



Benalla and District Inc.

## Newsletter – December 2021

U3A Benalla & District Inc

P O Box 674, Benalla 3672

E-mail: [u3aben@gmail.com](mailto:u3aben@gmail.com) (Secretary)

Website: [u3abenalla.weebly.com](http://u3abenalla.weebly.com)

Facebook: [facebook.com/U3abenalla/](https://facebook.com/U3abenalla/)

Newsletter: [newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com)

President: Dorothy Webber

5762 2116

Secretary: Geraldine McCorkell

P: 5762 2134 M: 0408 522 662

Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to [newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com) by 25 Dec 2021

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### President's Report

What a big month November has been. Various groups have held 'Christmas' lunches, including a very well organised U3A Wine Appreciation lunch for all U3A members at Chrismont Winery on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November with 63 participants. We missed the company of Heather and Keith Rogers who were unable to attend. Keith and Heather are retiring as convenors of the Wine Appreciation group after 10 years duty. John Lloyd, convenor of the Sustainability group, is also retiring after thirteen years as a convenor. We will acknowledge their participation as convenors at our Annual General Meeting in 2022.

Another big day out was held by the Garden Appreciation Group. 33 members of this happy group visited Corrie Witlox's garden for morning tea and a catered lunch was then provided at the McCorkell garden. We escaped the rain by minutes, both these activities showing us the necessity of looking after our social wellbeing.

The Program for 2022 is taking shape, with a reminder to our members to have your vaccination recorded with your group. The Committee will be looking for some new nominations at the AGM in March 2022, particularly a Publicity Officer. Don't be afraid to put your hand up for the Committee, we are a very approachable group.

**Enrolment Day will be on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January** at the Seniors rooms from 9.30 until 12.00. Enrolment forms can be submitted at Enrolment Day, by post or at the Redb4 bookshop. There will be a newsletter in January containing all course information that you may need, so keep an eye out for that. We thank all our convenors and members for your support and patience during a very difficult period.

Wishing all our members a healthy and safe Christmas and we look forward to a much better 2022.

Geraldine McCorkell on behalf of President Dorothy Webber

### Wine Appreciation

#### U3A Benalla's annual Christmas break up at the Chrismont Winery

Benalla U3A celebrated its annual Christmas break up on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at the beautiful King Valley's Chrismont Winery. Established by two generations of the Pizzini family, it follows the typical history of Italian immigrants arriving in the King Valley to grow tobacco, then switching to vineyards...and the rest, as they say, is history.

Chrismont prides itself on its Italian hospitality and fine dining. Arriving at the Restaurant by bus or car, 63 U3A members enjoyed dining in style: a 2-course meal, naturally accompanied by Chrismont wines, which are top quality. Our hosts, Arnie Pizzini and his bubbly wife, Jo, made us all welcome, in spite of being run off their feet. They did find time to make Claire's 80th birthday a special one.

Originally organised by Heather and Keith Rogers, who found themselves unable to attend, Corrie Witlox completed the task of organising the event. Meg Dillon and U3A President, Dorothy Webber, thanked all

members for attending and our hope for another successful U3A year ahead, hopefully one not interrupted by constant lockdowns!

Thanks to the capable treasurer, Corrie Witlox, Meg Dillon and of course our affable Benalla Bus Lines driver, Rod Farmer, we all agreed the Chrismont Christmas breakup was a great success. Salut!



Bev Thornell

## Covid-19 Message to U3A Members

Of our 360 members at present, about 215 have had their Covid-19 Vaccination status recorded as Fully Vaccinated by showing their Vaccination Certificate to their Coordinator while attending classes or activities. That means there are about 145 members who have not had the opportunity to have their Covid-19 Immunisation status recorded on our database.

As you will be aware, it is now mandatory for U3A Benalla members attending U3A activities to produce evidence of being Covid-19 Fully Vaccinated. Unvaccinated persons are unable to attend classes or other U3A activities.

In preparation for 2022 it would streamline the enrolment process if we could have the vaccination status of members recorded as soon as possible. Once recorded on our database all 2022 rolls and other records will show your Covid-19 vaccination status as 'YES' if you are fully vaccinated.

I will be sending individual emails to those members who have not yet presented their vaccination certificates to their coordinator for recording. It will ask you to respond to the email, **with a copy of your COVID-19 digital certificate attached**. Your Covid-19 immunisation record will then be amended to 'YES' for all future programs.

Please send response email to [len.benalla@gmail.com](mailto:len.benalla@gmail.com).

If you are one of the 17 members without email and have not presented your Covid-19 certificate to your coordinator, you could drop a copy to my home address at 108 Thomas Street Benalla and I will update your record.

If you are unable to respond, as above, you will need to show a copy of your Covid-19 certificate on enrolment day in January 2022.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Len Jeffers

## Group Reports

### A different View of German History

At our last meeting on Tuesday, 26th October we discussed some unfortunate occurrences that occurred in Nazi Germany. To say there were some unfortunate occurrences perpetrated by Nazi Germany is an understatement. The world benefited from the policy agreed to by the three main allies that they would accept only Unconditional Surrender by Nazi Germany.

We discussed the reason why the GDR came into existence and some of the problems they encountered.

Because of the low numbers attending the course it was suggested to me that we finish and not continue into next year. However, as the course was designed to finish with a detailed examination of the GDR, I would like to have one more day where we concentrate solely on the history of the GDR. I have been granted a slot in February (date not yet known) and will attempt to make sure everyone knows when this will be.

I am hoping that I might be able to generate some interest from the wider U3A community and we may have a larger attendance. I am thinking of resorting to a Press Gang. Stay tuned.

Neville Gibb

### A Taste of Art

'A Taste of Art' has weathered the Covid-19 storm since commencing in February 2020, despite having to cancel classes, sometimes for months at a time. Two sessions remain this year - on the 1st and 15th December.

We have enjoyed providing 'A Taste of Art' to U3A members, have been thrilled that some members have also decided to join Broken River Painters and are looking forward to resuming classes again in 2022.

Carol Perry, Convenor of 'A Taste of Art' and Broken River Painters

### Armchair Traveller

Tuesday 7th December at 2p.m will be the final meeting for this year and the presenter will be Brian Greed showing us some of his European and British travels. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all presenters for their contributions during the year, and for all attendees for their presence.

Don't forget to register for the forthcoming year's program.

Ray O'Shannessy

### Art Appreciation

We are able to go ahead with 'First Mondays' on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December. However, there is a 'one-off' time change in December due to the artist's availability that day. Our catch up for coffee will start from 10 am, while the session will run from 11am – 12pm in the Bennett Gallery. The café will not be open, however an urn will be available from 10 am, providing a chance for us to have a coffee and chat before the session.

At 11 am artist, Nick Selenitsch will speak about his latest exhibition, *Form & the Universe of Colour*. The exhibition brings together a collection of recent works and an ambitious new project specifically developed for Benalla Art Gallery. Thematically, the exhibition focuses on the most basic of artistic characteristics: Form and Colour. Works from recent solo exhibitions & (2020) and *The Nature of Things* (2016) will be presented alongside a site-specific chalk drawing, O. O will consist of several large single-colour circles executed by the artist and members of the community. Visitors to the exhibition will be asked to participate in the making of the work – essentially a large-scale colouring-in project.



Let the Benalla Art Gallery know if you would like to book into the session by phoning or emailing them - 03 5760 2619 or [gALLERY@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:gALLERY@benalla.vic.gov.au) Price \$2. Attendees will need proof of double vaccination.

Neville Gibb

## 'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

November's warmup activity, '*I very nearly...*' resulted in the sharing of gems, including '*I very nearly photographed Gregory Peck*', '*I very nearly won Tattsлото*' and '*I very nearly died in a car accident*'. The reading of an article '*Secrets Big and Small - Beneath their chestnut wigs and moralising, who were these people?*' (Monica Dux, The Age, October 24, 2020), provided a fertile base for discussing dilemmas which can arise when describing matters which family members have different views about.

This month's topics were '**Found**' and '**Triggers**'. Using the simple prompt '**Found**' to write about something of lasting importance discovered at some stage of life. Margaret described the importance of '*The World of Books*', Michelle '*Grandma Hall's Writing Case*' and Joy '*My Career*'. Keeping a notebook close by this month in which to note '**Triggers**' led Barry to remember a trip on the Rocky Mountaineer Train and a memorable stay at the Banff Springs Hotel; trips to Japan on business and his father singing the song 'Rose of Tralee' in his magnificent tenor voice. A lunch at 'All Saints Estate' triggered Joy to remember her daughter's wedding there 22 years ago; while news that her granddaughter had been accepted into an elite dancing program triggered memories of "our daughter, her mother, attending an elite dance program from around the same age". Other 'Trigger' stories from this year, and past years, can be found on the website.

It has once again been a great delight to convene this group. I'm already looking forward to hearing stories selected from the following topics at our first session in late February:

**'One Moment, This Year 2021'** Looking back on 2021, what single moment stands out for you? Whether it be loss, love, discovery or disappointment, share your unforgettable moment.

**'A Memoir'** Head for your bookshelf, the library or an online book-store to retrieve a memoir which has meant something to you. When did it enter your life? How did it then, or does now, relate to your life story?

**'I Was There'...** Have you experienced a significant news, historical or cultural event first-hand? Share your personal piece of history in 500 words

Bev Lee

## Be Connected 2021

In November we revisited the 'All About Data' Course. This is divided into five units. We have been working systematically through these during our last few sessions:

- What is data?
- Choosing a data plan
- Managing your data
- Home data vs mobile data
- Going overseas

How timely is it that our last unit to complete next month is 'Going overseas' just when the pandemic rules are being revised to allow overseas travel! ✈

Jenny Sawyer

## Bird Watching

The group visited Reef Hills for a morning walk along Centre Road on the southern boundary of the park. It was good to finally have an outing, as the two previous walks were cancelled.

A southerly wind off the paddocks was bracing but eased to a mild morning as we progressed. Several Common Bronzewings flew off as we approached, but later we had a good look at a female bronzewing at the side of the road. It is good to see these large pigeons in the park. They are particularly fond of wattle seeds,



Female Common Bronzewing

and there are good stands of the prickly Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa*) in this area.

We heard the Olive-backed Oriole calling nearby, and had good views of a Jacky Winter and several Dusky Woodswallows. A pair of White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes were heard then seen briefly before they flew.

Some of us had a good look at a Crested Shrike-tit, a striking bird with a yellow breast, and black and white striped head. It can sometimes be heard before it is seen, as it tears strips of bark from branches, searching for insects underneath. We saw both Crimson and Eastern Rosellas, plus several Superb Fairy-wrens, Willie Wagtails and White-plumed Honeyeaters. Our last sighting for the morning was a White-throated Treecreeper that landed close by on a tree trunk as we returned to our cars.



We recorded 18 birds for the morning walk. Here is

the link for the eBird list. <https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S97906323>

Thanks to U3A members who have attended during the year. The birding program will resume in March 2022.

Kathy Costello

## Bushwalking

### Easy Walks

Well, we made it! In between lockdowns some varied and interesting walks, with many more planned for 2022. Our thanks to the walkers, and to the planners who shared their favourite walks with us all, and to the photographers who captured the highlights.

#### November Report-Oxley to Milawa.



Once again, the rain radar didn't look promising but 13 determined walkers set off for Oxley, where Wende organised the car shuttles that would bring us safely back again. We studied the details of local history while gathering at the park, and then set off on an excellent track to Milawa, 4.8kms in total, walking alongside paddocks and an old mill before arriving in Milawa where we enjoyed lunch at the pretty little John Mcaleese Park behind the bakery.

Fortified by lunch, another 1.8km took us to the Milawa Cheese Factory and a leisurely talk over coffee and cake. Luckily, the rain held off and we then shuttled back to Oxley and our cars, and then home.

Many thanks to Wende for suggesting the walk, and managing the mathematics of car shuttles, and Andi Stevenson and Bev Thornell for the photos which can be found on the Easy Walks page on the website.

There will be no walk in December, with the group instead meeting to enjoy an end of year lunch and plan our 2022 calendar. Walks will recommence in March 2022.

New members are always welcome--Easywalks are aimed at maintaining fitness by providing the opportunity for walks of approx 7km. Tracks are usually easier and more defined than regular bushwalking, but participants should be comfortable with a walk of this length--a test walk around the Lake is recommended!

Walks take place on the first Wednesday of each month, and car-pooling is usually available. Convenors Glen Chessells 0431201077 or Julie McNeill 0407823031 can be contacted for further information.

Julie McNeill

## Mid Week Walks

### MIDWEEK WALK REPORT

#### Wednesday November 10, 2021 - Mt Buffalo Underground River.

Ten walkers set off from Lake Catani in threatening weather conditions. The track was rocky and slowly descended until the underground river outlet was reached. Here the group took a break before climbing a long steep section of the path.

Reaching the top provided some good views and photo opportunities.

We stopped for lunch at the Chalet car park as well as checking out the Chalet and viewing points. Then headed back to Lake Catani, crossing the creek at the dam wall to walk around the lake and returning to the cars for afternoon tea.

Weather conditions turned out to be ideal. Nice to see new member Margie come on her first walk.

John Boehm



### NEXT MIDWEEK WALK

#### Wednesday December 8, 2021 - Mt Buffalo - Mackey's Lookout and return.

Departing from Mackey's Lookout we will walk along the Big Walk Track up to the Gorge and Chalet. The 5km track will take us past many short off-shoot tracks leading to Marriott's Lookout, Crystal Brook Falls, Pulpit Rock, and Wilkinson's Lookout. Return the same way. Total distance 11-12 km.

Be prepared for a relatively long but superb day.

Rating M - 4- 3

Contact: Wendy Baker 0429780179

John Boehm

## Coin Collectors

Our Coin Collectors met on Monday 15th November at the Senior Citizens rooms.

Our small group continues to grow post Covid-19 as people reignite their interest in coins and others get stimulated through word of mouth.

**David** presented the group with a number of handouts related to decimal currency key dates and mintages for the various denominations. He also spoke to his handout that included large scale photos showing coin faults and what are in demand by collectors. These included 20 cent coins with the 2004 Big Head, 1966 Wavy 2 and 50 cent coins with the emu double bar and 2000 Millennium incused (depressed) flag.



Also circulated was a rotated (15 degrees) 20 cent piece where the obverse and reverse are out of alignment and a CUD (Coin Under Developed) coin where there is an imperfection left on the coin from the coin stamping process.

**Bill** circulated a number of silver (92.5%) coins including a \$10 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games coin, a South Australian \$10 coin and a 1982 proof coin set celebrating 150 years.



**Wendy** showed a very interesting 2000 Olympic relay pin album that depicted a map of Australia showing the towns where the Olympic torch travelled to prior to the 2000 Olympic Games in Australia. She also presented a bag of old pre-decimal coins to remind us all of the various denominations we all said good bye to in 1966.

**Peter** removed his wrist-watch to show a coin face depicting his date of birth. He also showed a number of British farthings.

**Doug** brought along a number of low mintage pre-decimal coins including the first threepence dated 1911 (mintage 4M); the first sixpence dated 1910 (3M minted Edward 7th head) and 1911 (1M minted) George 5<sup>th</sup> head). Also, the first shilling 1910 (3M minted) and the first merino head 1938 (mintage 1.4M). Comment was made how small and insignificant the threepences were and how both the threepences and sixpences were so thin and very light compared to the decimal currency.

He also circulated a 1993 collectors Silver Kangaroo \$1 coin (1 oz. of fine silver). This coin was the first 40mm legal 0.9999silver coin produced by the RAM. It was also the first to have reverse frosting. The kangaroo is facing the opposite direction to the Australian Penny Kangaroo and was designed by Horst Hanne Director of Design and Engraving at the Royal Australian Mint. His initials HH appear on a number of \$2 coins.



Doug Smith

## Collectors



The topic of our November meeting was 'Serviettes and serviette rings'. There was a pleasing display of these rarely used items including silver serviette rings, one featuring a kookaburra, kangaroo and emu; others plain but functional and others which were equally pleasing. For the December meeting the topic is 'Christmas'.



Judith Borthwick and Dorothy Webber

## Community Singing

An enthusiastic group of singers came together for Community Singing with Brian Greed at the Hub in November. Brian chose songs out of the Tram Book of Songs for the first session and accompanied the group on the organ. After morning tea Sammy's Song Book No 1 was used, with Brian playing the songs on the piano.

We are sorry to see one of our members Rick Hann moving to Queensland early in the New Year, but wish him all the best in the Sunshine State.

Everyone gave Brian a big round of applause at the end of Community Singing for the effort he puts into accompanying the group each month. Well done Brian! We all enjoy this relaxed group of singing.

This was our last session for 2021, but we are looking forward to more Community Singing in 2022.

Margaret Jenkins

## Creative Writing

It is always a pleasure to be able to meet face to face. We have enjoyed sharing our writing and providing written feedback, but it is even better when we can discuss the writing together. This means we can manage conversations about the feedback, sometimes including “feedback on feedback”.

The November writing topics were:

- “{name} turned her attention to the room and looked surprised
- Furniture Removalists, no job too big or too small
- My brain sloughs this off as unimportant

Our challenge at the start of the class this month was a little different. Horses in the Melbourne Cup the previous week had a range of “interesting” names. Everyone in the class selected two names (lucky dip style) and wrote a sentence or so incorporating the name, not necessarily based on racing. For example:

*He said ‘Certainly **SIR LUCAN**, come this way’ which is much more helpful than when I am just Luke.*

*Giuseppe loved to paint ceilings, until the chapel flooded and he didn’t notice until his palette floated away, and he became the **FLOATING ARTIST**.*

As usual we enjoyed a varied range of stories and pictures created using words. This month our conversations moved further, often away from writing, but starting from thoughts about the stories we had shared. And once again we had two members writing about a common theme. Both wrote about Italian immigrants to Australia. It is intriguing when this happens without communication between the respective class members. This time it may have been a case of stereotyping – both had a family business in removals which was a common activity for our Italian immigrants

Discussion this month included the need to grab the attention of the reader from the first sentence. Sometimes this means our first paragraph is not needed. It is often in the form of what is called back story which can be better provided later in the story. It is the second paragraph can be more catching. Novel writing courses often suggest dropping the first chapter that is only scene setting (or back story), with the real story starting in the second chapter which is where the reader’s attention can be grabbed and they want to continue reading. A challenge for our writing in the future!

The topics for December writing are:

- It was really starting to sound out of this world
- {Billy} and {Teddy} would always stay late
- And then, you know, the Sun comes up
- Solitude and sun-dappled air is a kind of magic, like music

As this will be the last class for the year, we hope to meet at the North Eastern for a final catch up for 2021.

Joy Shirley

## Demystifying Psychology

*Please note – this is an edited version of Jane’s report – Jane’s full report is on the website [here](#).*

In November one gathering was held over Zoom, the second was face-to-face, and the topic was supposed to be “The Psychology of Christmas”. The group was asked to bring along a topic of personal interest that could be related to “Ethics”. The plan was to spend just one hour (scouts honor) discussing these topics, before exploring the “Psychology of Christmas”.

What followed were many hours dissecting, digesting, and deliberating on ethics and theories related to:

- Mandatory Vaccinations
- Psychological impacts on children of single or same sex parents.
- Climate Change, Leadership style and the impact on citizens.
- Gambling – genetics, superstitions, learned behaviours, culture and advertising impacts.

I hope you can imagine the creative, humorous, and inquiring discussions, plus the potential for respectful controversy, these topics generated.

November ended without discussion on “The Psychology of Christmas”. Poor Santa!



Psychology can be seen as complicated, not relevant to the real world, mind-reading and to be avoided. The purpose of Demystifying Psychology has been to debunk many of these myths. Here are some musings from current group members about the course –

*“Not too high brow, understandable by anyone, totally relevant & great to increase understanding how (the) brain works and people interact. (The) program even better than I expected. PP presentations great.”*

*“Psychology as we live it; discussions, explanations and examples of human behaviour, in everyday terms. Fascinating and often fun, and where high-falutin' jargon could not be avoided, (we) translated it.”*

About Santa and Psychology ... we WILL consider him (note the political style commitment) at our final gathering over morning tea at: North Eastern Hotel (enter from Mackellar Street entrance), 1 Nunn Street, Tuesday 7 December 9.30am to whenever... Phillipa will be our host. Please confirm your attendance by Sunday evening.

Demystifying Psychology will take time out for 2022. It's been a ball, I will be back in 2023, and I look forward to participating in groups in 2022.



Jane Rushworth

## Exercises for Fun

It is so good that most restrictions have been lifted, we are out of lockdown and able to exercise again as a class.

A special “Thank-you” must go to Elly Smith for her efforts in providing the music for our class, and “Thank-you” to Lin Ryan for her help preparing the hall every week. Much appreciated Elly and Lin.

Our last class for the year will be on Mon 13th December, for the Christmas break, and will resume again on Mon 31st January 2022.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas season, and may the New Year be kind to you all.

Helen Jeffree

## Exploring the Universe

**The James Webb Inspace Telescope will be 1.5 million kms from Earth.**



The largest Inspace Telescope ever built, eight metres tall with a sun shield the size of a tennis court was due to be launched from a powerful Ariane Rocket on December 18<sup>th</sup> at the European Space Agency's Spaceport in French Guiana, South America. An incident caused vibration as the folded telescope was being placed into the nose cone of the rocket so it will not be launched before December.22<sup>nd</sup>.

The visible and ultraviolet light emitted by the first stars of the early universe has been stretched by the expansion of the universe. Everything in space is getting further away from us. Now 13.5 billion years after the beginning of the universe this light can only be viewed in the infrared part of the spectrum of light; that is invisible to our human eyes.

The James Webb is not a successor to the Hubble telescope nor will it last as long as Hubble. Hubble sees in visible light and slightly in the infrared.



James Webb is an infrared telescope. If all goes well it will see the light of the first stars and see through dust to observe the birth of the first planets and the formation of the earliest immature galaxies.

An infrared telescope has to be really COLD to observe faint infrared signals efficiently. Its instruments must be shielded from bright heat sources.

Far away from the heat of the Sun in its position of LaGrange point 2, the James Webb telescope will always point away from the Sun and Earth into deep space and operate at a temperature of - 223 C.

At our last 'Exploring the Universe' for the year we followed some of the construction of the telescope by the industry team of Northrop Gumman; its testing and the type of rocket fuel that will be used to propel it to its destination and maintain its orbit.

Watch this u-tube for the scientist's current understanding of the early universe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSO8evHlafA>

We wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a bright New Year.

Bev Morton

## Family Research

Commencing our November session with 'Pains and Gains' again led to shared problem solving and lots of encouragement and ideas for next steps.

Bev reported on using [the Ryerson Index](#), an index of death notices in Australian newspapers, for more recent death notices details. Robyn described having trouble locating traces of the family name 'Delargy', however she has located some new evidence on Wikitree which she is validating. Barry has been using the Irish search information supplied by Elizabeth at the last session. While unable to trace his GG Grandfather's records, he has been able to confirm some information about his GG Grandmother. His search continues. Jan continues searching for evidence of the Keon family from the Irish websites but has had no luck to date. Andi went to Wunghnu Cemetery searching for family graves, finding a 'Mills' grave-stone, but no other family members. It has been found that three family members drowned in the same boating accident, however Andi found nothing in the cemetery records of their resting place.

David became immersed in shipping passenger lists while researching and locating the passenger list for William Hinds. He shared fascinating findings based on his research into the 'Thomas Arbuthnot'; noting that the lists were segregated into male and female; highlighting financial details such as the passage cost was £19 and sharing his conclusion that the income earned by the ship's owner/s was significant. Marg went to Malmsbury on the day lockdown ended as planned, meet a helpful and informed local historian who had located extensive family history. Marg also located a possible contact in Ireland for information on the Ryan family and sent an email. There has been no response to date. Wendy gave the group a new search site called Ancestorian, which is free. The site has information from various regional groups and appears to be a valuable research tool.

After the break we shared stories on the November topic 'Census', using Census results, or records which would enable us to form a census-like view, to describe what might be happening for a family in our tree across the decades.

Robyn was able to track her maternal great great Grandfather Norman McIntyre family across 70 years using largely Scottish census results; while Barry had by necessity to use Electoral Rolls which are the closest thing to a census list of names in Australia during the 1900's. Bev's search took her from

Lincolnshire to Indiana, with the US Census records from 1860 to 1880 helping her develop a picture of her great grand uncle's life in America. You can read these and other [‘Census’ stories](#) on the website.

At the end of the session, we firmed up our plans for next year. Our current group will continue to be offered for members who already working on their family tree. Social distancing regulations permitting, we are adding a hands-on segment to some of our sessions and offering a new ‘Beginners’ course in 2022.

Comprising up to three one-to-one sessions in Term 1 transitioning to small group sessions in Term 2, *Family Research – Beginners* is designed for members who would like to start an online tree or gain confidence in using an online tree they started years ago.

Wendy Sturges, Barry O'Connor and Bev Lee

## Film as Literature

The main film for discussion the month was “Shiva Baby”, but we also shared comments on “Red Notice”, “Eiffel”, “Respect” and “The Rose Maker”.

**“Shiva Baby”:** While at a Jewish funeral service with her parents, a college student has an awkward encounter with her sugar daddy and her ex-girlfriend. It was different from many other films we have watched. It was primarily a “real time” film, based on an event rather than a story. Apart from the first scene, all the action took place in or around the house where the Shiva (Jewish mourning period) was taking place. The main characters are Danielle, her mother (Debbie), her sugar daddy (Max), Max’s Wife (Kim) and Danielle’s ex-girlfriend (Maya). The film explores the relationships between these key people, but also Danielle’s relationship with the Jewish culture and money. It was the first film for director Emma Seligmann who also wrote the script. Promoted as a comedy, we did not find it particularly humorous. Some of the characters were not very likable, and Max was certainly not seen as a very nice person. There was a degree of stereotyping of Jewish culture but this was consistent with experiences some have had with Jewish friends. The cinematography used lots of close ups, but I am not sure whether this was a good or a bad thing. Overall perhaps a well-directed film, but the film itself was frustrating and unenlightening. We rated it as 2.5/5.

**“Red Notice”:** When an Interpol-issued Red Notice (the highest-level warrant to hunt and capture the world's most wanted) goes out, the FBI's top profiler John Hartley (Dwayne Johnson) is on the case. His global pursuit finds him in the middle of a daring heist where he is forced to partner with the world's greatest art thief Nolan Booth (Ryan Reynolds) in order to catch the world's most wanted art thief, "The Bishop" (Gal Gadot). The high-flying adventure that ensues takes the trio around the world, across the dance floor, trapped in a secluded prison, into the jungle and, worst of all for them, constantly into each other's company. It is full of twists and turns, and you can never be sure who were the “goodies” and who are the “baddies”. It is totally implausible, but a piece of enjoyable escapism with references to James Bond, Indiana Jones etc. We rated it as 3.5/5.

**“Eiffel”:** The story behind the building of the Eiffel Tower. The government is asking Eiffel to design something spectacular for the 1889 Paris World Fair, but Eiffel simply wants to design the subway. Suddenly, everything changes when Eiffel crosses paths with a mysterious woman from his past. It is in French, with subtitles, needing a lot of concentration to keep across all that was happening. Intriguing, informative and stimulating, rated as 3.5/5.

**“Respect”:** The story of Aretha Franklin’s life. An interesting film, with a sound focus on her music. Perhaps a little long, but this could be because they include large excerpts of her songs, not just a few lines which is often the case with documentaries. An inspiring film rated as 4/5.

**“The Rose Maker”:** Another sub-titled French film. A gentle film, light and easy to watch. It included some magnificent roses, fostering talents and with a message that the process of growth (people or plants) is more about the nurturing than the actual steps. Light and easy to watch rated as 3.5/5.

For our December class discussion, we have a choice of two films – “No Time to Die”, the new James Bond film, and “The Last Duel”, an historical drama based on the final judiciary duel in France in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Joy Shirley



## Garden Appreciation



How lovely it was to see so many happy people at our last two Beautiful Gardens for the year - many thanks, Corrie and Geraldine. What a year! I am looking forward to seeing you all next year - hopefully there will be no more lock downs. To the people who have been unwell, get well soon!

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New year. Stay safe.

Gwen Turner



## German

The German group met for lunch at a cafe in Benalla for its last session for the year. Next year a beginner group will be offered again after none this year due to Covid. The group has decided to meet weekly in 2022.  
*Fröhliche Weinachten und Fröhliches Neues Jahr!*

Pauline Bailey

## Investment

It was so good to have the November meeting of Investment in the U3A room and to see everyone again. We welcomed a new member Tony Bayfield to our group, and hope he enjoys and participates in our discussions.

We looked at an article "Road Bumps and Opportunities on the Way to a Cleaner Future" by John Cowling which covered seventy-three countries including Australia which have targeted net zero emissions before 2050. In the article the last point listed was key minerals required to achieve this target which included lithium, nickel and rare earths.

The second article we looked at was "Four Key Materials for Batteries – and Nine companies that will benefit". We studied the nine companies listed including what materials they were exploring for and where, the current price of shares in the company, and the yield the company was returning to shareholders.

The final meeting of Investment for 2021 will be held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 1.30pm in the U3A room at the Seniors Centre.

Margaret Jenkins

## Let's Talk Books

***The Things We Cannot Say* by Kelly Rimmer.** Family Secrets and the Legacy of War. When her son was born with Autism life changed for Alice, at what cost to her family. ***The Codebreakers* by Alli Sinclair** was enjoyed by Lorraine. This book was inspired by real life female code breakers who worked for Central Bureau in Brisbane in WW11. The women worked in a tiny garage at the back of a beautiful mansion. ***The Family Inheritance* by Tricia Stringer.** A Will plays havoc with the lives of three women when they discover they have been living a lie – how intriguing. ***Jeffrey Archer*** has made an impression with ***Nothing Ventured***. If you enjoy his writing this one is worth the read. The third novel by ***Amor Towles*** (A Gentleman in Moscow) author, ***The Lincoln Highway***, spans just 10 days. If you enjoyed A Gentleman in Moscow this one will satisfy. ***The House I Loved* by Tatiana de Rosnay** tells the story of a Parisian woman in mourning for her husband and son, when Napoleon 111 devises an ambitious urban plan that could destroy her family estate. By the same author ***Sarah's Key***, two main parallel plots are followed through the book, a brilliant read according to Noelle. ***The Magician* by Colm Tolbin** is a fictionalised biography that explores the life and times of exiled

German Nobel winner Thomas Mann. ***The Salt Path a memoir written by Raynor Winn***. When their home and livelihood was taken away by a bad business decision and her husband diagnosed with a terminal illness they walked the 630 mile coastal path from Somerset to Dorset. This author featured in Michael Portillo's recent walk on the same coast. Shirley proudly showed us a short story written by her granddaughter Tracy Leotus featured in ***An Anthology of Short Stories*** and very enjoyable it was. Shirley also enjoyed the Historical novels, ***The History of the Unexpected, The Kings Obsession, and Dangerous Inheritance***. Keep enjoying reading, see you in December.

Geraldine McCorkell

## Lifeball

With the end of year approaching, we will be looking forward-hopefully-to a year free of lockdowns in 2022, and to a Christmas celebration next week. It has been fun picking up our skills again and playing some challenging games before we break for the holidays.

Our last game for this year will be on Monday 13th December, and we will return on January 17th.

New and continuing players can contact convenor Marlene Pitts on 0407240943 for further information. We would love to see some new players for 2022--even if it is many years since you have played a team sport, you will find Lifeball to be easy and fun. Suited to any skill level, it is a walking pace ball game. We play every Monday 10am at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre, so if you are an intending player, come along and watch!

Julie McNeill

## Meditation

Meditation resumed following the recent lockdown with fewer numbers than previously. This was discussed with Caroline, and it is proposed to run the Meditation group following Exercises for Fun on the first and third Monday of the month. This will overcome the problem of attendees having to collect grandchildren from school or taking them to out of school activities, giving more U3A members the opportunity to be part of this group. Members who attend have found Meditation to be a wonderful way to relax and learn to how to find a more peaceable way of living with others and ourselves. We thank Caroline for making Meditation sessions available for our health and wellbeing.

Heather Wallace

## Meet and Mingle

At our November Meet and Mingle we all enjoyed the huge variety of quilts and other pieces of patchwork which the Patchwork group brought along to show us. This display was held in the Main Auditorium of the Seniors Centre, as our U3A room would have been too small to allow for the setting up of all the quilts and other pieces. The quilt display demonstrated that there is a lot of artistic flair in the design of each piece. There is also a huge time involvement as many of the pieces were hand sewn.

Our thanks to the Senior Citizen's group for making the auditorium available for the quilt display.

This will be the last Meet and Mingle for 2021. Best wishes for Christmas to you all.

Margaret Jenkins

## Music Appreciation

"A love affair with New York' - a "total embrace" - was how one commentator described Bernstein's musical "On the Town", three dances from which began the first of our November sessions. This was followed straightaway by Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto composed while on the run from an embrace of any sort following a disastrous marriage. Something more soothing being deemed necessary resulted in Mendelssohn's Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage making it on to the playlist before the energetic and uplifting passages of Borodin's Polovstian Dances from Prince Igor sent us all home in a happy frame of mind.

Vivaldi, the "man of many concertos" (about 550 of them) introduced the second November session with one of his several concertos for four violins – in this instance the most popular of them (the B minor one). Mozart (a man of many symphonies - 41 of them) was our major focus with the very last of his 41, commonly known as the "Jupiter", so named for no other reason than for publicity purposes. Joaquin Rodrigo known famously for just one concerto – "Concierto de Aranjuez" proved that genius is not necessarily determined

by how many, but with the quality of what you produce, while Torvil and Dean showed genius of another sort in their interpretation of Ravel's Bolero and a wonderful climax to our Music sessions for 2021.

Many thanks to all who formed the "Class of 2021" for your input and encouragement in what may be described (due to Covid) as "Interrupted Melody". After a couple of years with "necessity being the mother of invention" at times to "keep the music going" we look forward with hopefulness to a less restrictive and inventive 2022.



Bill Squire

## Page Turners

Page Turners finally caught up with some of our members in November and shared some thoughts on three books we had missed during the lockdowns.

Our November book, Jack Serong's *Burning Island*, is a story of a voyage in 1830 to the Furneaux Group of Islands between Victoria and Tasmania. The islands had a reputation for lawlessness and worse, perpetrated by whalers on the Aboriginal women they stole as wives and workers and on any ships that sailed too close to them.

A Hindu businessman, Scrivinas, reacquainted himself with Captain Joshua Grayling whom he had known many years earlier. Grayling was now a chronic alcoholic living in a bush hut a good ride out of Sydney. They both had much to fear from a former enemy, Mr Figge, although the details of this remained mysterious. Scrivinas wanted Grayling to go looking for Figge, who he thought was hiding out in the Furneaux Islands while taunting him with attempts at murder. Although unspoken, the aim of the voyage was to eliminate this dangerous adversary. Grayling agreed, despite his poor health and, accompanied by his daughter Eliza, boarded the ship provided by the Hindu. The unusual crew consisted of the Master, a cross dressing man, and two twins who constantly fought each other. A scientist who wanted to study fish and birds joined the ship at the last minute with his trunks of scientific equipment.

What could possibly go wrong? Well, quite a lot. But I won't spoil the surprises for those who want to find and read this book.

Meg Dillon

## Patchwork

Patchwork members presented an interesting quilt display at Meet and Mingle on November 17th. There were finished quilts, quilts being pieced together, and quilts awaiting quilting. The Patchwork group will meet twice in December, with a regular get together on December 2, and the Patchwork Christmas Lunch on the December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Corrie Witlox

## Play Reading

Six members were present this month to read our chosen play with the very long title *The Haunted Through Lounge and Recessed Dining Nook at Farndale Castle*. Part of the inimitable Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswoman's Guild Dramatic Society, this was the second time we have enjoyed the Guild's Dramatic society. Both times the attempt to put on a play by the Guild provides complete chaos by the cast, still rehearsing when the curtain goes up.



Described as a sinister, spine chilling mystery of murder and mayhem guaranteed to bring the house down, we all agreed, performed on stage, it certainly would and probably half of a flimsy set! The readers excelled in their roles and laughter was the order of the day. Great fun.

Our last play reading for the year will be a one act play before we retire to Rambling Rose to celebrate before the Christmas break, hope to see you all there.

Jenny McKenna

## Politics and Current Affairs

Only one session was held in November, but it was filled with a variety of discussion topics as a lot has occurred in the world of politics during the lockdown period in Victoria. Terry opened the discussion for members to participate to try and make sense of world, federal and state politics.

Because of inherited distrust due to religious and voodoo practices in their region, our nearest neighbour, Papua New Guinea is currently in turmoil regarding the Covid-19 dilemma of vaccinations, etc and we are looking forward to hearing from Brian Vial regarding information he has on this matter at our last meeting for 2021 on the second Tuesday in December.

Heather Wallace

## Recorder



*Recorder group members were learning a new piece of music during this recent photo shoot!*

## Saturday Cards – 500

Since the lockdown we have had two sessions of Cards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month.

All who attended were so looking forward to being able to play 500 again. It is such an intriguing game, and time flies so quickly when playing.

With the highs and the lows during each hand there is lots of laughter and groaning when a player is either dealt a good or bad hand.

The last session will be held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December. Come along and join us.



Heather Wallace

## Singing for Fun

We all enjoyed three sessions of Singing in November as we came out of lockdown. Thank you everyone for being so cooperative with showing me your COVID double vaccination certificate.

In the second Singing session for the month, we had Kieran Smith and Brian Greed playing the piano for the session as our pianist Gwen Barnes was at a Teachers College reunion in Bendigo. Brian also brought along his barrel organ which he has spent seven months making during the lock down of 2021.

This barrel organ plays music when the handle is turned, the musical score having been previously punched out on a roll of thick paper. Brian demonstrated this music to us during morning tea. We were all fascinated with the technology which had gone into producing the sounds.



*Brian demonstrated the barrel organ watched by other members of Singing for Fun*

In our third session Kieran Smith, Brian Greed and Margaret Merriman all took turns in leading the singers with Gwen Barnes ably playing the piano.

As this will be the last Singing report for 2021, I would like to thank the three Leaders, Kieran, Brian and Margaret for the preparation they put into choosing songs for each session and for leading the sessions. Many thanks also to our talented pianist Gwen Barnes who has provided great musical accompaniment in 2021.

I would also like to thank Wendy Hyland for assisting with sorting the song books and putting the books back in the cupboard each week. Thank you also to the guys who put the chairs away after each session and set up the tables for the Hub each time. These may seem small jobs. However, they contribute immensely to the smooth running of Singing for Fun and Harmony.

Best wishes to everyone for a Happy Christmas. Hope to see you all in 2022.

Margaret Jenkins

## Sustainability

During November our focus, like that of the media, was on Australia's poor performance at the COP26 in Glasgow.

In the lead up to COP26 we spent much time discussing the political "theatre" that took place between Scott Morrison and the Nationals to reach an agreement on Net Zero Emissions by 2050.

We studied an interesting article about the modelling behind the government's "so called Plan" for emissions reduction, which revealed that the Prime Minister had got the Nationals to agree to a plan that supported fossil fuels over farmers.

The modelling showed that the government had been considering two scenarios. One that could see Australia increase its investment in domestic carbon sequestration, achieved primarily through increased revegetation of Australian land, which would boost income for farmers and result in Australia achieving full net zero emissions by 2050. However, the government and the National Party room chose a plan that cuts emissions by 85 percent by 2050 and leaves the fossil fuel industry better off.

We also had much discussion about what was happening at COP26 and, in particular, the issue of reducing the use of fossil fuels. We read an article about the "Fossil Fuelled 5", wealthy countries that have amassed vast amounts of wealth from fossil fuels over centuries and are unwilling to give it up – when the wealth could be used to fund the transition to cleaner energy for developing countries.

The five wealthy countries nominated in the report as the “Fossil Fuelled 5” are the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Norway and Australia. All of these countries plan to approve and subsidize new fossil fuel projects despite claiming to be leading the climate fight.

Freddie Daley, from the University of Sussex, and the author of the report “The Fossil Fuelled 5” says:

“Not only are these wealthy nations jeopardizing their own futures and the future of their citizens through this continued expansion, but they are condemning communities in the global south to a state of perpetual crisis which they did the least to create. If these nations want to be climate pioneers, it is time they addressed the elephant in the room: fossil fuels.”

For many of our meetings throughout the last 12 months the politics of climate change was a major focus of our discussions and will no doubt be a major issue in the coming federal election.



After thirteen years as Convenor of the Sustainability group this will be my final report as we will be moving away from Benalla in the new year. However, the group will continue in 2022 as two current members have agreed to act as joint convenors.

John Lloyd

## Tech Savvy Beginners – Android

It was great to see some new faces in November!

We covered -

- Word processing.
- Installing printer drive onto laptops.
- Saving pictures to the Cloud, Google Drive & Google Pictures.
- Exporting data onto external drive.
- Saving favourites in Services Victoria QR code & how to use those favourites.
- Housekeeping on laptops.
- Send & receive emails.
- Attaching an attachment to emails
- Revision.

We will be meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of December before taking a Christmas break.

**Merry Christmas Everyone!**

Robyn Lukey

## Tech Savvy Beginners – 2021 Apple

We revisited the Settings App and checked out our data capacity (number of GB), iCloud usage, the model and the software version.

Then the class was given a problem to solve.....How to show the degrees symbol.

Yes, we all managed to solve this, and email reports were sent with a report of the current temperature.

As I write this - it is 17°C 📱

Jenny Sawyer



## Tech Talks

At our meeting held Tuesday 9th Nov we were fortunate to have a Barrel Organ demonstrated to us by Brian Greed. Brian has recently built this Barrel organ by hand. He informed us of problems with supply and other things which he overcame by his natural persistence. The Organ has an internal bellows which is manipulated by a crank handle and the notes are produced by air being forced into barrels which produce notes.

All in all, a very enjoyable show and tell.

In the second half we listened to Jeremy Clarkson give muted positive acclaim to a Telstra Electric Car. It could be said that he appeared to be speaking through gritted teeth. Clarkson has always spoken in derogatory terms about Electric cars but in this instance, he claimed to be impressed.

Unfortunately, the car's cost (\$160,000) will probably limit the ownership to low numbers.

We then watched a video showing a large nuclear waste dump that exists quite near to Los Angeles. Nuclear waste is a problem that will not go away until some method of recycling spent fuel rods is developed. Surprisingly this miracle is claimed to be possible. Until this happens, we have the problem of where we store the waste. Australia is a large country with its own tectonic plates that do not normally allow earthquakes that could cause the waste to spill and consequently is often mentioned as a possible candidate as a world storage facility. My contention is that the best solution would be to store the waste at the same site as the nuclear reactor and that the nuclear reactor should be located in the centre of our largest City. This would ensure we made it safe.

My suggestion did not generate a lot of discussion.

Neville Gibb



## What's On

### Wednesday, 1 December

9:30am Play Reading  
1:30pm 'A Taste of Art'  
2:00pm Be Connected

### Thursday, 2 December

10:00am Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)  
1:00pm Patchwork

### Monday, 6 December

9:30am Exercises for Fun  
10:00am Collectors - 'Christmas'  
10:00am Lifeball  
10:00am Art Appreciation – morning tea at the Gallery (urn, etc provided) followed at 11:00am by First Mondays session 'Form and the Universe of Colour'  
1:30pm Investment  
2:00pm Let's Talk Books  
4:00pm Meditation

### Tuesday, 7 December

9:30am Demystifying Psychology at the Northo  
10:00am Page Turners  
10:00am Stock and Land  
2:00pm Armchair Traveller - Brian Greed

### Wednesday, 8 December

Mid-Week Walks - Mt Buffalo - Mackey's Lookout  
1:30pm Film as Literature

### Thursday, 9 December

10:00am Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)  
1:30pm TBC - Executive Committee Meeting

### Saturday, 11 December

1:30pm Saturday Games - '500'

### Monday, 13 December

9:30am Exercises for Fun  
10:00am Lifeball  
2:00pm Creative Writing

### Tuesday, 14 December

10:00am Politics & Current Affairs - Seniors Centre

### Wednesday, 15 December

1:30pm 'A Taste of Art'

### Thursday, 16 December

1:00pm Patchwork - Christmas Lunch

### Wednesday, 12 January 2022

9:30am 2022 Enrolment Day at the Seniors' Centre

### Thursday, 13 January 2022

1:30pm TBC/Executive Committee Meeting