



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – September 2015

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Attention tutors and Convenors! School Holidays and Access to W4 (19/9 TO 4/10)

- **Scheduled classes will be held, however I will need to switch off the security system and open the main entrance prior to classes entering W4. I will endeavour to have the room ready 15 minutes prior to the timetabled start. Tutors who have a key to W4 DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR UNTIL YOU KNOW I HAVE TURNED THE SECURITY SYSTEM OFF.**
- **I WILL RETURN WHEN THE LAST CLASS OF THE DAY IS FINISHED AND TURN THE SYSTEM ON.**
- **During the holiday period do not attempt to enter the building, other than for timetabled classes.**

Forthcoming events:-

- 1/10/15 (Seniors' week). The Singing for fun group presents "Sing-a-long for Seniors" Baptist Church, Bridge St. 10am.
- 21/10/15 Meet & Mingle in the Library
- 18/11/15 Meet & Mingle in the "Cooinda Hub". Annual concert and display of quilts.
- 25/11/15 (4th Wednesday in November) Christmas Lunch.

***Terry Case
President***

Betty Margaret Coats

11-01-1929 – 21-08-2015

We gathered in Shepparton on 28 August 2015 to say farewell to one of the founding members of Benalla U3A.

During her many years as a member Betty was a participant in a vast number of groups – Politics, Book Group, Comparative Religion, Australian History, Philosophy, Creative Writing, Wine Appreciation, to name just a few. Betty had a special interest in Politics and was a great believer in free education, social justice, gender equality and freedom of speech.

A member of Probus, Betty worked for years as a volunteer at Ballandella Opportunity Shop.

Married to Geoff for 65 years. A loving mother; a doting grandmother, great grandmother and a loyal and caring friend.

R.I.P., Bet.

Joan Vance

Important dates for Seniors week. in October

- Singing for Fun will conduct a Sing a Long at the Baptist Church Hall on the **1st October** at 10.00 a.m.
- An Information Table will be set up outside the Newsagent on Friday/Saturday the **9th/10 October**.
- U3A will have the display cabinet in the Library for October with Meet and Mingle being held in the Library on the **21st October**. Items for the cabinet would be helpful

GROUP REPORTS

Armchair History: the Victorians

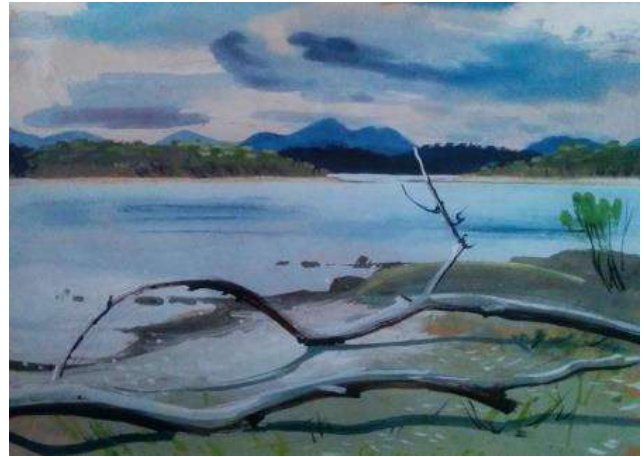
Following the death of Albert, Queen Victoria sought seclusion. The Queen had homes (palaces) such as Osborne, Balmoral and Sandringham, all hidden from public view and well away from the duties expected of her in London. Our next series of DVDs look at how the British people made themselves at home in the wider reaches of the Empire and how a travel company specializing in offering cheap days out for the poor, began to cater for rich clients enjoying adventure holidays.

Art Appreciation

Two prints donated to our U3A are currently on display on the noticeboard in W4. These are prints of original works by Philip Sargeant and Colin Munro who were the Architects/Artists who designed the Benalla Art Gallery. The original works were part of an exhibition at the Gallery earlier this year to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Gallery. The prints have been donated to Benalla and District U3A by their friends Bernard and Mary Newsome who spoke to the Art Appreciation Group in April 2015.



Print of original art work by Colin Munro



Print of original art work by Philip Sargeant

Astronomy

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT: "MOST PEOPLE VIEWING THROUGH A TELESCOPE AT THE SAME TIME!!!" This was held in August with 'Astronomy Benalla' participating organising a massive viewing attempt in the Hockey grounds. The number of people who have to be present to officially organise and record a Guinness official event throughout Australia is huge. Benalla gathered 48 viewers, who got a glimpse of the moon in between clouds just at the right time. The biggest numbers were of course at Mt Stromlo Canberra (who organised this complex event), the Gold Coast and cities. There were over 50 clubs who participated throughout Australia. Mt Stromlo Observatory sold mini telescopes to clubs and many people used their own of course. Astronomy Benalla bought 100 mini telescopes from Mt Stromlo and we have some left over.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A LIGHT WEIGHT, MINI TELESCOPE FOR ONLY \$6 CONTACT JEFF KNIGHT, PRESIDENT ASTRONOMY BENALLA ON 5762 5429. These small, lightweight telescopes would be suitable for Christmas/birthday presents for children too. The moon is especially good through them. Galileo used one very similar for all his discoveries in the 1600's!

'EARTH FROM SPACE': Did anyone see this fabulous 2 hour program on SBS Sunday Sept 13 (repeated Fri 18 Sept). All our dozens of satellites orbiting the Earth are doing an incredible job monitoring and attempting to understand our planet's weather and oceans and the complex web of forces that sustain life on our planet. We were shown how the rotation of the Earth, the atmosphere protecting us from the sun, the winds and ocean currents for example are caused by the Earth trying to equalise heat. Storms

are thus inevitable, as are bushfires and these forces are bigger than what people on Earth can control- however with so many people and extra CO2 we are having an effect. Surprisingly tiny plankton in their millions in the oceans is producing more O2 for us than trees (which rapidly absorb O2 at night after producing it during the day). This is a fascinating program get the DVD if you can.

Chat n' Chew

Our next Chat and Chew will be held on Friday 16th October at Georgina's Restaurant, at our usual starting time of 11.45 am. Bookings and cancellations to Shirley on 5762 6768 by Tuesday 13th October.

e-Book Group

Our most recent book was the curious incident of the dog in the night time, by Mark Haddon. Fifteen year old Christopher Boone is a very unusual narrator. He has Asperger's Syndrome, and because of it, has no emotional connection with people, not even his parents. However, he is also a brilliant mathematician, who uses his analytical skills, in the manner of Sherlock Holmes, an idol of his, to solve the murder of a dog. His second mystery, is to reconstruct the life of his mother, having found out through a series of letters that his mother had not died, as his father had told him. The pivotal part of the novel springs from this lie, which leaves Christopher deeply distrustful of his father, and motivates him to navigate his way through some formidable obstacles to find his mother in London. Described as stark, funny, and original, this novel is all that and more. It is a journey of self-discovery for Christopher, but it is also ours, as we come to question the meaning of 'normality', and the nature of family. The ending appears neat, as Christopher is reunited with his family, yet the gulf between him, his parents, and the reader is still immense and therein lies its poignancy.

Our book for next month is 'My Brother Jack'.

PS: Please remember to bring your book selections for 2016 to our next meeting in October.

Comparative Religion

Our plan for our September meeting was to have a speaker from the Baha'i FAITH but we have been unable to contact them. If anyone knows of a reliable contact person from Baha'i please let us know. Instead, after discussion time, we watched the final of three videos about Islam in which we

saw the extent of the Empire and its various leaders including, probably the greatest, Suleiman. This video was mainly about the secular side of the Islamic empire when it was at its height. Suleiman expanded the architecture and culture of Islam with magnificent mosques and other engineering marvels extending from Spain in the west, Hungary in the north and most of the middle-east.

Suleiman suffered the usual problems of the succession in an autocracy which included the terrible necessity of having his own son killed. It was not uncommon, when there was more than one son, for the potential rival to be killed even by his own brother. This was meant to prevent a splitting of the loyalty of the subjects.

Also interesting was learning about the place of the "harem" which was not the imagined "sexual free for all" for the ruler that some would have us believe. The Sultan spent a lot of leisure time with the women because it was an escape from the duties of court and only a strictly limited number of wives and concubines were there for his "pleasure". Apparently the harem women were highly valued for their contribution into the management of court duties.

Our planned outing in October to the Anglican Benedictine convent has been cancelled due to illness at the convent. We are still going to the Winton Wetlands Hub for lunch and will have a guest speaker, if available. For this outing we will car pool, for people driving from Benalla, starting from the Dunlop campus carpark, (between the classroom and Aldi supermarket). We will leave the carpark at 12:10pm for lunch at 12:30 at the Hub.

Regarding the duration and start time of our regular Dunlop campus classes: it was decided at the September meeting that we change back to a two hour session with the option of an extra half hour if needed. The start time will stay at 1pm.

Mike Larkin

Film and Literature

Our group watched 'The Theory of Everything' based on the memoir 'Travelling to Infinity my Life with Stephen Hawking' by Jane Wilde Hawking.

Eddie Redmayne gives an astounding performance as Stephen Hawking. Felicity Jones sensitive but strong performance as Jane Hawking brings the core of the movie together. A supporting cast of fine actors complete a warm viewing experience.

Our next movie 'Under the Tuscan Sun' starring Dianne Lane looks interesting,

Jim Casey

Garden Appreciation

September 24th

Meet at Royal Hotel car park 10.00 am. We will visit the garden of Heather and Tom Sloan, 27 Goomalibee Street. Please byo morning tea.

Then a short walk to Retirement Village in Bridge Street, followed by a walk around St Joseph's Church garden. Lunch at Royal Hotel.

Sorry we will miss going to Libby McLennan's garden. Libby has to work on that day.

October 22nd

Meet at Centre car park 8.45 am.

Magpie Rise, the garden of Jill Whitford near Yackandandah. Garden is in a rural setting of seven acres, one acre of garden, mix of species – roses, perennials, natives, fruit trees and vegetables. Byo morning tea.

Jill has suggested a Thai café in Yackandandah for lunch.

November 26th

Three gardens. Louise Armstrong and Mary Daws and Carol Hair in Goomalibee Road

Gwen 5762 7017, 0438 627010

Garden Team

We made satisfying inroads on spring weeds in Jane's garden and will next gather at Kathy's (Mon 21st, when Elspeth will be away and Shirlie is also a doubtful attendee).

Now is apparently the time to set punctured bottle traps for Queen European wasps as they seek new nest sites, vanilla and honey in water being a recommended menu to lure them in.

Investment Group 1

Our August meeting was a first in one respect in that of all the individual Companies submitted by each member only one member's selection managed to achieve a rise in price!

This happening strongly supported the expectation that August was always going to reflect the global turmoil which in truth proved to be somewhat chaotic.

Those people interested in the share market are forever optimistic so hopes are high for better results next month!

Investment Group 2

At the meeting of Investment Group 2 held in early September we discussed the external factors which had contributed to the decline in the share market of more than 7% during the past month. We also talked about Hybrid Securities and the possible role these could play in diversification of a portfolio.

The next meeting of Investment Group 2 will be held on Friday 2 October 2015 at 2pm in W4.

Let's Talk Books

Our September meeting held at the Library revealed that many of the books we are reading are not only taken from the Library but sourced from second hand book shops and op shops. So many pre loved treasures are found hidden away on shelves and pounced on when found by all you keen readers. Quite a range of books were discussed from The Man who mistook his wife for a hat; Not Quite Right an autobiography of Jeffrey Smart and Quebec by Louise Penny. Two books relating to Egyptian history – River God and Finding Tombs The 7th Scroll by Wilbur Smith; Belly Dancing for Beginners by Liz Byrski was also enjoyed as well as other titles by Liz. We also discussed the recently released book, The Watchman by Lee Harper of The Mocking Bird Fame. It was recommended that a revisit to The Mocking Bird before reading the new release would be a good idea.

We even had a visit from a young schoolboy at the end of our session, who asked the librarian if he could join our group, he read a lot of books and we seemed to be having a great time. We hope he comes back after school next month. See you all on the 6th October.

Geraldine and Lorraine

Lifeball

Teams have been a bit light on recently, with illness, and with holidaying in the warmer climes, so we have been playing half court. The laughter becomes louder and more frequent, because the play is more intense.

A player from Mansfield has also joined us, as Mansfield has gone into recess during September because of lack of numbers. So Val Vella has been with us, and she is so enthusiastic, she is another boost to us.

We went to Albury recently for their annual Fun and Friendship day, and as usual the 7 of us had a super

day. Albury always hosts a great day, and teams from Deniliquin, Rutherglen, Griffith and Benalla attended, with the numbers around the 50 mark. Three of our members received their certificates for passing their umpire's course - Gerry Herman (our President), Tom Wales and Anne Summers. So they can now participate as fully qualified umpires and assist in our play, thus giving other umpires the opportunity to play more frequently. We have another Fun and Friendship Day at the end of October, at Wangaratta, which also is a beautiful day, so we are all looking forward to that day. We anticipate our numbers will rise as the weather warms up, as people return from vacationing, and health improves all round. Why don't you come and see what all the fun is about? Or just pop in to see how we play this great game? You will be made very welcome.

Marg Merriman, Secretary, 5762 1404



Gerry Herman, Anne Summer and Tom Wales are now qualified umpires in our Lifeball team, and received their certificates at Albury when we attended their Fun and Friendship Day recently.

Meet and Mingle

We all enjoyed the August Meet and Mingle with Janice Mentiplay-Smith from the Department of Primary Industries, who gave us an insight into the Field days run in the Goulburn Broken catchment area, with our native birds. Janice provided examples of nesting boxes and information books which proved very interesting. Some of us took home the bird identifying booklet in anticipation of our Bird Watching program in 2016.

At our September Meet and Mingle Sean Ginnivan from Council told us about plans for the Aquatic Centre and asked for input from our group, this was

a short 15 minute session. As the pool is important to many of our members it is nice to be asked for our opinion.

Our main speaker for the morning was Jane Metcalfe from Serendipity B & B who has a wonderful stock of lavender products. Jane will tell us about her life as a producer of lavender and being an owner of a B & B in Benalla. A cuppa was then shared and we chatted about what we have learnt from our guest speakers

U3A will have the display cabinet in the Library for October with Meet and Mingle being held in the Library on the 21st October. Items for the cabinet would be helpful

Music Appreciation

28 August 2015

John presented the music of Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957).

1. The score for the movie, Captain Blood, played by Brandenburg Philharmonic.

2. Violin Sonata, written for Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing.

Also, Mendelssohn's The Hebrides Overture, played by the Slovak Philharmonic.

For the second half of the session, John presented Dvorak's Cello Concerto, played by the Royal Philharmonic.

11 September 2015

John presented a BBC, Great Composers DVD, Life of Beethoven.

This was followed by Beethoven's Triple Concerto for violin, cello and piano.

Patchwork



Members are having a great time getting their Christmas bunting finished and finishing off their UFOs. The annual escape to the sunshine has meant that numbers have been down over the last couple of months. Enthusiasm will be high when everybody is back

Politics



Politics group members Joan and Delfina

We have been amply supplied with material from politicians of all political shades and it makes preparation for the classes easy! As one of our members recently suggested, we could do with a bit of a laugh, apart from the cartoons it's been a sorry tale.

Singing for Fun

Fifteen of our Harmony group will be singing at the Cooinda "Hub" dinner on Wed. 16th. Four of these members are residents at "Cooinda".

We are looking forward to our community sing a long at the Baptist Church Hall Bridge St. West on Oct. 1st. at 10 a.m. The singers from the Senior Citizens group will also be there to help us sing. Ask your partners and friends to come along to swell the volume. If you don't want to sing, just come and listen. It should be a fun morning. There will also be a yummy morning tea.

Tech Savvy Seniors

'Information sharing' this month brought a number of stories of time consuming efforts to resolve problems relating in some way to computers. Margaret W spoke of her frustration at trying to use Weebly on her I-Pad... until she had an 'aha' moment – "perhaps there is an app for using I-Pads... and there is! Barry spoke of his research into then procurement of five I-Pads with covers for our U3A, only to spend days dealing with stores and banks after his vigilant bank considered the payment outside his normal transaction pattern and stopped payment. Val arrived most apologetically, late after having spent five hours trying to work through a problem with her service provider involving a virus

on her computer. Such time consuming problem solving is something we all experience from time to time when we have a computer!

The presentation this month was a report back from Bev on the 'digital literacy and inclusion' themes at the recent U3A Network Victoria conference. There is an entry containing Bev's summary notes with links to videos and documents on our Tech Savvy Seniors page on the website.

Our extended coffee break again provided time for useful sharing between members – such as in the photo below where Marg W is talking to Judy S about adding the Weebly for I-Pads app to her I-Pad.



Tech Savvy Seniors Margaret Walshe and Judy Stewart

'Now, just how do you use the Weebly App?'

Our working groups then met to discuss their areas of interest. It's a new experience for us all to working in a class structured to allow for three 'mini groups' – 'bloggers', 'mentors' and 'tech heads' - linked by an overall interest in remaining 'tech savvy'. Time seems to fly and it's soon time for each group to briefly report back to the group as a whole. The 'bloggers' are continuing to develop their ideas about 'blogging'; the 'mentors' clarifying possible ways of offering support to increase 'digital inclusion', and the 'tech heads' following up procurement of I-Pads; discussing Wi-Fi options for W4 and preparing for Terry's presentation on 'Smart TV's'.

Towards a Sustainable Future

A number of good news stories featured in this month's session. The Anstow Eureka Prize for Innovative Technology has been awarded to a University of Adelaide team for research which suggests melting salt to store solar power could solve the big challenge of solar power – ie. the

mismatch between peak sunlight hours and peak evening electricity use. Infratech's new 'solar raft' technology, comprising solar panels that move with the sun allowing them to soak up more energy, has the added benefit of the cooling impact of water being available for use at higher temperatures when the efficiency of solar panels usually falls. Tim Flannery's latest book *'Atmosphere of Hope: Searching for solutions to the climate crisis'* advocates for new 'third way technologies' which may absorb greenhouse gases on a large scale such as seaweed farming; carbon negative cement; carbon negative plastic; and other new forms of carbon capture (The Age 15 Aug 2015). According to the CEO of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency 'It's difficult to overstate just how quickly things are moving in battery storage space' and that 'within months every major solar installer will also offer a storage product' (The Age, 21 Aug 2015). We hear from a reliable source that our local provider Country Solar is talking of having the Tesla battery available soon. We also read a most informative and optimistic article describing ways in which forward looking policies in ['Four Surprising Countries' China, India, Brazil and Mexico, are giving hope for Climate Action](#) (EcoWatch 14/8/2015).

We are continuing to monitor areas of concern. Will the Indian ocean temper the impact of the El Nino which has been predicted would otherwise have a 'great Godzilla' impact on Australia? How likely is extreme weather under global warming? Will legislation proposed by the Abbott government to change environment laws to reduce the rights of community groups to challenge development projects pass the senate cross benchers? How can the dominance of coal, particularly Victoria's brown coal, be reduced in Australia? A country which [visiting writer Naomi Klein](#) suggests is like her country Canada, 'founded on a powerful frontier mentality with an idea of limitless nature that can be endlessly extracted'... "In Canada I can't tell where the oil industry ends and the government begins and in Australia the same is true when it comes to coal" (Guardian Australia 17 Aug 2015).

Walks

Easy walk Wed. Sep. 2

Ten walkers started the walk from a delightful picnic area in the Northern Warby Ranges. A broad granite outcrop gave great views to the north. We crossed Tower road to follow the ridge to Mount Killawarra, where the views were even better. Snow could be

seen on the mountains, and the Spur-wing wattles were just starting to flower. Also seen were many Early Nancys, Leopard Orchids and multitudes of blue *Stypandra glauca*. The threatened rain held off, and a good day was had by all. The distance was about 4km.



Bush walkers on top of Mt Piper

Mid-week walk Wed. Sep. 9

Eleven walkers were not deterred by the weather forecast, and the distance of the drive, to visit Mount Piper near Broadford. These included Carol and Graeme who walked with us at Goughs Bay. We climbed up the zig-zag track before lunch admiring the display of white, and occasional pink heath, and wattles. The view from the top is virtually 360° and we spent some time watching the clouds and rain showers on the surrounding hills. Somehow they all managed to dodge us. We returned to the base for lunch and then did the 3.2km circuit of the lower slopes. The tracks are well maintained and it proved to be an interesting day.

Easy walk Wed. Oct. 7

We will walk in the Reef Hills to enjoy the wildflowers. The track or tracks will depend on the best display on the day, but will be quite easy. We will leave the Centre car park at 10.00am. Please ring Vaughan beforehand on 5762 1980.

Mid-week walk Wed. Oct 14

We will be walking at Mount Meg, near Thoona. It will be all off track, but not difficult. We will walk from the end of Amery Road to the Northern peak for lunch. Then we will visit one of the few groups of Northern Sandalwoods (*Santalum lanceolatum*), that grow in this area, as we return to the cars.

It is an interesting area with several gnamma holes and probably some Midget Greenhoods.
Ring Vaughan 5762 1980
Meet at the Centre at 9.15am for 9.30 departure.

Wine Appreciation

Wednesday 23 September

Meet at 10.00 am for visit to Boynton's Feathertop winery at Eurobin. Lunch at the Red Stag Restaurant nearby.

Wednesday 28th October

We visit Valhalla Wines, Wahgunyah after a 10.30 start and lunch is at Tuileries Café at Rutherglen

Wednesday 25th November



Lunch at Mansfield Golf Club. Bus leaves at 11.00 am from Benalla Bus Lines.

Further details in October newsletter.

Writing Workshop

Our regular meeting this month wasn't possible, however having our first 'coffee and conversation' alternate fortnight meeting at the Farmer's Basket helped to make up for this. We thoroughly enjoyed sharing 'Car Stories' memoirs over steaming mugs of cappuccino and hot chocolate. The 500 word topic for our September 21st regular meeting in W4 is 'For Better For Worse' - 'Share your story of a long term romantic relationship and what kept or has kept you together. How did it start? What did/have you learned through the ups and downs?' As 'For Better For Worse' may be a difficult topic to share in a rural setting with few 'degrees of separation' between U3A members, an alternative topic is available- 'Cringe'. 'Your eyes squint, your cheeks burn red, your teeth grate. Share a personal cringe-worthy tale of woe that you can't quite forget!' We've set ourselves a challenge for our next coffee and conversation meeting at the Farmer's Basket on October 5 which is to write a 500 word bed time story for children set in the Benalla district/North East Victoria.

The 500 words topic for meeting on October 19th in W4 is 'A Test of Courage' - 'Has your courage ever been tested? Tell us a story of your bravery, or when you should have been brave but couldn't summon the courage.'

If you are thinking of joining our group in 2016, perhaps you might like to come along to one of our meetings as a 'taster'. For more information contact Bev on 5762 8171.

Benalla Croquet Club
invites you to a

Come and Try Day

Tuesday October 6th 2015
9.00am – 12 noon
at the Benalla Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club
Ackerly Avenue, Benalla

No Cost includes Dueshine Morning Tea

Croquet is a sport for all ages and abilities.

This is your chance to learn how to play.
Wear some flat soled shoes and come along and have some fun.

Contact Judy 5762 5920
or Debbie 0402 506 328

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