



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – May 2022

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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Please send reports for the newsletter to newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com by 25 May 2022

President's Report

Congratulations to the Benalla Rural City Council on the great job they have done with the resurfacing of Fawckner Drive outside the Benalla Senior's Centre. It is a much smoother surface, and the extra car parks provided adjacent to the street are already being well utilised.

On 25th April Geraldine and I attended the Benalla Anzac Day service, which was very well attended, and laid a wreath on behalf of U3A. After the service we spoke with several U3A members.

John Barry, a senior lawyer until his retirement, is giving two special lectures during May 2022. The first lecture on Friday 6th May at 2pm will be about Powers of Attorney (both Medical and Enduring) whilst the second lecture on Friday 20th May at 2pm will be about making a Will and Estate Planning. John is an excellent speaker and I encourage as many as possible to attend.

A new program called "The Sky's the Limit" is being investigated and it is hoped that it will commence in August or September 2022. It is for U3A members with an interest in gliding, flying and the history of aviation. The sessions will include guest speakers with backgrounds in aviation with stories to tell. Claire Rudolph has been involved in the initial planning. If you are interested in such a course could you contact Claire on 0428 151 750 please so that we can get an idea of how much interest there is. For a venue this new group hopes to be able to utilize the gliding club as a meeting place so that they can use their IT equipment and also fly the gliding simulator.

Margaret Jenkins, President

Executive Committee 2022 – 23



Back Row – Len Jeffers (Membership Officer); Heather Wallace (Newsletter Editor); Corrie Witlox; Ann Nelson (Vice President); Deborah Goodrich; David Palmer (Publicity Officer); Neville Gibb (Treasurer);

Seated—Dorothy Webber (Immediate Past President); Margaret Jenkins (President); Geraldine McCorkell (Secretary); Lorraine Knox (Welfare Officer); absent, Terry Case.

Group Reports

Armchair Traveller

Bill Parris was our presenter for the April meeting. He gave a fascinating presentation on a visit some years ago to India.

Bill highly recommends our reading Jane's pictorial journal entries of their 'Colours of Rajasthan' tour, November 17 to December 12, 2012. They have been added to the Armchair Traveller page on the website, together with this photo of Bill and Jane taken on Jane's birthday on November 29th 2012.

It was disappointing to have so few members in attendance in April. Hopefully more will come to listen to David Palmer on Tuesday May 3rd when he will take us on a stroll through Southern France. Hope to see you there.

Ray O'Shannessy



Art Appreciation

At our last meeting on Monday 4th April, we enjoyed an exhibition in the Bennett Gallery of the work of Adrienne Doig entitled *It's All About You*.

This exhibition featured several forms of Art - Painting. Embroidery. Sculpting. Video. Doll Making. Collage. In other words, Adrienne Doig works in many mediums.

One wall of the Gallery was devoted to smallish paintings on cardboard of various things that have happened to her and sees her in various situations both every day and important. Mundane and significant. When you study this wall, you think that she must have just about exhausted all that has happened to her, but in reality, it probably only just scratches the surface and there are much more paintings to be done before she is finished with this project.

Her exhibition has the title *It's All About Me* and Adrienne freely admits that this is what her work is all about. It's all about her.

The ultimate outcome is that she is assembling her biography through Art.

Adrienne grew up in Wangaratta. So, we can claim her as a semi local.

Join us at the Benalla Art Gallery on Monday 2 May at 10 am for an introduction to the new exhibition, [ACTS I-VII](#), by members of the [Oculi Collective](#). Oculi, a collective of 18 fine-art and documentary photographers, has been the leading influence in photographic documentary practice in Australia since 2000.

Neville Gibb

'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

As Time Goes By

We did not meet in April as our session fell on Anzac Day, however we have extended our meeting time on Monday 23 May to 1 to 4 pm. Please bring one if not two 500-word stories and a small plate of afternoon tea or some chocolates to share!

The topics? **'Community'** (April's topic)- "Write about a community you participated in, taking this opportunity to write about a slice of your life's journey which may be of interest to your family. It could be a community in which you felt a really 'good fit', a community which changed you, perhaps even a community you were glad to leave behind. Share your reflections in 500 words. " 'Community' can be a geographical unit - a region, a town, a neighbourhood, a street, but it can also relate to a **'community of interest'** you belong or have belonged to.

The alternate April topic is **'Anzac Day'** – The Brief - 'Looking back over your lifetime, write about your memories of Anzac Day and its place in the cultural rituals of your family and the communities in which you

have lived, moving from the personal to the political if you wish. "A chance to reminisce about memories of Anzac Day (or Days) which have stayed with us over time".

'Long Lost Friend' (May's topic) – "Have you ever come across a long-lost friend years after first meeting them? Tell us about the time when you first knew them, how you lost touch and the major changes in your life since, how you met them again, and your reflections on doing so. Are you still in contact? Explain what has happened since you came across them again." ('long lost' could also be a family member).

The alternate May topic is **'A Friendship Tested'** - "A true friend is there through thick and thin, but not all friendships survive under pressure. Tell us about a time when a friendship was put to the test. Did it strengthen your relationship, or push it over the edge?"

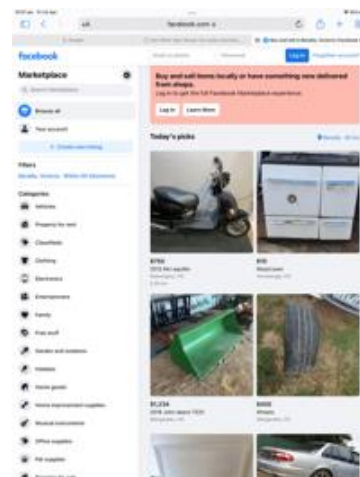
Bev Lee

Be Connected

In April we followed up learning our about emails by exploring the email app and sending ourselves an email with a photo attached using Copy and Paste. We also used the Save Draft function. And then at the end we Deleted all of that hard work. The following week we all had another practise of our emailing skills.

Email security was discussed as per the Be Connected unit 'Email Safety and Security.' We then launched into a new topic; 'Introduction to buying and selling online.'

Elly was able to show everyone the Benalla Marketplace site and explain how the site works. I used the E-Bay site to demonstrate buying and purchased a new iPad cover online. I hope to be able to bring my new iPad cover to the next class.



Jenny Sawyer

Bird Watching

Report of visit to Euroa on Thursday 14 April.

Eight people attended this outing to the Seven Creeks walking track in Euroa. This is an attractive area to look for birds with its mix of huge red gums, silver wattles, reed beds and managed parkland. We walked the southern section of the track.

Because it was the day before Easter the Euroa caravan park was already very busy, so at first, we saw larger birds that are used to people - magpies, magpie-larks, cockatoos and wood ducks.

We had excellent views of Blue-faced Honeyeaters and Crimson Rosellas in several places.

As we continued to a quieter part of the track, we started to see and hear some of the smaller birds. We found good numbers of Red-browed Finches and Superb Fairy-wrens in the long grass near the creek. The two highlights were Golden Whistler and Crested Shrike-tit.

Thanks, Andi Stevenson for the photos.

Our list of 27 species can be seen on eBird. Here is the link

<https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S107972259>

Next outing is to the Moorngag area, on Thursday 12 May

Good quality roadside vegetation can support a variety of bird species, so we will visit the Moorngag area for some quiet roadside birding. With a bit of luck, we may see some Scarlet and Flame Robins which head to lower altitudes for the cooler months. Please meet in the carpark behind the Seniors Building at 9.30am, bringing any food and drink you need for the morning and binoculars if you have them.

Kathy Costello



Blue Faced Honeyeater



Crested Shrike Tit

Bushwalking – Easy Walks

April report: Cremona Bridge

With the threatened rain holding off, seventeen walkers set out from the former Cathkin Railway Station for the much-anticipated Cremona Bridge.

This is an early design of Sir John Monash, and there was much discussion of the history and construction- thank you, Andi, for providing us with newspaper articles and other documents from Trove!

Enjoying morning tea and a lovely view over the Goulburn at the bridge, we then returned to Yarck for lunch.

All up, a pleasant walk of approx 6 kms, which some of us extended after lunch by a walk to the old Yarck goods siding. Thanks to Andi and to Bev for photos, and to Andi for some excellent research!



Wednesday 4th May: Jamieson

For this walk, Wende will be sharing her knowledge of the Jamieson and Goulburn River environs. Walking approximately 8km total, lunch will be BYO picnic, although the general store may have some takeaway.

We will be ready to leave the Seniors' carpark, Fawckner Drive, by 9am. Please confirm with Glenys by Monday 2nd May on 0431 or gchess@hotmail.com. Remember to bring lunch if needed, snacks, a drink and comfortable shoes.

Wednesday 1st June: Victoria Lake to Shepparton Botanic Gardens

We have previously explored the amazing Botanic Gardens, but on this walk, with the opening of the suspension bridge, we can walk from Victoria Lake to the gardens, a total of approx 8 kms. We will again leave the Seniors' carpark at 9am. Please confirm with Glen by May 30th.

Car sharing for all walks is usually available, with a small contribution.



"The vanilla slices of the Giddy Goat Cafe at Yarck were especially popular"

Julie McNeill

Chat n' Chew

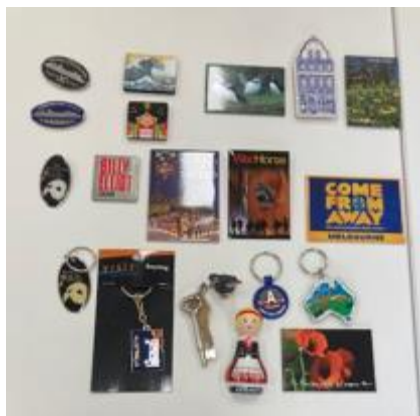
Chat and Chew will be held on **Friday May 20th** at the *Ella Goose* restaurant in Nunn Street. Please take note of the time change – 11.45am for a 12.00 Lunch. It would be appreciated if you could ring my mobile 0427 376 991 to confirm your attendance and if I do not answer, would you leave your name and phone number, and I will ring you back.

Lorraine Knox

Collectors

A collection of keyrings and magnets were presented at the April meeting. It seems that the group had no trouble in putting together their collections as shown in the photos.

There were mementos from cruise ships, places visited both locally



and overseas and from favourite stage shows. Some had special meanings such as the magnet with the red poppy and bearing the inscription "*In Flanders fields the poppies grow*". This poem was written in 1915 by John McCrae, a Canadian officer and physician in the Ypres area in Belgium, and read by him at the funeral service on active service. The poem has become a symbol of remembrance for those



The group next meets at 10.00am on Monday 2nd May when the theme will be embroidered articles. These may be old items or something you have made yourself. All welcome.

Janet Gourley for Dorothy Webber

Community Singing



The weather may be getting cooler but the enthusiasm for Community Singing is certainly there.

Brian Greed chose songs from our regular Book 1 for the first part of Community Singing and followed it with a selection from Sammy's Song Book No 1. We all enjoyed the variety of songs, many old favourites, some with an Irish, Scottish or Australian background. But all sung with great gusto and all thoroughly enjoyed.

Everyone gave Brian a round of applause at the end to show their appreciation for his wonderful effort on the piano.



We also had a visit from Bev Lee who stayed for some of the second half, and told us that she enjoyed the singing

Margaret Jenkins

Creative Writing

Our writing classes consist of three components:

1. A quick writing challenge
2. Discussion points to improve the quality and readability of our writing
3. Discussion/feedback around a story or piece of writing shared with the class.

Our writing challenge this month was to fill in some blanks in a few sentences. For example, the first sentence was:

“ _____ walks to the edge _____ and _____.”

Some great creativity as people came up with different characters, edges (of what) and actions. Next time we have this type of challenge, I think I should collect the work so I can include examples in the newsletter.

The discussion points were around when to use contractions (for example, *I'm* instead of *I am*; *I've* instead of *I have*) in our writing and when to write the word for numbers (*five*) or use the figures (*155*).

For our written work to share with the class there were three prompts to choose from:

- **She pushed the strands of wet hair from her face.**
- **He could see the greedy look in {insert name} eyes**
- **She bolted out the door like a bat out of hell**

As usual there were some interesting and varied interpretations from the prompts. With one of the prompts being around wet hair and the current flooding in northern NSW and south-eastern QLD, it was not surprising to have some flood and rain related stories. Although not all related to rain...there were other ways to achieve wet hair. Other stories involved shape changing, identity changing and the devil.

The topics for May are:

- **Just then an alpaca stuck its head out of the window**
- **Don't go mistaking paradise for that home across the road**
- **They crouched in the ditch not daring to breathe until the footsteps faded into the distance**

I am eager to see what the new topics bring for our next class on 9 May. I have already started on mine!

Joy Shirley

Exercises for Fun

Did you know that walking around the Benalla Lake is a distance of 4.2 kms? Did you know that at our Exercise for fun Class, we do over 6,000 steps, which is the equivalent of walking round Benalla Lake? Come join us to get your steps up every Monday at 9.30am, in the Seniors Hall! See you there, have fun!

Helen Jeffree

Exploring the Universe

Our Quest was to follow the Solar Wind.

We live within the atmosphere of a star. It provides us with heat, light, energy and life. Our Star, 'The Sun,' is a dynamic sphere of nuclear thermal energy that is bound together by immense gravity. On a planet in the Goldilocks Zone, not too hot and not too cold, we bask in sunlight that travels at the speed of light to Earth in 8.3 minutes.

The Solar wind is an energised stream of charged particles streaming from the outer reaches of the Sun at an average speed of 1.4 million kms/hour. 'Effects of the Solar Wind.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twB62NYsalg>

To follow the Sun, we'll start with a study of Space Weather that drives the Solar Wind across vast distances towards the boundaries of the Solar System. NASA has two excellent films:

1. What is Space Weather? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8jwTpG-26E>, and
2. Parker Solar Probe touches the Sun https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkaLfBuB_6E

In April we travelled across our Solar System with the light, heat and energy of the Sun, following the Solar Wind all the way to its boundary, to the heliopause.

We hitched a ride with the Voyager 2 Spacecraft launched in 1977, studying the 4 outer planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, to where the Sun's influence is only one five thousandth of what it is here on

Earth. At the heliopause the supersonic solar wind pushing outward against the interstellar medium, forms a giant bubble around the Solar System and protects the planets from Interstellar radiation. The bubble is also shaped by the force of stronger Interstellar wind that contains material from exploded stars.

The Voyager 2 Space craft passed Neptune and reached Interstellar Space 29 years later, having travelled 18.3 billion Kms and moving at 15.341kms/second.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWFqT354Jxc> References: NASA.

Rupe took over the second half of the program with a great power point presentation of “400 Years of Telescopes”. From the theories of Aristotle and Copernicus to Galileo’s first sight of Jupiter’s moons, through to present day telescopes.

Bev Morton

Family Research

The group decided to forego our April 28th session to provide members with the opportunity to attend Benalla Family Research Group’s Australian Heritage Festival ‘Lone Graves and Other Curiosities’ sessions that week. Members agreed to present stories for both April and May’s topics in May – ideally both, but one would be fine. The topics? **‘They were there when’....** “Did someone in your family tree experience a significant news, historical or cultural event first-hand? Share your understanding of what may have been their experience” and **‘Eulogy/Obituary’** Write a eulogy for an imagined funeral (or an obituary for a newspaper) for someone in your family tree you never, or barely met (preferably at great grandparent level or earlier), based on your research and any family stories passed down about them.

Bev Lee, Barry McDonald, Wendy Sturgess

Family Research – Beginners

Beginners currently working ‘one to one’ while developing their family tree enjoy remembering and draw upon stories told by family members and their own memories of grandparents, great uncles and aunts. They generally discover family documents and photographs tucked away in boxes, trunks or suit cases. It isn’t long before discoveries are made using ancestry.com which develop a deeper understanding of their family history—one beginner is currently immersing herself in British Census records which describe the many generations of her family who worked in the steel industry in Sheffield, England; while another is discovering ancestors transported to Tasmania and a generation-spanning mining connection to the Maldon area.

Members of the small group class which meets on the 1st and 2nd Thursday had each collected a well-developed set of resources and started working on their family tree when we began, however all had mysteries to be solved, information to (hopefully) be found, by becoming more comfortable using online records and family tree programs.

It has been exciting to watch them making gains in terms of their initial goals and, in doing so, strengthening their understanding of ancestry.com, Trove, BDM, Scotland’s People, Census records, British Newspaper collections and more.

Dawn Stephens recently achieved her goal of producing a book about her husband’s forebears for family members. The result impressed us all!

Dawn incorporated a My Heritage genealogical report followed by engaging ‘case studies’ following her husband’s paternal line, along with lots of photographs across the generations.

Dawn’s choice of 150 gsm satin paper, colour and cover worked beautifully - we were all keen to get details of the online printing firm involved!



Bev Lee

Film Discussion Group

Our films for discussion this month were **Marry Me** and **Death on the Nile**. Most of the people attending the class had managed to see one and many had seen both the films. We also had a quick discussion around **Off the Rails**.

Death on the Nile stars Kenneth Branagh, playing the Agatha Christie sleuth Hercule Poirot. When Poirot holidays aboard a river steamer, his holiday turns into a search for a murderer when a couple's honeymoon is tragically cut short. Set in Egypt against a landscape of sweeping desert and pyramids, this is a tale of passion and jealousy, with twists and turns that can leave audiences guessing – unless you have seen earlier versions or read the book. The scenery impressed, although it was not filmed on location.

There were several interesting characters with lovely costuming. Included were several well-known actors including Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders. In the main, performances were reasonable. The bride's role was not demanding and seemed to be overacted. Branagh's performance as Poirot was better than in **Murder on the Orient Express**. It is always hard to see him as Poirot though as David Suchet's interpretation has been around for so long. The opening scenes were a bit of a puzzle. We were introduced to Poirot in the trenches during World War I, then in hospital with injuries to his face – hence the moustache to hide the scars. And there is a scene at the end where he has shaved off his moustache which seemed to have no relevance to the film.

Overall, a watchable but not outstanding film. Ratings of the film varied from 3/5 to 4/5.

A few people had seen **Marry Me**. Music superstars Kat Valdez and Bastian are getting married before a global audience of fans. When Kat learns, seconds before her vows, that Bastian has been unfaithful, she decides to marry Charlie, a stranger in the crowd. Starring as Kat is Jennifer Lopez. It was a fun light-hearted film. Charlie and Kat both learn a bit more about themselves as the film progresses. There are a couple of messages that come through. Perhaps key of these is the theme 'all that glitter is not gold'. The acting was average, with the best performance by Chloe Coleman who plays Charlie's daughter, Lou.

It was generally well received as a light happy film, with most of the class rating it as 3/5, with one giving it only 2/5.

We also briefly discussed **Off the Rails**. Three fifty-something women set out to repeat the European inter-railing adventures of their youth, after their close friend passes away leaving them rail tickets, and a final request: to take her teenage daughter with them. Many of the events were totally implausible, but if able to overlook these it was an entertaining way to spend 90 minutes. We rated it around 3/5.

April is school holiday period and many of the films screening at BPACC are animated children's films. This is not to say these are unwatchable. Many of these films are fun to watch and have valuable messages for both the children and adults. There is one film that is not animated that looks to be interesting and fun. This is **The Duke** and is the primary film for our next class on 11 May

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation

Although umbrellas were needed at times, a delightful day was spent with Indigo U3A garden appreciation group members in Beechworth on Thursday 28 April. From a convivial morning tea at the George Kerferd Café, we strolled through the gardens of the former psychiatric hospital then proceeded to the Community Gardens (pictured below), followed by a long lunch at the Hibernian Hotel. We also we drove through the old May Day Hills precinct and admired the beautiful autumn colours of the trees all over town.



Special thanks go to Indigo U3A's Kathie Higgins for her role in planning such a successful activity, and to Rosemary Ryan and other garden loving members of Indigo U3A for their company on the day.

Thursday 26th May - Two town gardens in Benalla.

We have been invited to visit Arlene Van DerMerwe's Garden at 67 Sydney Rd, Benalla. Arlene's Garden has been a show garden in its day, with large Camellias, Azaleas, trees and bulbs - now it's a work in progress with Arlene putting her stamp on it. Arlene and her husband only purchased their home a year ago. Hopefully we can help with names of plants. Next, we will visit the garden of Dawn Shaw at 16 Bond Street, Benalla - a lovely garden with many different plants. Please BYO morning tea. Lunch - Benalla Golf Club.

Thursday 23rd June - Albury Bus Trip.

Meet at Benalla Rose Garden, Royal Hotel end at 8.30am. We will visit St. Matthews church in Kiewa Street, Albury then to the private home and garden of Father Peter, for our morning tea in the Ballroom and then to view garden. Lunch will be at Borella Café, Pearce Nursery, Borella Road, Albury. Cost Bus and Donation to Church is \$22.00 per person, with money to be paid at our May outing. or by arrangement. Hope you all had a lovely Easter!

Gwen Turner

German – Advanced

The now combined German group is making very good progress in pronunciation and general knowledge of vocabulary. Since it is now possible to travel overseas again, we began to dream about a trip to Germany with all the vocabulary to survive should such a trip happen. I am taking the members down memory lane and it appears we all enjoy it. The old brain is being rejuvenated. For those former students who might be interested what we are doing, check the Benalla U3A Weebly website for [Advanced German/Lessons](#).

Horst Gunther

Investment

At the April meeting of Investment, we looked at an article by Lewis Jackson which described the Market as entering a new phase. This conclusion was reached due to a series of factors including the Ukrainian Russian conflict, the continued high metal prices and the increasing inflation in both the US and the UK. The article talked about four sectors and 17 stocks which will be affected.

Sometimes our monthly selections show up interesting facts, and this month it gave us two stocks involved with lithium mining which had made very substantial gains for the month. It will be interesting to see if CXO and AGY continue with the momentum they showed during March.

The next meeting of Investment is on Monday 2nd May in our U3A room at 1.30pm. As part of the program, we will be viewing a 40-minute video sent to us by FIIG on Investing in Bonds. This topic has been touched on before. However, having something from one of the main investment houses on Bonds should be worthwhile viewing. All welcome.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

A lively discussion on literary matters took place on the Monday 4th April. Joan has read the James Herriot series including *Animal Stories*, and also enjoyed *Written in the Sky* by aviation local author Mark Carr. *The First 49 Stories* is an anthology of Hemingway's writings, the problem being that you get into the stories and they are finished! Darry Fraser author of *Women in the 1850s in Victoria*, *The Widow of Ballarat*, and *Where the Murray River Runs* were all enjoyed. Alice Feeney has written a psychological thriller *I Know Who You Are* and along the same line *Wire in the Blood* by Val McDermid has been made into a TV series. Shirley always enjoys a variety of books *Street Lawyer* by Grisham, *Over My Dead Body* Geoffrey Archer, *Australian Racing Stories* by Jim Haynes, and *40 Years of Murder* by Professor Keith Simpson. *Monkey Grip* by Helen Garner was not a favourite read, whilst a heart-warming story, *The Travelling Cat Chronicles* by Hiro Arikawa, was appreciated. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* by William Shirer was written in layman's terms, meanwhile Ann Cleeves was at her best with *The Long Haul* the first novel in the *Two River Series*. A delightful book was *The Secret of Lost Things* by Sheridan Hay telling of the eccentricities and passions of booksellers and collectors. *The Single Ladies of the Jacaranda Retirement Village* and the Alexander McCall Smith book *The Kalaharri Typing School for Men* bought a smile and on a more serious note *The Night She Disappeared* by Lisa Jewell. A beautifully told novel *Clock Dance* by Ann Tyler was worth the read, whilst a classy political

thriller was *In Darkness Visible*, well written by Tony Jones. A well-researched book was *A Daughter's Tale* written by *Mary Soames*, the youngest daughter of Winston and Clementine Churchill. Catherine Cookson has made a return in *The Cultured Handmaiden*. So many books read, some good and some not so popular. See you all on Monday 2nd May.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball

So many public holidays on a Monday! We have enjoyed the games we have had this month, but Easter, Anzac Day and the temptation to travel in the lovely autumn weather have made their mark. Luckily, we're an enthusiastic group, and will be back on court on May 2nd at 10 am.

Lifeball is a walking pace ballgame played weekly at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre, and is great for anyone who enjoys team sports, as well as being a fun and safe way to maintain fitness. Coordinator Marlene Pitts is happy to provide more information on 0407240943. Players are also asked to advise Marlene if they will be away

Julie McNeill

Meditation

Meditation, not held this month due to public holidays, will resume on Monday 2nd May at 12.00 noon.

Caroline Sims and Heather Wallace

Meet and Mingle

'Scooter drivers must avoid roundabouts'

The degree to which mobility scooter operators embrace the legal concept that they must act as if they are pedestrians, can be carried to extremes, as road rules expert John Weinert discovered recently.

He told a Meet and Mingle group at U3A (University of the Third Age) in Benalla last week, that while traversing a roundabout in his car, he almost collided head on with a person in a mobility scooter, coming at him from the opposite direction. "I couldn't see the front of the scooter he was so close to me".

The explanation from the scooter operator was that as a pedestrian on a road, you must travel facing oncoming traffic and that was the way he believed he should negotiate a roundabout.

Mr Weinert, communications officer for RoadSafe North East based in Yarrawonga, was making one of his first presentations on driving safely since Covid constrained such talks two years ago.

He said the only approach scooter operators should take at roundabouts was to avoid them entirely.

He also said the biggest single thing drivers could do to increase their safety was to always drive with headlights on low beam. "That will greatly increase your visibility to other drivers, as will avoiding driving silver, green and black cars," he said. "Those colours just blend into the bitumen and are very difficult to see".

Buy the heaviest car you can handle, because if you are in a small car and collide with say a Land Cruiser, you and your car will come off second best.

If you have a chronic medical condition or disability that is not on your licence and you crash, your insurer will very likely deny liability. "The police or VicRoads don't care but your insurer will," he said. Mr Weinert said the most dangerous manoeuvre of all, was doing a right-hand turn, because there could be traffic going in four different directions.

He said it was best to turn right, when traffic was quieter and where there were right hand turn signal arrows, or at least traffic lights. "In a perfect world we would only do left hand turns, but it could take us a long time to go anywhere," he said.

Mr Weinert also spent time on other legalities of using a roundabout, to explain the law that says, those already on a roundabout have right of way. "But don't carry that to extremes," he said. "If a vehicle is on



the far side of the roundabout, you will not clash with it if you enter the roundabout, when the vehicle is some distance from you”.

Where merging lanes are encountered, Mr Weinert made the point that a vehicle entering a main road from a merging lane on the left, must give way to vehicles on the main road. “If they go out of their way, they are doing you a courtesy to let you in easily, so give the other driver a waved acknowledgement,” he said.

David Palmer

Meet and Mingle in May – Use of the Defibrillator

At the Convenors Meeting held in February 2022 there was a question concerning use of the Defibrillator which is stored in the main Auditorium of the Benalla Senior’s Centre. Following this question, we are pleased to announce that we have invited Ambulance Victoria to give us some information about **Use of the Defibrillator** at our May Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 10 am in our U3A room.

In the meantime we have been sent information from Ambulance Victoria called [Call Push Shock FAQ](#) (Frequently Asked Questions) which we have added to our Website with their permission. The information is available to our Convenors and other U3A Members if required.

Margaret Jenkins

Music Appreciation

“Something old, something new”, “ancient, yet familiar”, “modern, yet little known” is one way of summing up our April presentations. Perhaps we could add in “the long and the short” as well. Schubert’s ninth symphony, perhaps not so ancient but certainly a familiar work and just about the longest orchestral work in the classical repertoire, was our opening composition for the month. This was balanced by a five-movement cello concerto by Anna Clyne ‘DANCE’, so new as to have been composed less than 3 years ago and premiered to the world two years ago, yet the inspiration for it dates back to the 13th century. Our second session included a viola concerto by Carl Stamitz, little known outside of the world of conservatorium students, yet close your eyes and you may think “Mozart” with whom he was contemporary. A couple of very short choral pieces by present day Estonian composer Arvo Pärt were followed by Richard Strauss’ oboe concerto where the story behind the work is as interesting as the music itself. You can read all about it, and listen to the recordings, by turning up the [Music Appreciation](#) page on our U3A website.

Bill Squire

Page Turners

April – ‘The Promise’ by Damon Galgut (2021 Booker Prize Winner)

This book won the Booker Prize in 2021 and explores the lives of an Afrikaners family over two generations as South Africa changes from Apartheid to Democracy, albeit with, at times, several corrupt Black South African politicians in charge.

The focus is on the Swart family, running a small reptile park and living on a tiny barren farm. Salome their loyal African servant was promised the ownership of her house by both Rachael and Manie Swart. The book is structured in four parts round the funerals of Rachael, Manie and their two children Astrid and Anton – all about 10 years apart.

But the book is more than a promise to Salome; there is the promise that democracy will bring jobs, education and space to achieve their goals – especially for the majority of Africans. Also, the promise of peace between all racial groups. Instead, the 30 years introduces increasing chaos, violence and poverty still for large numbers of people.

Amor, the youngest daughter, tries to ensure that the promise to Salome is kept by her family but at each funeral this idea is rejected by her bitter, fearful and self-centred family members. Finally, when she is sole heir, she gives both a title deed and her inheritance from the trust fund to Salome, now an old lady. But this gift arrives too late to improve the lives of Salome and her son.

Galgut, a South African writer, has no solutions for the problems of this complex country which may take several generations to work towards prosperity.

‘The Promise’ was greatly enjoyed by the group and generated a lot of discussion about the characters and the issues it raised.

Next month we are trying two books - ‘The Survivors’ by Jane Harper and ‘Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine’ by Gail Honeyman - to see how that works out.

Meg Dillon

Play Reading

The title of our recently read play "*Death by Chocolate*" was a little daunting, given some of our members were looking forward to Easter and the abundance of chocolate that would be available. The play was far removed from the pleasant partaking of such delight by participants in Benalla!

Set in a newly renovated health resort and following the unexpected death of famed chef Edith Chiles, slick and cynical manager John Stone teamed up with mystery writer Ed Parlor to find the cause and the murderer, in a crazy race against time. Clues pointed to a sinister box of chocolates and a variety of suspects from the outlandish characters working at the resort.

An American play combining comedy and mystery, "*Death by Chocolate*" highlighted the talent of our newcomers who embraced their roles with flair and enthusiasm. Ensuing discussion decided that the Brits take the honours for comedy rather than the American based shows.

Next month our play is set on a Queensland station following the war. "*Here under Heaven*" by Australian writer Mona Bond, deals with racism and gender bias in the 1940's. Look forward to seeing you all in May.

Jenny McKenna

Politics and Current Affairs

Due to Terry's absence, Neville Gibb was the Convenor for the second session this month. Neville delved into the history of both China and Ukraine, explaining how this history is instrumental in the current conflict in Ukraine and also the current situation in the Solomon Islands and China. The current Federal election and how all parties were approaching their campaigns were also discussed.

Heather Wallace

Russian Literature

The Mother, Maxim Gorky

Published in 1904 this novel looks closely at the lives of a small group of activists who were protesting against the harsh conditions of the working class. Secret meetings in supporters' houses, pamphlets in factories and even the attempted protest march in a small town to mark May Day. This was dangerous work as secret police arrested many and they were jailed or exiled. One mother became a committed activist despite being middle aged to support her son and his friends in their quest for reform.

An interesting novel as Gorky himself had held many working-class jobs from the age of eight when he was put to work by his family. His experiences ground this novel in a ring of truth gained from his own experiences. This is an easy way to pick up some of the history of Russia during this period.

May: '*And Quiet Flows the Don*', Mikhail Sholokhov (1925-30) Book One.

Meg Dillon

Saturday Cards – 500

Only one session was held this month, which was enjoyed by those who attended. If you would like to join the group, sessions are on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month, 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Heather Wallace

Singing for Fun

April brought us three sessions of Singing for Fun with no Harmony session, and we think this is a successful move judging by the increased attendance.

During April we welcomed Carmyl Winkler as a Leader. Carmyl chose a series of well-known Australian songs for her first and second sessions, and these were enjoyed by all. The variety introduced by an extra Leader seems beneficial to the group.

Our three other Leaders Brian Greed, Margaret Merriman and Kieran Smith all chose bright catchy songs for their sessions. Kieran kindly responded to a request for a session of Scottish songs.

Gwen Barnes is providing great accompaniment on the piano for which we thank her.

The next meeting of Singing for Fun will be on Thursday 5th May at 10am at the Hub in Cooina.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

Superfine Wool Took Over Ian Gill's Life

Ian Gill told the Stock and Land group last month that, as a geologist educator, he was able to successfully transition into growing superfine wool in sheds in the mid-1990s, by bringing his scientific expertise to bear on the project.

He is also an agriculturist because he graduated from Dookie Agricultural College in 1958 with honours.

He opted for shedding specially selected, coated, superfine Merino sheep and feeding them carefully to produce the finest wool possible. Only five years later in 2001, he produced a bale of wool that fetched a world record price of \$1200 a kilogram at auction. "Our wool was also displayed at the entrance to the Sydney Olympic games," he said.

Ian settled on Merino wethers for his operation and started a fastidious classing project to get the right sheep. Initially he selected for the consistency and fineness of their wool, the number of crimps per millimetre of wool staple as well as total staple length.

He said the ideal length for ultrafine wool tops - the cleaned, combed and aligned wool fibres - was 72mm. But that was difficult to achieve because while the length of newly shorn wool was often about 76mm, it could easily come back to say 62mm after processing. Ian said it was also important that fibres be strong because the stronger they were the faster they could be spun into yarn.

The next selection criteria was how the sheep behaved in the shed. "Some sheep can't handle that environment, but most conform," he said. "They make hierarchies within the two extremes of bullies and timid ones. But we had to keep moving the bullies around the pens and that was half our job because most sheep continued producing quality wool for at least six years".

Providing healthy feed was usually straight forward but was a problem during drought. In 2008, he bought in straw from the Riverina which resulted in seriously ill sheep. Ian said that after some investigation it turned out that the straw had *Yersinia pestis* bacteria in it, which is what also causes the black death in humans. "We only lost six sheep out of 260 but that was bad enough," he said.

Shearing was done slowly by one shearer, local Keith Hammond, at the rate of about 80 a day. That ensured plenty of time could be devoted to ensuring the quality of each fleece.

Ian and his family became involved in processing their wool into yarn and clothing sold under the [Jemala](#) brand. Specialists in high end-luxury wool, Ian demonstrated to us passing a two square metre superfine wool shawl from their collection through a wedding ring. This technique was developed by US customs to detect shawls illegally made from the superfine hair of a rare and protected antelope.



Ian explained that they have had to go to Italy for wool processing because, although there are some small wool processing businesses, Australia has shut down nearly all its wool processing and there are no good spinners or processors of fine wool. Loro Piana is an Italian fabrics and clothing company specialising in high-end, luxury cashmere and wool products. Loro Piana used to buy the finest bale in the world and always had a list of buyers.

Jemala's wool has also featured in Italian high-end luxury cashmere and wool producer Cruciani's products sold in prestigious Moscow stores favoured by oligarchs. "Cruciani's has the reputation of selling the finest in the world with customers so rich they don't ask about prices and just buy what they like". However, Ian noted that "We are really struggling right now. One of the reasons is the oligarchs have gone to water, have gone greener, have been affected by the Ukraine Invasion".

Our speaker for Tuesday 3 May will be **Trevor Phillips, an agricultural contractor based at Molyullah**. About 25 years in the business, he travels up to 80km from Benalla using five Fendt tractors, three round and three square balers as well as seeding equipment. He is currently sowing winter crops near Goorambat, part of a 7000 acre sowing and fertilising remit.

David Palmer

Sustainability

First, apologies for not getting a Sustainability Group report into last month's newsletter. All my own forgetful self's fault! In April the group had only one session due to the Good Friday holiday. However, Tom Crocker bravely volunteered to take our session on Friday April 1. No April fooling involved as Tom gave a terrific account of his family moving their farming properties to a more sustainable footing over the generations. He showed us some great maps of the area south-west of Benalla and explained how management issues and their treatment varied between the eastern slopes of their properties to the adjacent plains and the lessons learnt along the way. He also talked about how the area was described by the first Europeans surveying the area as being an almost 'park like' environment created by thousands of years of Aboriginal land management practices. Additionally, Tom provided some fascinating soil mapping undertaken by Dookie College produced by students under guidance who undertook what sounded like a 'line search' across the landscape taking soil samples at short regular intervals. The resulting soil maps have been used by many farmers since to plan their operations. Finally, Tom pulled, not out of a hat, but out of a steel bucket, some really interesting Aboriginal artifacts picked up while ploughing. He showed beautiful examples of grinding and milling stones, as well as cutting stones. It was a great session. Thanks, Tom.

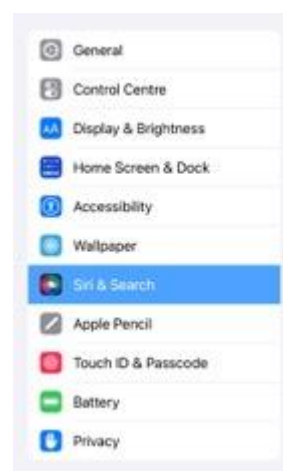
John Lane

Tech Savvy Beginners – Apple

This month we looked at Siri which is the voice assistant for Apple devices. So after viewing a website that gave explanation of the Siri function and how it works, we all enabled Siri on our iPads.

In settings - (General - Siri and Search) you can also choose whether or not you want a male voice or a female voice. Then after that, you can choose the accent you'd like Siri to use. We each asked Siri a question and often the reply came with a visual link.

For people who don't like typing, Siri can take on the role of personal secretary and you can dictate your message or email. If enabled on your phone Siri can make phone calls and give you map directions. So, Siri can save you time - you just speak and Siri can set a timer, check sport scores, check the weather, check your calendar, make calculations, check cinema showings And the list goes on.



Jenny Sawyer

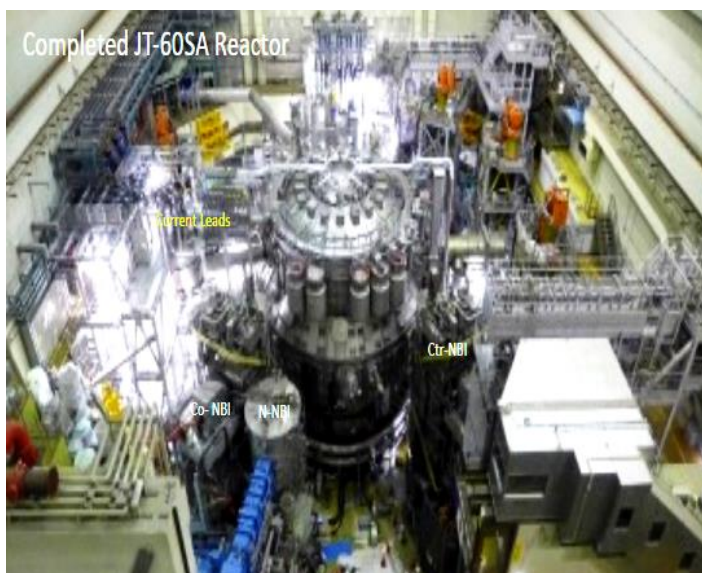
Tech Talks

At our meeting on Tuesday 12th April, we followed on from our last month's meeting.

Ian Maver lectured on the James Webb Telescope and Les Rodgers lectured on Nuclear Fusion.

The James Webb Telescope is an incredibly complicated piece of machinery. It is now situated a long way from Earth and there is no present method of repairing it or recalling it to Earth. It has to work. It has a lot of very precise machines on it. Les pointed out some of the engineering involved in its functioning. The mirrors at times must be moved and this has to be done with precise measurement. Machinery is involved.

Les then followed with Nuclear Fusion Reactors, Part 2. Les spoke about the reconstruction of the Japanese JT-60U reactor as a result of the "Broader Approach" agreement between the EU and Japan. This agreement was reached after a two-year standoff while the argument proceeded as to whether ITER should be built in Japan or France. France won and the agreement was the payoff to Japan and has already been extended. Physical construction was completed in March 2020 and commissioning has been ongoing since then but was



interrupted in March 2021 by the failure of insulation in the connections to the Equilibrium Coil EF1 at 25% full power. Commissioning was expected to recommence in February 2022 but has not done so yet. This was a major setback and was said to be a failure of quality control of the design and specification of critical components. Finding and correcting these things are what such comprehensive commissioning tests are for. (If you would like to read Les's summaries of his powerpoint presentations for both Parts I and II, visit the [Tech Talks](#) page on the website).

Neville Gibb and Les Rodgers

Wine Appreciation

La Cantina winery were our hosts for this month's outing held at their beautiful stone cellar door. Linda Cortini imparted her extensive knowledge of their organic wines. As there are no preservatives in their wines the fruitiness comes through more strongly.



We then journeyed to our lunch venue - King River Cafe - and enjoyed a wonderful lunch and each other's company.

Our next outing is to Campbells Winery at 4603 Murray Valley Highway Rutherglen. Lunch venue is still being explored. Meeting behind Aldi's at 10.00 a.m.

RSVPs by Sunday 22 May--phone/text 0428 696 408 or email nicnakmac90@gmail.com.

Nicole McFarlane

Member News

Generous '8mm Movie to mp4 Video' Offer by Les Rodgers!

Are you interested in converting old 8 mm movies to mp4 digital on a USB memory stick?

I recently obtained a device to convert 8 mm movie films to mp4 digital, in my case on a usb memory stick.

For the next three months before I dispose of it, I would be willing to do that for any interested members who may have old movies of sentimental value to them.

You would need to do your own editing etc, but there are a number of options available on the internet.

I'm not keen on giving out my phone number, but the prospect of a few hundred more spam emails would not kill me!" Les Rodgers - Email lesrodgers@bigpond.com

Your grandchildren may, like mine, be highly amused at the antics of their parents when they were children!

Les Rodgers

Program reminders ...

Legal Information Sessions with John Barry, a senior lawyer until his retirement. *Powers of Attorney (Enduring and Medical)* on **Friday 6 May** and *Making a Will and Estate Planning* on **Friday 20 May** - at 2pm in our U3A room. Contact Margaret 0424 454 313.

Meet and Mingle - Following a question asked at the Convenors Meeting in February we have invited Ambulance Victoria to give us some information about **Use of the Defibrillator** at our May Meet and Mingle - **Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 10 am** in our U3A room. All welcome.

What's On

Monday, 2 May

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Collectors – 'Embroidered Items'
- 10:00 Lifeball
- 10:00 Art Appreciation – 'ACTS I-VII' – Oculi Collective
- 12:00 Meditation
- 13:30 Investment
- 14:00 Let's Talk Books

Tuesday, 3 May

- 10:00 Page Turners - 'The Survivors' & 'Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine'
- 10:00 Stock and Land – Trevor Phillips, Agricultural Contractor
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Armchair Traveller - David Palmer – 'A Stroll through Southern France'

Wednesday, 4 May

- 09:00 Easy Walks - Jamieson
- 09:30 Play Reading – 'Here under Heaven'
- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'
- 14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 5 May

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 6 May

- 09:30 Sustainability
- 14:00 Powers of Attorney – John Barry

Monday, 9 May

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball
- 14:00 Creative Writing
- 14:00 Garden Team

Tuesday, 10 May

- 10:00 Politics and Current Affairs
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Tech Talks

Wednesday, 11 May

- 10:00 Recorder Group
- 10:00 Russian Literature – 'And Quiet Flows the Don'
- 14:00 Be Connected
- 14:00 Film Discussion Group – 'The Duke'

Thursday, 12 May

- 09:30 Birdwatching – Moorngag
- 10:00 Harmony Group
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 13 May

- 10:00 Armchair History
- 10:00 Music Appreciation

Saturday, 14 May

- 13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 16 May

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball

- 12:00 Meditation
- 13:30 Coin Collectors

Tuesday, 17 May

- 10:00 The News - Fact or Fiction
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Exploring the Universe

Wednesday, 18 May

- 10:00 Meet and Mingle – Ambulance Victoria 'Use of the Defibrillator'
- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'
- 14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Apple

Thursday, 19 May

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 20 May

- 09:30 Sustainability
- 11:45 Chat 'n Chew – 'Ella Goose' - Nunn Street
- 14:00 Wills, Estate Planning & End of Life Directives - John Barry

Monday, 23 May

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball
- 13:00 As Time Goes By--Community/Long Lost Friend

Tuesday, 24 May

- 10:00 Politics & Current Affairs
- 12:15 German - Advanced
- 14:00 Brain Games

Wednesday, 25 May

- 10:00 Wine Appreciation – Campbells, Rutherglen
- 10:00 Recorder Group
- 17:00 Newsletter reports due today

Thursday, 26 May

- 09:30 Garden Appreciation – Two Benalla gardens
- 10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub
- 13:00 Family Research - 'They were there' 'Obituary'

Friday, 27 May

- 10:00 Music Appreciation
- 14:00 Armchair History

Saturday, 28 May

- 13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 30 May

- 09:30 Exercises for Fun
- 10:00 Lifeball
- 14:00 Garden Team

Tuesday, 31 May

- 12:15 German - Advanced

Wednesday, 1 June

- 09:00 Easy Walks – Victoria Lake to Shepparton Botanical Gardens
- 09:30 Play Reading
- 13:30 'A Taste of Art'
- 14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 2 June

- 10:00 Singing for Fun
- 10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android
- 13:00 Family Research - Beginners
- 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 3 June

- 09:30 Sustainability