



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – November 2017

U3A Benalla & District Inc

P O Box 674

Benalla 3672

Website: u3abenalla.weebly.com

Facebook: facebook.com/u3abenalla

Newsletter: newsletter@u3abenalla.com

President: Dorothy Webber

5762 2116

president@u3abenalla.com

Secretary: Geraldine McCorkell

P: 5762 2134 M: 0408 522 662

secretary@u3abenalla.com

Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to newsletter@u3abenalla.com by Wednesday 28 Feb 2018

President's Report



On Monday 13 November around 60 people witnessed the launch of the refurbished Seniors Building. Cathy McGowan MP and Elsie Mutton, U3A Network President, were complimentary about the space we have and the outlook from our room.

The Program Committee has been working on some new and exciting courses for 2018.

COURSES AND ACTIVITIES THAT WILL RUN IN DECEMBER

| | | |
|--------|---------------|--|
| Fri 1 | 1.30 – 3.30 | Investment |
| Mon 4 | 1pm | Trivial Pursuit 1980 |
| Tues 5 | 10.00 – 12.00 | E-Book Group at Benalla Library |
| | 2.00 – 4.00 | Let's Talk Books |
| Wed 6 | 9.45 – 12.15 | Play Reading |
| Fri 8 | 1.30 – 3-30 | Armchair History |
| Mon 11 | 9.45am | Morning of Memories (Share Photos and Holiday Stories) |
| | 1.00 – 2.15 | Creative Writing Workshop |

| | | |
|---------|---------------|---|
| Tues 12 | 10.00 – 12.00 | Bill's Railways (The New River Steam Train) |
| Mon 18 | 1.30pm | Christmas Sing-a-long. |

More detailed information can be obtained from the website

Dorothy Webber President

Group Reports

Armchair History

The course was judged a success by the class and we will continue next year looking at the intriguing reign of Queen Victoria and why people in Britain and its Empire proudly called themselves "Victorians".

Once again I have a large collection of DVDs to illustrate the era and you can sit back and enjoy your history:

- Photography became very popular during Victoria's reign and people who thronged to the Great Exhibition were entranced by this new development. I will draw on some collections of photographs from the period.
- The great writer associated with the period was Dickens who held society accountable for the miseries inflicted on the poor.
- City and home life gradually improved and the new Middle Class reaped the benefits.
- This was the Age of Steam as trains and steam ships cut travel time and carried people cheaply and (eventually) safely to distant destinations.
- It was also a period when the British Empire was at its peak and we will look at colonies such as Australia, after all what could be more Victorian than a colony named for the Queen

and a State capital named for her favourite Prime Minister?

Terry Case

Art Appreciation

This session was designed and hosted by co-convenor Neville Gibb to explore a question he often asks 'Where is the Art?' Benalla Art Gallery staff responded to Neville's request for works by two well-known Australian painters to be exhibited before our group, setting the scene for a talk about two greats of Australian Art Neville describes as 'both arguably geniuses', Albert Namatjira and Hans Heysen.



Neville began the session with a thoughtfully prepared response to the paintings. His premise was that we can tell where the art is when we look at both men's work. *"Both were able to produce works that are close to perfection in their capturing the spirit of the land. Not an easy thing to do"*. Neville contended that there would not be an Australian anywhere in the world who would not feel identification with the work of both men. Namatjira and Heysen were contemporaries and it is not known if they ever met but it is known that Heysen admired Namatjira's work. Namatjira came to painting in his 30s. Heysen was recognised from a young age as someone within immense talent. Both had good and bad times. Namatjira suffered mightily the slings and arrows of being an Aborigine and Heysen had to lay low during WW1. Namatjira's intention was to record the land - painting came into it but getting the essence of the land into a painting was his intention. It is an easy argument to make that this was Heysen's intention also. Neville considers both men to have produced work of great worth and feels proud that we have examples of their work in the Gallery. As he sees them standing head and shoulders above most other Australian Artists, Neville hopes we see more of their work on display.

Neville then invited local painter Mervyn Beamish to give his opinion. Merv made several comments

where he clearly differed from Neville. Merv said that in his view, art is determined to be art by the beholder, not by someone telling them it is art, because it hangs on a gallery wall or because someone is willing to pay a large amount of money for it. *'Your two year old grandchild's sketch stuck on the refrigerator door triggers an emotion; a memory, that, to you, is a work of art. A crack in the footpath can be a wonderful work of art and be quite fascinating because it stimulates senses, emotions even a memory.'*...*'If the item stimulates you senses; disgust and fascination ... the colours, the pattern, the situation, the swirl, there is something about it that takes you beyond the moment'*. Merv was able to explain where he felt the strength of both painters lay and made several valuable explanations, warming to his task as the morning went on. Merv's work is on display at NEA.

Neville and Merv's follow up discussion, together with contributions from the floor by Val Dunin; Carol Perry; visitors Reuben and Hazel Frankland; Bev Lee and others concluded an absorbing and lively session.

Bird Watching

Bird walk along Honey Suckle Creek, Violet Town

Ten people attended our last activity for 2017 on Thursday 9 November, and what a lovely day it was. We set off along the walking track from the football oval heading east the old Hume Hwy where we crossed the creek for the return walk. We found several nesting birds. One was a Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike on a very flimsy nest high in a red gum. Further on a Noisy Friarbird sat in a much more substantial hanging nest near the road bridge on High Street. Also heard near this bridge was the Scarlet Honeyeater, and after a few minutes the bird was spotted in a red gum tree across the road. We had better views of an Olive-backed Oriole, several Eastern Rosellas, Sacred Kingfisher and a tiny, but beautifully marked Spotted Pardalote. It was surprising to see a flock of White-winged Choughs near the creek and not far from houses. We recorded 32 birds during the walk. The bird list can be viewed [HERE](#)

We then drove to a private property near Violet Town to eat our lunch in a lovely shady garden. We watched Red-browed Finches and Superb Fairy-wrens hopping around our feet, and listened to a Rufous Whistler calling nearby. Other birds seen here included several Diamond Firetails, Peaceful Doves and Crimson Rosellas. Property owner Roberta showed us the old saucepan in a

shed where the Grey Shrike-thrush makes its nest each year and a nest box for Striated Pardalotes. A pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles soared high overhead, and above them was a lone dark morph Little Eagle. We then enjoyed a walk around the large garden, with many plants in flower. Just before we left a male Scarlet Honeyeater showed itself briefly on a yellow flowering sage bush. Roberta was very pleased to finally see one in her garden.

Scarlet Honeyeaters in Benalla



Photo Richard Gregson, Birdlife Murray Goulburn

A lot of Scarlet Honeyeaters are currently visiting Benalla. These tiny birds are usually found down the east coast of Australia, with few coming into Victoria. This spring they arrived in large numbers, probably sent south by a severe drought further north. If you happen to see a tiny, red-headed bird in your flowering bottlebrush or grevillea, that is the male bird. The female is brown. They have been visiting many gardens in Benalla. For a tiny bird, the male has a loud tinkling call.

Kathy Costello

Brain Games

Brain Games ended the year with the usual mix of challenges starting with a left-hand sketch through to solving cryptic clues. Our guest Ruth did well and we hope to have a few more joining us next year when we'll have just one session each month to fine tune our brain cells.

Elspeth Maconachie

Bushwalks

There are no more walks this year. The first mid-week walk is in February (Also to Mt. Buffalo – but easier) and the Easy walks start in April.

Thank you for your work and help over the year, and have a good Christmas,

Easy Walks

Six walkers enjoyed the fine weather and a good display of wildflowers in the Reef Hills. It has been

a good year for this area, and particularly for wattles.

Starting from the Picnic Area, which is a concentrated centre for flowers, we walked up Tower road towards the Quarry before turning right down a bush track and viewing quite a deep mine shaft before meeting the Rifle Range road and then the Wattle road. This road has a very good display of purple flowered Rough Mint-bushes, particularly near a low section of the track. We turned left here and walked the straight road to the hill where the fire-watch tower used to be. Down the hill to the Tower road and left then right on a bush track which has a line of mines including "The Lion" and leads down to "Wrangler's Gully", and the alluvial diggings, uphill from here to the Quarry and back to the cars. We were lucky to find a few Flying duck orchids flowering.



They are very small – about 2 cm, but quite spectacular. Also, after lunch, we drove to Baines road to see a small display of Tiger Orchids.



Mid Week Walks

Led by John Boehm, six walkers had a great, if strenuous day walking from Tatra car park to the Back Wall on Mount Buffalo. The track wends its way past many huge boulders and features such as the Chinaman's Dam, built in 1898 to provide water for sluicing, but was washed out by heavy rain about a year later, Cannon Hill (a rock on top resembles a cannon), and "The Giants Playground" with many boulders.



The Back Wall is an almost vertical cliff situated to the south of the Horn and meets Boulder Creek at

the base. We had lunch on top of a huge boulder with more than 180° views. The track was reasonably easy to follow, but was not well maintained. The grassland section was very narrow and the higher areas were overgrown, requiring a push through waist high vegetation and fallen branches at times. Having said that, it is one of those “must do before you die” walks for all those capable of walking the distance which was about 12km return.

Vaughan Cowan

Collectors

Another very successful U3A Collectors meeting was held in October where our theme was ‘tableware’. Although our numbers were down we had some lovely items for show. Two of our members resorted to walking their items in to our U3A room from their cars on trolley/walkers and we were so glad they made the effort.



Bev brought along cutlery items in an antique wooden box which consisted of a compartment with a lid and drawers. Louise brought just some of her large collection of knife rests. These are used in some countries where clean cutlery is not issued with every course, hence knife rests are required to keep cutlery off

the tablecloth. Many of us had not seen or heard of them before so it was a learning experience and a lovely one at that with many different designs to see. Items from a dinner set and cutlery set given as wedding gifts in the 1960s were also brought along and many other beautiful items. More photos are available on our U3A website and will be included in our Collectors end of year slide show to be held on November 27. Our theme for this final meeting for 2017 will be ‘Christmas’.

Collectors will commence again in 2018 on the 12 February at 10 am in the U3A room. This is the second Monday of the month. Hopefully this change in date will not inconvenience too many of our members.

Judith Borthwick

e-Book Group

We had no meeting in November, but just a reminder to bring your kindles, and a plate to our next meeting on December 5th.

Helen Scheller

Exploring the Universe

As the third Tuesday of this month falls beyond the deadline for the November newsletter, November’s ‘Exploring the Universe’ report is not available this month.

Bev Morton

Facebook for Mentors

We are now half way through our second short course with an enjoyable pre-course session in our meeting room followed by a very productive and fun first session with Christine Nicholas at GOTAFE. The course includes executive members, convenors and mentors and David Muir, who teaches the computer programs at Goulburn Valley U3A in Shepparton. It’s good to have him on board! Like the first group, the second group now has a ‘secret group’ for course members to practice sharing good ideas and news. A side benefit of the course is increased awareness by convenors, executive members and mentors of the possibilities and limitations of our Facebook community page ‘U3A Benalla and District’. Margaret Walshe from our first short course has joined Bev in regularly sharing news and photos of groups she attends as Facebook posts. You can see her posts—just search for U3a Benalla and District on Facebook.



Bev Lee

Film and Literature

This month we watched *The Last Word*, a recent film starring Shirley MacLaine.

Genre: Dramatic comedy

Plot: Harriet is a retired businesswoman who tries to control everything around her. When she decides to write her own obituary, Anne takes up the task of finding out the truth. When Harriet does not like the truth of her life, she sets out to show she is different, resulting in a life-altering friendship between Harriet, Anne and Brenda, an “at risk” coloured girl.

Key Characters: Harriet (Shirley MacLaine), Anne (Amanda Seyfried), Brenda (AnnJewel Lee Dixon)

Review: This involved some superb acting by Shirley MacLaine. At 83 and after over 60 years of acting, she can still portray a great character. Her character was not likable at the beginning, but as she touched the lives of the other two key actors, the depth of her character became apparent. There are many humorous scenes, but overall it has deeper meaning, revolving around a range of relationships: couples, parent/child, work colleagues, mentors. A thoroughly enjoyable movie, which we rated as between 4.5 out of 5.

Further: We are planning to watch the new Murder on the Orient Express at BPACC on 5 December at 10:30am. Anyone is welcome to join us. We will be discussing the movie over coffee the following week as our end of year activity. With all the movies we watch, we look at them as literature – literature in a different medium, the medium of film. This helps to focus the discussion, covering ideas around genre, characters, plot, but also adding the aspects that relate to film, such as cinemascope, music and atmosphere. We are looking forward to welcoming all interested movie goers in 2018.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation

Meet at Gwen Turner's in Arundel Street (behind the Drill Hall) for morning tea Thursday 23 Nov at 10.30 a.m. before either walking or driving to Thomas Street for two gardens.

- John & Betty Lindsay – 28 Thomas Street
- Neil and Lois Smith – 30 Thomas Street.

We will then have a picnic lunch in the Benalla Rose Gardens (bring a folding chair).

As this will be our last outing for the year, we hope to see everyone there. We have seen some lovely gardens during 2017 and plans are underway for 2018

Gwen Turner

Garden Team

Despite the rain over lunch time on Monday 30th October, four people still turned up to do some weeding and pruning at Jane & Bill's making 6 people in total. After 90 minutes of concentrated work, the usual magnificent afternoon tea was enjoyed by all, and down came the rain again!

Jane Parris



A good turn out on a hot day at Kirstin and Marcus's for the last garden team meeting of 2017. Bill even came early so he could get in a full session and still make it to the opening of the refurbished seniors' room - now that's dedication! We finished with our usual delicious afternoon tea,

good conversation and celebratory drinks. Thanks to Elspeth for co-ordinating our efforts this year (and next!).

Marcus Bolger

In the Mood for Opera

The curtain is coming down on our 2017 Opera Season. I thought you might like a list of those we have seen over the last eighteen months because many of them are in the Top 10 Favourite Opera Lists.

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mozart | Così fan Tutti | Contemporary Dress |
| Donizetti | La Fille du Regiment | Joan Sutherland as Marie |
| Verdi | La Traviata | Placido Domingo as Alfredo |
| Verdi | Rigoletto | Pavarotti as Rigoletto |
| Rossini | Otello | Zurich Opera production |
| Strauss | Fledermaus | Opera Australia production |
| Giordano | Andrea Chenier | Jonas Kaufman as Chenier |
| Bizet | Carmen | Jonas Kaufman as Don Jose |
| Puccini | Turandot | Zefferelli Production NY Met |
| Puccini | La Bohème | Opera Australia production |
| Britten | Peter Grimes | La Scala production, British cast |



While the Italians have featured with their marvellous nineteenth century arias and stirring orchestral movements, we have also sampled some of the twentieth century's great singers and heard some surprisingly beautiful singing from lesser known but equally wonderful performers. Nor have we forgotten our own stunning Opera Australia. Fortunately, the advent of the DVD has meant that we can see and hear some of the great performances from opera houses from across the world.

Meg Dillon

Investment

At the November meeting of Investment we looked at a newly published article by the ASX on Understanding Bonds. There was a good table in the article comparing bonds with Term Deposits and Shares. Bonds which include Government and Corporate bonds can be a complex topic. However, the article was quite informative about what is involved. Thanks to Les Rodgers who provided us with the website of a commercial company which deal in Corporate Bonds.

As the market had risen by 4% during October we also looked at some shares that had shown good increases in price during October. These had come from a variety of sources.

Barbara Buchanan provided us with an interesting article on algorithms being used for computer generated trading. This method of share selection is probably being used now by some Financial Institutions and its use will probably only increase in the future.

Members are reminded that we are having our final meeting for the year on Friday 1 December at 1.30pm in the U3A room at the Seniors Centre.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

As there was no meeting in November due to Melbourne Cup our last gathering at the Library

will be on Tuesday 5 December. I hope everyone has read lots of interesting books to discuss.

See you at the Library.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball

Lifeball continues to expand at a very pleasing rate. We now have a full team playing each week, with varying numbers having to sit out and wait for a game to finish before they can play. Which is SO good!

As well, those who qualified as umpires are having more experience with constant opportunities for umpiring under the close supervision of Gwen and Rupert Cheetham, to ensure they have a good grasp of the rules, and, more importantly, how to blow their whistle! True!! The whistle is one of the most important components of the game, believe it or not!!

Our very sad news however, is that we lost a popular player, Thelma Lipscombe, last Sunday morning. She had been ill for a while, and her health was rapidly deteriorating of recent days. So we hope to have some of us representing Lifeball, to attend her funeral, whenever that may occur, unknown as I write. We are all very sad, as we have never lost a member before.

Preparations are being made for our breakup luncheon, to be held at the Golf Club, on the 11th December. We will play first, as we do, then move to the Golf Club by midday.

We resume playing on the Monday 15th January, in our hall at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre, starting at 9.45am.

If you want to be involved somehow, the new year is a great opportunity to give us a go. No pressure! Come along, see (and hear) what we do, and why we love our game so much, this game of LAUGHball.

Give me a call to find out more, I am happy to advertise us to anyone who is prepared to listen!

Marg Merriman 5762 2967

Meet and Mingle

Those in attendance at our last Meet and Mingle for 2017 were afforded a real treat with the performance of the U3A Singing for Fun group. The three conductors Faith Hicks, Margaret Merriman and Brian Greed each conducted several songs. The performances were of a high standard and from the comments heard during morning tea it was obvious that the audience had greatly enjoyed the performance, and it seemed equally obvious that the performers

enjoyed singing. Peter Simpson performed a solo act relating to yesteryear which was well received and caused much merriment as U3A members could relate to it. Neville Gibb accompanied the singers in their rendition of Halleluliah which was performed at his suggestion. Well done to those involved. Your performance did you proud.

Many quilts produced by the Patchwork Group were on display and created much interest and discussion. A delicious morning tea followed the performance with plenty of time available to 'Mingle'.

Judith Borthwick

Music Appreciation

27 October 2017

Bill commenced the session with Richard Strauss' 'Four Last Songs' (a swan song of sublime beauty), Soprano – Jessie Norman



John presented Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D Major, Violinist – Arthur Grumiaux and Beethoven's Romance for Violin and Orchestra Nos 1 and 2.

Bill concluded the session with a DVD of Act One of The Mikado performed by the English National Opera Company. Act Two will be played later.

10 November 2017

Doug commenced the session with the following:

- A selection of Australian Classical/Operatic singers, some of whom were in prestigious competitions.
- A selection featuring the Grigoryan Brothers, world-renowned guitarists.



Bill conducted the second session as follows:

- Leopold Mozart Concerto in D Major for Alto Trombone
- Ludwig van Beethoven, Coral Fantasia played by the Wiener Philharmoniker conducted by Leonard Bernstein – pianist was Homero Franesch



Joan Visvader

Over There



Our late October session 'Technology in World War I' provided a fascinating and at times gruesome survey highlighting technological advances of the Great War. We learnt that deadly, sharp shooting German snipers armed with scoped sniper rifles appeared, impacting on trench warfare. We learnt of a responding innovation - the use of a dummy head to find the location of an enemy sniper. The papier-mâché figures were painted to resemble soldiers to draw sniper fire. Some were equipped with rubber surgical tubing so the dummy could "smoke" a cigarette and thus appear realistic. Holes punched in the dummy by enemy sniper bullets then could be used for triangulation purposes to determine the position of the enemy sniper, who could then be attacked with artillery fire. We learned that fake trees were sometimes used as sniper posts. We learnt of developments in machine gun technology and in poison gas, including mustard gas. John explained that although gas was not a great killer of men it incapacitated them for life. For example, only one of the 144 men named on the Benalla Memorial he has researched died of gas. Two more died before 1922 from its effects. We learned about developments in artillery, plastic surgery, submarines, aeroplanes, barbed wire, tanks, helmets, trench coats and much more. Thank you John, for another wonderful session. Our next session, 'The What If War and The Treaty of Versailles', will be followed up on December 15 by a session with John over coffee at a local café to ask further questions and raise any issues we would like to discuss with him in greater depth.

Bev Lee

Patchwork



Dorothy Webber

Play Reading

Jenny Macdonald, Jenny Sawyer and Shirley Swallow's choice of our current play, 'A Murder has been arranged', by Emlyn Williams, is proving most engaging. I think we'd all agree Claire Rudolph deserves an 'Oscar' for her award-winning performance in the role of Mrs Wragg. We will be meeting again on Wednesday 6 December at 9:45 am to read the concluding scenes of this 'murder which has been arranged'. Cast members have been asked to come along with costume and props suited to their role. We then plan to head off to the Northo for an end of year lunch together. If you are thinking of joining play reading next year, remember, you don't have to remember lines!



Bev Lee

Politics and Current Affairs

We started our year with President Trump and he is still grabbing the headlines at the close of the year. Australian politics was remarkable in the demonstration of how the Constitution and High Court can determine the fate of mere mortals, oops dual citizens!

I hope to see you back refreshed in 2018 for another year, surely it cannot be as strange as 2017?

Terry Case

Singing for Fun

Our meetings during November have been focussed on fine tuning of the songs which we are presenting at Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 15 November at 10am. The variety of songs chosen by our leaders Faith Hicks, Brian Greed and Margaret Merriman should provide a great concert. Gwen Barnes has been providing excellent assistance on the piano.

We have also been singing extra songs during our Thursday morning meetings. Faith has chosen

some rounds while Margaret has included many requests from the Singing for Fun members.

Brian had a great approach with him playing the piano for a Sing-along at the Harmony group. Members really enjoyed the variety of songs which included "The Saints Go Marching In" and "K-K-Katie".

Our sing out at the Alice Goulding Wing at Cooina is on Thursday 7 December. Members are asked to be at Cooina by 10.15am. To celebrate the end of a great year we are having our end of year lunch at the Golf Club after our Cooina performance. Please contact Joyce Borschmann if you want to go and have not put your name down already.

Margaret Jenkins

Tech Savvy

Tech Savvy Beginners

In November we looked at using our devices for pleasure activities; reading online and playing games. Hopefully both pursuits will keep our brains cells active and enrich our lives. In our last session there was some discussion about computing technology and how invasive it can be in our lives. So, we looked at a YouTube clip on modern dating and then part of a Gruen episode about Alexia who is even more helpful than the Google assistant. Who would have thought the mobile phone and tablets would be able to be the portable computers they are, 20 years ago?

Jenny Sawyer

Chester Gould perhaps as early as 1931 in his comic character Dick Tracey???

Editor



Tech Savvy Talks

We were fortunate to have Martin Nichol from Sun Real to speak to our group in November.

Sun Real completed the installation of a 100 percent renewable off grid micro hydroelectric system at Mt Stirling to service the Telephone Box Junction café, ski-shop and office, as contracted by the Mt Buller/Mt Stirling Resort Management Board. This was to replace the hydro system destroyed by fire during the bushfires of 2006-7 which was temporarily replaced by a diesel-powered generator. The project was a very challenging one due to the difficult terrain and the need to install a weir with 350 metres of 110 mm diameter poly pipe to deliver water to the AC 'turbine' with 80 metres of vertical drop. Around 6 to 7 kW power is produced by the three phase

alternator. This is converted to DC and then converted back to AC by associated inverters to provide 3 phase grid quality power.

To get the power from the turbine to Telephone Box Junction several hundred metres of aluminium cable was also installed. 650 metres is underground down the Mt Stirling Rd and 200 metres in steel conduit through bush country in accordance with the environmental requirements of the State Government and Energy Safe Victoria.

Also installed was a large lead acid battery bank costing around \$30,000 and associated inverter. This provides 70 kW hours of storage to boost power production when required.

Martin explained some of the difficulties and problems which arose with the project. The system has been operational since July this year and is working well according to reports.



Martin also imparted a good deal of information about roof top solar systems generally and responded to many questions from interested participants regarding the latest types of panels available, micro inverters, power optimizers and battery backup. Martin also showed us some very interesting monitor displays of working solar systems. The information available from these displays shows how well the system is performing and how much power is being used at any time and how much is fed back to the grid.

Everybody present found it a most interesting and informative session.

Les Rodgers

Towards a Sustainable Future

This month saw the return of John Lloyd from his overseas trip. John had only been back a week and said that he'd already attended five meetings relating to various roles in working towards a sustainable future! While keeping an eye on shifting policy sands and environmental politics each session, we continue to be excited by good news stories. These can overcome the despair which at times overtakes us. An interesting development we heard about was that see-

through solar cells have been created which could turn windows into small scale solar plants.

Researchers at Michigan State University have developed thin, transparent, plastic-like material that can act as an energy-generating coating on windows, and provide additional power when coupled with a rooftop solar installation.

We have often discussed the plight of people having to leave low lying Pacific islands due to rising sea levels and it was interesting to learn that the New Zealand government could become the first in the world to recognise climate change as an official reason to seek asylum. If implemented the plan could see up to 100 refugees per year admitted to New Zealand on a newly created visa category. The 1951 UN Refugee Convention, written long before there was such a thing, does not recognise victims of climate change.

We also seek a response from John about the current work of Renewable Energy Benalla which will be conducting a community forum and workshop on Tuesday 28th November to launch Benalla's Renewable Energy Transition Strategy - a plan for how all Benalla's energy can come from renewable sources. It was good to welcome new member Brian Feeley recently – Brian clearly has a deep interest in working towards a sustainable future and asks many engaging questions.

John Lloyd & Bev Lee

Wine Appreciation

The next occasion will be Wednesday 21 February—Details later. We will continue to assemble at the original carpark in Barkly Street .

Early in 2018 we will celebrate a special anniversary for 21 years of the U3a wine appreciation group. Founding convener was Louise Dodderell who led the way during most of these long years.

Season greetings to all who participated and contributed to the outings.

Keith & Heather 5762 4086

Writing Workshop

At our October meeting we shared stories on the topic set for the Benalla Festival's Writing Competition – *'Good Vibrations'*. We all felt Jenny McKenna should enter her story – about the good vibrations she experiences throughout the day meeting visitors to Benalla and others when she volunteers at the Tourist Information Centre—in Benalla Festival's writing competition. Seamus Foley, who loves to write, particularly poetry and folk songs, attended as part of the taster program

and shared with us his compelling poem 'The Kelly's are riding tonight'. We hope to hear more of his writing!

The topic for our meeting at 1.30 pm on Monday 27th November is '[Right here, Right now](#)' 'A time capsule of the present. Write a story about a situation currently unfolding in your life, right here, right now.'

Our November creative writing and pub sessions have been held over until December 11th because of the clash with the opening of the Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre renovations in November. The creative writing sub group will meet with Helen Treloar Duggin at 1 pm on the 11th December in the U3A meeting room, joining other members to share stories and ideas over a coffee at the Northo at 2.30 pm

Bev Lee

Program News

The newsletter for December will not contain the usual reports but will convey important information for the 2018 program.

The February 2018 newsletter will return to the normal format.

2018 Programs

U3A new courses in 2018. Held in the U3A meeting room at The Seniors.

Recorder Group led by Janet Douglas

First Wednesday of each month 12.15-1.15pm & Fourth Wednesday 10.00am-12.00pm

Some Moments in Australian History with Meg Dillon

Second and fourth Fridays 1.30 to 3.30pm first semester only.

"History" is very much a "shape shifter". It's a personal presentation that reflects a particular historian's point of view. So there is no such thing as infallible history only various propositions about what probably happened. We can never truly recreate the past, but only interpret it according to the best evidence that has survived and our personal beliefs about what the evidence shows.

We will use discussion, art, photos and videos where possible to explore the following five topics that are based mostly in the nineteenth century.

- The indomitable Captain William Bligh: Hero or Villain?
- The Squatter Kings in Grass Castles
- The Large Hole in the Ground

- The Boom/Bust Years. Is it all about greed?
- The Growth of the Labour Movement in the 1890s

Stock & Land:

Led by David Palmer & Kathy Murphy on first Tuesday 10-12

Are you a regular watcher of 'Country Wide' or reader of 'Stock and Land' or 'The Weekly Times'? Did you grow up on, run, still run, or downshift into Benalla from a farm? Perhaps you studied or taught food and agriculture related courses or worked in an area related to agriculture? Or perhaps, like most of us, you are interested in where food comes from. This group aims to provide a regular forum for members with interest and experience in agriculture to discuss agricultural issues and current developments in farming. Monthly two-hour sessions will feature well informed speakers from particular areas of farming who will share their story, their understanding of current issues and developments in their field of farming. This will be followed by questions and discussion. The group will also discuss current news and events in farming and share stories of 'our farms'.

Tech Savvy

Our Tech Savvy courses continue, the Beginners class this year will be for iPad users.

iPad for Beginners will be offered in the first semester with a possible transition to iPad intermediate in Semester 2

What's On

Monday, November 20

10:00am (Benalla Computer Club)
10:00am Lifeball
1:30pm Brain Games

Tuesday, November 21

10:00am Armchair Traveller
1:30pm Exploring the Universe
1:30pm Facebook For Mentors 2/#2

Wednesday, November 22

10:00am Christmas Luncheon - REMEL
185 Whorouly
11:00am U3A Christmas Luncheon

Thursday, November 23

10:30am Garden Appreciation - 'Open gardens' in Thomas Street, Benalla
3:00pm Tech Savvy Talks - Coffee at Rustik

Friday, November 24

10:00am Music Appreciation

1:30pm Armchair History

Monday, November 27

10:00am Collectors 'Christmas Theme'

10:00am Lifeball

1:30pm Writing Workshop - 'Right here, Right now'

Tuesday, November 28

10:00am Politics & Current Affairs

1:30pm Facebook For Mentors 2 - Post course session

Thursday, November 30

9:30am Patchwork - Christmas Projects

Friday, December 1

1:30pm Investment

Monday, December 4

10:00am Lifeball

10:00am Art Appreciation

1:00pm Summer Program - Trivial Pursuit 1980

Tuesday, December 5

10:00am E-Book Group

10:30am Film & Literature - BPACC - Murder on the Orient Express

2:00pm Let's Talk Books

Wednesday, December 6

9:45am Play Reading - 'A Murder has been Arranged' then lunch

Thursday, December 7

10:15am Singing for Fun - Cooina 'Sing Out' then Lunch at Golf Club

1:00pm Patchwork - Christmas Lunch

Friday, December 8

1:30pm Armchair History - additional session

Monday, December 11

9:45am Summer Program - Morning of Memories (Share Photos and Holiday Stories)

10:00am Lifeball

12:00pm Lifeball Breakup Luncheon - Golf Club

1:00pm Creative Writing Workshop

2:30pm Writing Workshop - Coffee at the Northo

Tuesday, December 12

10:00am Bill's Railways Returns - 'The New River Steam Train'

Friday, December 15

1:30pm 'Over There'

Monday, December 18

1:30pm Summer Program - Christmas Sing A Long