns.

I would like to farewell Joe Solomon who joined us this year. Joe is going to move to Melbourne. We will miss your contributions Joe, all the best from the Politics class.

Singing for Fun

Brian's partner and footie songs are progressing well. We now have in our books many great songs that need reviving and Faith and Margaret are doing just that. At our last session, we welcomed a new member, David Palmer. Over a third of our singers are men and this gives great depth to our singing. Best wishes to Gwen Cheetham who is recovering from surgery and a big welcome back to Lois.

Towards a Sustainable Future

During our classes we read a range of well written articles based on evidence based research in looking towards a sustainable future. In the past month we read evidence of climate change — with sea temperatures around Australia suggesting 2014 records may be surpassed again this year and next; El-Nino like conditions in the Pacific; and Arctic sea ice the smallest in a northern winter since satellite conditions began in 1979. We read that the warming pause noted by scientists is leaving scientific projections over the longer term virtually unchanged.

We often find ourselves pondering about the capacity of climate contrarians to reject rigorous scientific evidence and worry about the impact this has on those working towards a sustainable future. Making waves recently have been two influential 'climate contrarians', Maurice Newman and Bjorn Lomborg, who 'consistently argue against action on climate change' (Assoc. Prof Michael Brown, astronomer, Monash University). In our own 'Country News' supplement (15/4/2015)we read that conjecture by the Coalition's Agriculture Committee about climate change resulted in the poor hearing received recently by nine climate campaigning farmers from across the country concerned about changes in the timing and severity of frosts. John Pettigrew, from Bunbartha near

Shepparton, described their meeting with the Agriculture Committee as their 'worst reception in Canberra'. Internationally we read (NY Times 28/4/2015) that the upcoming encyclical from Pope Francis relating to climate change is causing concern among conservative think tanks and politicians in the US. Pope Francis has a particular concern that climate change will particularly impact upon people in poverty.

We often read and discuss articles describing policy and bureaucratic initiatives and battles relating to sustainability. We monitored the negotiations between the parties as to the size of the Renewable Energy Target. The need for certainty and indeed a more robust renewable energy target than the Abbott Government initially proposed was becoming increasingly evident during the negotiations and also evident in the request by the Victorian government to establish its own renewable energy target. We take a particular interest in positive interventions which promote sustainability such as the planned placing of solar panels over sewerage ponds in Jamestown, SA, which has the added benefit of reducing evaporation, and the construction of a \$50 million dollar wind farm northwest of Bendigo, an area with strong winds which can produce energy nearly 90% of the time, to provide cheap electricity to more than 14,000 Canberra homes. We also read a heartening report that the highly polluting brown coal generator at Anglesey attached to Alcoa's defunct Point Henry aluminum smelter, is to be closed for economic and environmental reasons.

The best news this month is undoubtedly the release of Tesla's new Powerwalk, a compact, wall mounted, rechargeable, lithium-ion battery designed for homes and small businesses.

Apparently there was such pent up demand that the storage system has sold out until mid-2016.

For our June 19th meeting, the group will be joining in the council sponsored tour of composting and recycling facilities in Shepparton and Wangaratta.

Walks

Short Walk Beechworth, Wed. 6 May.

The water level in Lake Sambell has risen, and the weir wall should be completed in the near future. Nine walkers set off from the lake on the streamside track to admire the autumn foliage, then went through the Queen Victoria Park, and on through various streets where the interest turned to the 1850's and later houses.



Autumn Colours

We managed to keep Rosie out of the many antique shops, before visiting the facade of the old Hospital then finding ourselves in 2 churches. A stroll across and beside Spring Creek led us to what remains of the Chinese gardens and back to the lake for lunch. Freya had some difficulty with an aggressive duck, before we had a short walk around the wetlands, and left for home.



Lunch beside Spring Creek

Mid-week walk, Wed. 13 May.

Back to Beechworth again, this time with 18 walkers, we started from Lake Sambell, but this time walked along Kars Street to reach the Gorge Road via a short walking track. This road gives magnificent views down on the township, and the plains to the North West. Walking rather than driving gives a new aspect to the enormous rocks along the way. We lunched alongside Spring Creek just below the bridge, before descending to view the Cascades. Back on the Gorge road we continued toward the main road and another spectacular falls. Along the way some eagle eyed walkers noticed a car in the creek, at least 100 metres down a very steep slope and wondered if it had just arrived. We later learnt from Andi, who found a copy of The Border Mail, that the accident involved a car driven by a female, with a male passenger at

midnight August 19, 2014. She had a blood alcohol level three times the limit, they were both uninjured and the car is still there!! We finished the walk along Spring Creek via the Chinese gardens. A very enjoyable day.

June Short Walk, Wed. 3.

We return to Violet Town for a pleasant walk along Honeysuckle Creek. It is interesting to see what a small community can do to provide sporting and recreation facilities. It is an easy walk, mostly on tracks. We leave from the Centre car park at 10am. Vaughan Cowan 5762 1980.

Mid-week walk, Wed. 10th June.

Brian Watson will be leading another walk along the Tallarook – Mansfield Rail Trail. This will probably cover sections covering the Cheviot Tunnel and Yea. For full details, and departure times, please ring Brian on 0407 300 922.

Wine Appreciation

Special notice for Wine Appreciation Group – change of venue

Wednesday 27 May

Due to circumstances beyond our control, our trip on Wednesday May 27 will be to Auldstone Winery near Glenrowan and lunch at Thoona Hotel.

We leave from the car park at 10.30 am on May 27.

I apologize for any inconvenience caused. Keith Rogers, Joint Co-ordinator Phone 5762 4086.

Wednesday 24 June
Meet at 10 am for visit to Lake Moodemere
Vineyards at Rutherglen.
Lunch at Pickled Sisters café.

Noel Meagher 5762 3149

Writing Workshop

Using ABC Open's 500 word topic for our writing workshop exercise each month is proving to be a very engaging way of sharing our writing. Stories on April's topic 'Testing the Friendship' triggered absorbing reflection and thought provoking discussion on the nature of friendships over time and the ways in which friendships can be tested. May's topic, 'Grandparents', opened the way for nostalgic sharing of memories of severe grandmothers and of warm, comforting grandmothers; of grandmothers who knew how to use rags to curl our hair; of grandfathers who were

wonderful tradesmen; of a lovely ritual featuring Nana Jess's tea-set; of being a grandfather and more

The topic for our June meeting, on Monday 15th June from 2-4pm at the Centre, is **'I quit'!** "Tell your story of quitting. Did you quit a sport, a job, a bad habit? Was quitting your act of defiance or were you giving up?" "We've all quit something - a job, a musical instrument, a food group or a bad habit. Tell us your story of quitting. What brought you to breaking point? Was it exhilarating or challenging to quit? What strengths did you draw upon and how did people react? What new opportunities were created once you quit?"

(Some ideas are already up on ABC Open's 500 words web page – check out

https://open.abc.net.au/explore?projectId=121&sor
tBy=interest)

Community Notices

Let's Talk Suicide

The Benalla community has been touched by suicide during the past 12 months. Such tragic deaths impact on family, co-workers, neighbours and the general community. Concerned Benalla residents approached Benalla Health, Benalla Rural City Council and the Rotary Club of Benalla to assist with the facilitation and organization of a free community forum – "Let's Talk Suicide". This forum will be held at 7.30 pm on Monday 22nd June 2015 at Rafferty's Receptions. Dr Debra Monk, Clinical Psychologist, will be the keynote speaker.

Supper will be provided for attendees followed by a Question and Answer panel. The panel will include Michael Nuck, Acting Executive Director Mental Health and Drugs, Northeast and Border Mental Health Services (NEBMHS), Susan Benedyka, Managing Director of the Regional Development Company, and Michael Donehue, Ambassador of Love Me Love You Foundation that supports Youth Mental Health. The evening will be chaired by Matthew Sussmilch, Benalla Solicitor and former Chairman of Benalla Health. The event wil lbe supported by a range of health professionals who will be on hand for a "cuppa and a chat" over supper.

RSVP and for further information: Email gail.brown@benalla.vic.gov.au

Phone: 5760 2655

For catering purposes RSVP's would be appreciated,

Urgent Appeal from Tomorrow Today Foundation

Kathy Hair from the Tomorrow Today Foundation has approached U3A with an appeal for urgent help asking if any of our Benalla members would be interested on part-time paid work tutoring secondary school students mainly in Maths and English. Kathy's telephone number at Tomorrow Today is 5762 1211 and Kathy is there Monday to Thursday each week.

Normally we would not bother you with emails, but the urgency of the request made me decide not to delay and wait for the newsletter.

Terry Case President.

Ms. Deborah Smith Community Health Nurse



Ph: 0357614500 • Fax: 0357614502 Benalla Health: 45 Coster St , Benalla MAP PO Box 406, Benalla 3671 www.benallahealth.org.au

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Your next Boob Bus to BreastScreen is scheduled for

Monday 29th June. Leaving Benalla Community Care Coster St. Benalla at 12.00 pm
Travel to Shepparton for your Mammogram.
Bring lunch with you, or have it early, then share afternoon tea, and more support than a bra can offer. Arrive back around 5.00 pm
Cost: Your time, and money for refreshments!!!
Bookings: Please Book by Monday 15th June

Call Benalla Community Health Service on 5761 4500

If you miss this opportunity, any woman who is due or overdue for her screening mammogram with BreastScreen is encouraged to add her name to the waiting list for the next Boob Bus, which will be departing at the end of August, watch this space for details!

You can ring our friendly Reception staff at Community Care on 5761 4500. Please provide your full name, date of birth, address, and phone contact, and let us know if you have had any implants or breast issues in the past, or whether you have any disability that may impact on your appointment time, this is so we can make adequate arrangements for your comfort at BreastScreen.

The BreastScreen program invites and reminds all women aged between 50 and 75 to participate in the screening program, but women aged between 40-50, and women older than 75 are also welcome to join the Boob Bus. If you are unsure whether you are due for a screening mammogram, or have questions for BreastScreen, please call 13 20 50.

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