



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – May 2021

U3A Benalla & District Inc

P O Box 674

Benalla 3672

Website: u3abenalla.weebly.com

Facebook: facebook.com/U3abenalla/

Newsletter: newsletter@u3abenalla.com

President: Dorothy Webber

5762 2116

president@u3abenalla.com

Secretary: Geraldine McCorkell

P: 5762 2134 M: 0408 522 662

secretary@u3abenalla.com

Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to newsletter@u3abenalla.com by 25 May 2021

VALE - JOHN AVERY

It is with sadness that we inform U3A Benalla members of the death of esteemed Life Member John Avery.

John passed away in Cooinda on Wednesday 28 April.

John's funeral will be on Wednesday 5th May, 11.30 a.m. at St. Joseph's Church, Arundel Street.

U3A Committee

President's Report

April marked the commencement of the U3A Benalla's involvement in Wesfarmers Digital Inclusion Partnership Program, a response to the closure of the Target Store in Benalla on Saturday April 10. The program we are offering 'On Target --Learning to Shop Online', commenced with an orientation session in late April for members of the Benalla community keen to undertake the transition to online shopping. Participants will also be encouraged to learn other vital digital skills required by the modern world, including online Government services, online banking, paying bills online and safe internet usage. For members of the community who do not have a smart phone which will support online shopping, the pilot program will provide participants with one. Although the program has commenced any member of the Benalla community who would like to participate can ring me on 0412 263 071 to enrol.

Thank you to the Convenors who attended the Convenors meeting on Wednesday 21 April after Meet and Mingle. Items raised during the meeting included changes which have been happening in the building and the availability of training and support for convenors in using equipment.

The small meeting room is now empty. The carpet will be cleaned, new locks and furniture installed, then it will be available for use.

Training and support for convenors in the use of the Photocopier is provided by Geraldine on 0408 522 662 and the use of the Overhead Projector by Margaret on 0424454313. If you would like to learn how to operate the new Dishwasher in the kitchen, please ring me on 0412 263 071.

A reminder to members – please sign in to the Seniors Building using the QR code or sign in sheet as you enter the building; sign the U3A record sessions attended at any venue; bring your own cup; and, if you are feeling unwell, not to attend classes or activities but to get tested for COVID 19.

I have become aware that some people don't know about the Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme. This enables you to claim for travel and accommodation expenses when you have a medical appointment more than 100 Km from home. Forms are available wherever you have your appointment. The form must be signed by the Medical Practitioner.

Dorothy Webber, President

Group Reports

Armchair History – Tudors

We have been tracing the wreckage caused by Henry in pursuit of a new marriage with Anne. His attempts to pressure the pope led to Spain attacking the Vatican and holding the pope hostage in Catherine's cause. Both sides tried to involve the French as Henry increased the pressure.

We have considered how fiction writers portray the period and how filmmakers tackle the familiar story.

Terry Case

Armchair Traveller

In our April session Wendy Sturgess gave us a very interesting summation of her rail travel in America, Europe and Australia. Wendy has travelled extensively, and we thank her for allowing us to share in her experiences.



'Three eras of trains at Spencer Street Station' – panorama shot, Wendy Sturgess

At our next session on Tuesday 4th May at 2 pm we welcome Kieren Smith who will provide us with stories and slides on his 1970's, one hundred-day, trip from London to Kathmandu.

Ray O'Shannessy

Art Appreciation

There was no 'First Mondays' session in April as it fell during the Easter break.

Next session: **Monday 3 May 2021, 10 am**

Topic: **Northern Abstraction**

Speakers: **Ralph Bristow, Frank Burgers and Anthea Kemp**

Join us after the session for a coffee at the Gallery's 'Munro and Sargeant' café.

As numbers are limited, please don't forget to phone or email the Benalla Art Gallery to secure your place - T 03 5760 2619 or gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au.

Neville Gibb

'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

Topics shared in April began with 'New in Town', which proved a great way for new to class member David Lowing to introduce himself to the group. Judy and Neville then shared 'New in Town' stories with a different twist. Judy wrote a spellbinding story about sharing moments of revelation and wonder with a little neighbour who is 'new in town. New to the world in fact'. Neville reflected the experiences of migrant children new to Wangaratta when he was at school ...'None of them had an easy time... I never wanted to swap places with immigrant boys.' 'Someone who shaped me' followed, with Michelle writing

about a beloved nanna who was her anchor and who she continued to write to throughout her life, and Elizabeth writing about a childhood neighbour in Ireland, Jim McCormack, who taught her to love and value books. Bev Morton's reflections on 'Anzac Day' in Goorambat engaged us all, while David shared an Anzac Day story written about his paternal Uncles, Sgt Walter Harold Lowing MM [1879-1916] and Major Bertie McAdam Lowing MC and Bar [1891-1937], along with a powerful poem he had penned to mark their valour. The pleasure of 'reflecting on a memoir that means something to you' appears to have been outweighed by the pain of writing it down! Marg McCrohan persevered, and we all enjoyed listening to her thoughtful, perceptive reflections on Jill Ker Conway's 'Road from Coorain'. Bev developed a framework for the class to approach the task, trialling it to review Claire Bowditch's 'your kid of girl' – A memoir'.

Barry reflected on an 'aide-memoir', or 'a memory-aid; a reminder or memorandum, especially a book or document serving this purpose' that meant something to him. Initial research on family history by his daughter in 1998 and a family tree developed by Benalla Family History Group given to him by Pamela as a present in 2015 inspired him to further this research when the Covid restrictions were imposed in early 2020. Barry's story described discovering more about the life of his great grandfather, James O'Connor, who proved to be a highly thought of founding father of the Wycheproof community.

Looking ahead to Monday 24 May from 2 – 4pm, the topics are -

'Curved Ball' – Write about a time in your life when you felt that you were thrown a curved ball. The 'curved ball' may, for example, have been a health/other biological issue, an issue in pursuing your career or business, and more. What happened? What did it mean to you at the time? What does it mean to you now, reflecting back over your life?

Alternate topic (suggested for newer members to class): 'The Year that Made Me' – (A topic drawn from an ABC programs which sets this task when interviewing actual or future Australian living treasures.) Write about a year which made a particular difference in your life's journey. Over to you!

Bev Lee

Be Connected 2021

Welcome to past Be Connected participants and to new ones for 2021.

Login example

Email Address
paul@gmail.com

Password
3br@T2



Joining the Be Connected Network was the first order of the day and it was relatively smooth computing with those signed up for previous courses helping newcomers enrol.

So, when logging in to the Be Connected site everyone now clicks or taps on Sign In. And enters their Email and Password. There are now 29 modules of informative computing information.

We had an in depth look at Passwords. Great when you remember them and great when they work! They are necessary when you have any computing device.

Our main focus over the past two months has been on Safety Online. Our last session looked at Phishing scams.

Jenny Sawyer

Bird Watching

Report on April outing to Honeysuckle Creek walking track at Violet Town

On Thursday 8 April 2021 our group visited Violet Town for a morning walk along the northern side of Honeysuckle Creek. It was a new walk to a few in the group, and is a pleasant place to visit, whether for walking or birding.

We were drawn to the sound of birds in a flowering ironbark in the parkland. Everyone had close views of two feeding Musk Lorikeets, while three Blue-faced Honeyeaters made a few visits to the tree. Two Gang Gang cockatoos sat quietly among the branches, and two small Purple-crowned Lorikeets were seen briefly. There were large numbers of Sulphur-crested Cockatoos in the area, making it hard to hear other birds at times.

We visited the casuarina patch, looking at a Grey-crowned Babbler nest in one of the trees, but sadly no visiting babbler, then admired some beautiful stonework that enhances that planting of trees.

As we neared the bridge over the old Hume Highway, some of the smaller birds along the creek were seen, including Spotted Pardalote, Grey Fantail, Weebill, Yellow and Striated Thornbills and a few Superb Fairy-wrens.

On the return walk we added Laughing Kookaburra, Crimson Rosella and Olive-backed Oriole to our sightings. 29 bird species were recorded. The bird list can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S85275263>



Coming Up in May - outing to Pine Gully in the Warby Ranges

On Thursday 13 May 2021 we will travel to the western side of the Warby Ranges for a morning walk at the Pine Gully Picnic Ground. Please meet at 9am in the car park behind the Seniors Community Centre in Benalla. As usual, bring any water and nibbles you need for the morning, wear sturdy shoes and bring binoculars if you have them.

Kathy Costello

Bushwalking

Easy Walks

On Wednesday, April 7, 13 Walkers set off to the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park. This park was created in 2002 to protect the remaining box-iron forests that were once predominant in North-East Victoria.

Upon arrival at Old Coach Road, some walkers drove in to be closer to the summit while the rest walked the 2.7km.

Those who then walked the 300m on a rather steep and rocky path to the summit declared it well worthwhile for the 360 degrees view of the surrounding countryside.

A rock formation depicting the date 1961 created some interest thanks to Rupe who noticed it appeared the same when viewed from each side. Andi later discovered it was the date a fire tower had been erected there.

The return walk to the Beechworth-Chiltern Road was a little slower as it was quite a hot day.

We then drove to Woolshed falls for lunch and concluded our day by walking to the viewing platform high above the falls and then down onto the rocks below where many people were paddling and walking across the falls.

We thank Fujiie for leading this walk, for his planning and for alerting many of us to the existence of this lovely park.

Coming Up - Wednesday 5th May, Pangarang Lookout Walk/Pine Gully Nature Trail.

These two walks in the Warby-Ovens National Park will offer members an “ambler” or “rambler” option. The Pangarang Lookout walk of 4.5km return, offers panoramic views to the west over farmland and floodplain. The formed track has a gentle slope with some low obstacles, becoming moderately steep towards the end. Amblers preferring a more easy-going option will take the 2km loop of the Pine Gully Nature Trail, with the Pine Gully Falls seen from the viewing platform. Both groups will reunite at Pine Gully for a picnic lunch. Walkers are strongly encouraged to bring a walking stick or pole for both walks, which are rocky in places.



Please confirm your attendance by Monday 3rd May with Glenys Chessells 0431201077 or gchess@hotmail.com. Remember to bring a hat, sunscreen if needed, picnic lunch and a drink, and consider a walking stick or pole(s).

Meet at the Seniors' Complex, Fawckner Drive carpark at 9.15am. Detailed directions will be provided at the carpark.

Looking Ahead - Wednesday 2nd June: Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Oxley to Milawa.

In early June, the group will take to the beautiful King Valley for a walk along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Starting at Oxley, the walk of approx 7kms along a relatively flat path will lead us to Milawa for lunch at one of the local cafes. Car shuttles will be arranged on the day, and for those looking for more exercise after a relaxing lunch, a further 2km brings us to the Milawa Cheese Company. The walk provides an introduction to the 116km Rail Trail which winds through north east Victoria.

Please confirm your attendance by Monday 31st May with Glenys Chessells 0431201077 or gchess@hotmail.com

Remember to bring a hat, sunscreen if needed, a drink, snack, and walking sticks or poles are recommended. Once numbers are confirmed, lunch will be booked at Milawa.

Meet at the Seniors' Complex, Fawckner Drive carpark at 9.15am. Detailed directions will be provided at the carpark.

If new members are unsure of their ability for these walks, please check with convenors Glen Chessells as above, or Julie McNeill 0407823031, juliemcneill55@gmail.com. Please also add convenors' numbers to your mobile. Car sharing is usually available, with a small contribution to costs.

Glen Chessells and Julie McNeill

Mid Week Walks

Bright Report – Wednesday 14th April, 2021

This walk was led by Bev Thornell who welcomed eight eager club members - one of whom was an hour early - he was so keen!

We arrived at Bright armed with raincoats and our colourful range of umbrellas only to put them back into the boot because the sun decided to come out from behind the clouds giving us a perfect day for walking. We all enjoyed the change of weather as we were now kitted out with hats and sunscreen.

The first part of the walk was the Canyon (3 km). It was, as usual, picturesque with the Autumn leaves just starting to 'turn'. The Ovens River was clear and flowing well. We admired the rock formations which looked stunning in the sunlight. On returning to the car park, we stopped for an early lunch and walk around the shops. Coffee and ice creams were the popular choices of the day before setting off on the Cherry Walk of 5 km. A short way into the walk Bev kindly led us on a small detour so that we could admire the bitumen road before we turned onto the 'real' track to continue our journey. During our walk we crossed some swing bridges. John, however, had trouble containing his boyish behaviour and just couldn't resist jumping on the bridges to upset the other walkers - there's always one in a group!



Along this section, we admired the abundant birdlife and the carpets of beautiful autumn leaves with strong colours of purples and yellows.

Back at the car park, we enjoyed sharing our usual afternoon tea goodies before setting off for the drive home. We were surprised at the number of families enjoying the area. There were children, dogs, bike riders, campers (bush walkers), and day-trippers all out and about in the Autumn weather.

Thank you, Bev, for leading this lovely walk.

Eileen Skelton

Wednesday 12th May 2021 MT MEG S-3-4

Mt Meg is a gravelly, rocky conservation reserve near Thoona. The circuit walk begins near the car park and climbs to the summit following animal tracks and then descends along a fence line back to the car park. There are good views at the summit and wonderful rock formations.

Meet at 9.15 am. Leave Benalla at 9.30 am

Leader: Helen Spinks Mobile: 0488 013059

John Boehm

Chat n' Chew

The May Chat and Chew is being held at the [North Eastern Hotel](#) on 25th May commencing at 12.15pm. If you did not put your name down in the book at our last Chat n Chew to say you would be attending, could you please call me on 5762 1531, preferably by Tuesday 22nd, so that I can add your name to our booking.

Lorraine Knox

Coin Collectors

The Coin Collectors Group is up and going. Our previous convenor Alex Atkins, and wife Annette, have shifted to Echuca and Alex has handed the reins to Doug Smith. Doug convened the March meeting on our return to the U3A Meeting Room, with five members attending. The recent April meeting was also attended by five members although two of these members were not present at the March meeting. Our numbers are slowly creeping back to pre-COVID levels of 10 to 15 members.

With Doug away on a planned break with family to Gippsland in April, Gary Edwards convened the April Meeting. Members presented selections from their coin collections. A very interesting cross section of Australian pre decimal and decimal coinage was exhibited, as well as coinage from overseas countries. Discussions included the ways in which coins can be catalogued and displayed and the values of coins, including coins with varieties and blemishes. Interesting stories of how coins were procured/discovered were told and sets of specimen coins displayed.

If you have coins, either as a serious collector or as someone with a cache of old or foreign coins who wants to know more about them, come along to share your knowledge or to find out more about those coins.

The Coin Collectors Group meets on the 3rd Monday from 10am to 12noon in the U3A Meeting Room.

Gary Edwards

Community Singing

We had another enjoyable session of Community Singing conducted by Brian Greed in April.

At the beginning Brian asked members of Community Singing what they enjoyed and found out that most people enjoyed hearing both the piano and the organ to accompany their singing.

For the first part of the session Brian used Sammy's Old Time Sing along Book Part 1 and accompanied the group on the piano. After morning tea, the second session was using the Tram Menu of Song Book with accompaniment on the organ.

It was another very enjoyable morning and our thanks to Brian for providing the musical accompaniment to a great variety of songs.

Margaret Jenkins

Creative Writing

We have been able to continue meeting in the U3A room to share our thoughts on the stories written during the month. The April writing topics were:

- **"I wonder if I can do it"**
- **He/she/name was back, everything would be alright**
- **He/she/they wrinkled his/her/their nose in distaste when the smell first hit them**

It is always a treat when the stories start coming in towards the end of the "writing" month. Stories varied, with some sad and others happy. But all included some great descriptions of either place or characters. All the topics were used by at least one class member this month. One of the favourites was "He/she/they

wrinkled his/her/their nose in distaste when the smell first hit them.” The smells that included were a rotting corpse (it had a satisfying ending) and the acrid fumes resulting from reduction of balsamic vinegar. One of the stories was set in the jungle with a group of animals named after the letters of the alphabet – Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta and Omega.

We also had some discussion around some web sites that can help with our writing and grammar – soon to be shared with the rest of the class by those who mentioned them.

The topics for our May class are:

- **Everything he did was a waste of time and energy**
- **But they had the benefit of a nearly full moon**
- **Everybody should have at least two.....**

For our 10 May class, we will again share the stories via email ahead of the class, allowing time to read and prepare feedback for discussion when we meet.

Joy Shirley

Demystifying Psychology

On 6 April we enjoyed fearless, frequently humorous, and often meandering group discussions at Coinda.

The previous evening ABC TV had aired “Brazen Hussies” - a 2020 Australian documentary recording the history of the Women's Liberation Movement in Australia from 1965 to 1975. This era, seared in the memories of so many, formed the foundation of the morning's discussion. We covered the impact of the pill, the role of religion, the role of Women's Weekly magazine, raising girls as future wives, access to education, gender-based wages, the right to employment when married or pregnant, the definition and aims of feminism, 6 o'clock closing, and so much more.

(View Brazen Hussies at <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/brazenhussies>)

The impact of Germaine Greer's 1970 “Female Eunuch” and 2019 Jane Caro's 2019 reflections and commentary in “Accidental Feminist” as authors who “put words to our experiences” was also included.

In the context of how difficult it was for many women to get an education Andi introduced us to Elizabeth Gaskell's character “My Lady Ludlow”. The novel was printed in a women's magazine called Household Words in 1858. Lady Ludlow described education as “a bad thing, if given indiscriminately” (Ref: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Lady_Ludlow). The full text is available online at Project Gutenberg - <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2524/2524-h/2524-h.htm>

It is said that discussing either football, religion or politics is a surefire way to destroy barbecue bonhomie. Experience tells me that combining all three of these national “holy grails” into a single barbeque does not compare to the historical and current angst often attached to the social movement called feminism.

On 16 April we concluded the session on Family Violence. I'm disheartened by recent tragedies and with the continual escalation of Family Violence. Never look away. Call 1800respect/1800 737732.

Bringing this month's report to a gentle close, we thank Andi again for telling us about this, a mother's sage entry in her child's autograph book (remember those?).

“If wisdom's ways you wisely seek,
Five things observe with care,
To whom you speak,
Of whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where.”

— Caroline Lake Ingalls (mother of Laura Ingalls Wilder, and recorded in “Little House on the Prairie”)

May sessions:

1. Discussion Group: Tuesday 4th May 2021 10 – 12 noon @ Coinda
2. Course Content: Friday 21 May 2021 1 – 3pm @ Benalla Seniors Building Fawkner St.

Jane Rushworth

Exercises for Fun

Our Exercises for Fun group have now returned to the Seniors Hall, after holding our classes for the months of February and March in the local Town Hall, while the Seniors Hall was being freshly painted.

It is encouraging to see good attendances, as everybody is keen to become a little more active, and improve their fitness, whilst in the friendly atmosphere of the Exercise Class.

See you Monday, 9.30am.

Have fun.

Helen Jeffree



Exploring the Universe

The Wonders of the Early Universe. Earth Day and a trip to the Moon.

Galaxies were a topic at our April session. We celebrated Earth day of April 22nd by finding the approximate position of planet Earth in the Orion Cygnus Arm of the spiral Milky Way Galaxy.

When we look through a telescope at the night sky we are looking back in time as the light from the early Universe takes so long to reach us. The in-space Hubble Telescope's powerful lenses showed us discoveries of immature early galaxies, the earliest a small red galaxy from 12.6 billion light years ago. It hadn't had time to come together with other pieces of matter to create the elliptical and spiral galaxies that we see today. We viewed their stages of evolution.

'Hubble' has become 'the people's telescope'. Since it was launched in 1990, we have learnt so much about astronomy and cosmology. We watched film of its discoveries, the early history of the telescope and servicing missions from astronauts in space fitting it with the latest technology. Hubble is now alone. It will never be visited again and is controlled from ground-based computers.

These segments of film were edited from 'Hubble 15 Years of Discovery,' which is very long, with 10 chapters and can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeZ3APhUT2Q>

We visited the craters and rifts of the Moon via Rupe's power point presentation and marvelled at the depth of impact craters that had been formed by meteors slamming into the Moon many years ago, creating cliffs higher than any here on Earth.

Travel is limited these days. If you would like an experience away from your usual destinations, why not join us on the 3rd Tuesday of each month?

Bev Morton

Family Research

Report backs on family research over the last month commenced our April session. It was fascinating to listen to journeys taken, discoveries made, with many opportunities taken to note down ideas and resources to follow up in our own research.

'Show and Tell' featured Jan's use of scrapbooking techniques to record and share her family history. The large coffee table book 'Winton Swamp to Winton Wetlands', available from the Mokoan Hub, was discussed. It draws extensively upon local family history records and photographs to describe the impact of the transitions which have taken place there on families. A highlight was Marg's photocopy of a Trove article received just that morning which included only the second photo she has ever seen of her mother. We are so delighted for her!

Our story brief for April – '**Grandparents**' -- brought out memories, mostly fond, of grandparents, including loving grandmothers and at times irascible grandfathers who lived with families in later life. A story about a grandparent always returning from town with a 'Mars Bar and packet of Smarties' for his grandchildren

brought back memories of my grandfather, who always kept a supply of 'Kool Mints' for us. Such a small treat but so looked forward to.

Some class members, often younger siblings, reported barely knowing even one grand parent. David chose a 'great grand relative' instead, concluding a very interesting presentation stating his next goal was to learn to use Trove to discover more about him... 'No time like the present!'...We opened up Trove on the large screen, a search for his great grand relative provided a fun way to introduce features of Trove, including the capacity to save records in lists and to download and print out documents as pdf's.

Next month's topic is '*In search of*' - Write* 150 - 400 words about someone who is proving, or proved to be, difficult to find. Who were they, what did you find out about them, and what would you still like to know? If you face or faced obstacles along the way, describe them and how you managed to resolve them. Are you 'happy enough' with your findings to date? (*stories can be presented in other ways)

Bev Lee and Wendy Sturgess

Film as Literature

This month we discussed a range of films recently screened at BPACC. And one member who had not been able to attend BPACC spoke about a film seen on television.

High Ground: Inspired by history this tells of the treatment of aboriginal people in the 1930s. Very confronting, particularly as it shows the dreadful treatment of aboriginal people in recent times. Rated as 4-4.5/5.

The Nest: An entrepreneur moves his American family to England, espousing his status and wealth as much better than reality. It was a dark story with cinematography to match but came across as a bit disjointed and the end was not quite clear. Rated as 2/5.

Long Story Short: A comedy around a newly married man whose life moved forward a year every time he woke up. It was easy watching, with a message around the importance of family and friends rather than money and time. Rated as 3/5.

Wild Mountain Thyme: The story of two young people in Ireland, who eventually come together. It is a light and gentle film. The music was excellent, but not enough of the rolling Irish hills included in the cinematography. Rated as 3/5.

Minari: The story of a Korean family who move to Arkansas in the 1980s. A story of determination and emotion with some excellent performances. Rated as 4/5.

Peter Rabbit 2: An animated film as a sequel to the earlier "Peter Rabbit" release. Only one class member saw this film and thoroughly enjoyed it – felt it was better than the original. Rated as 4.5/5.

Raya and the Last Dragon: In a re-imagined world, a young warrior sets off to find the last dragon to help save her father and world from a dark mass that turns everything to stone. It has a great message about greed and trust, as well as providing colour and action to appeal to younger audiences. Rated as 4/5.

Nomadland: Based on a book about a woman embarking on a journey in a converted van, this includes mainly real people who have various reasons for living a nomadic life. We were introduced to some interesting characters, with some great comments. "I am houseless, not homeless", "things remembered will never die". Rated as 3.5/5.

At our May class we will be discussing "The Father", which is screening at BPACC from 6 May.

The things we will watch for in viewing the film include:

- Did you enjoy the film? What in particular did you like?
- Was there anything that you did not like?
- What did you think about the cinematography?
- What did you think of the performances? Any strong performances that stand out? Any weak performances that spoil the film?
- Overall rating out of 5.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation



What a lovely day we had at Royal Botanical Gardens Cranbourne in late April.

I was one of those people who did NOT like Native Plants very much. Boy, were my eyes opened!

The Garden and landscape, beautiful; meal and service, excellent.

I would highly recommend Royal Botanical Gardens, Cranbourne.



On May 27 we are going to Euroa. Meet at U3A Carpark at 9.30am. We will visit the Euroa Aboretum and Plant Nursery. Morning tea and lunch to be arranged.

On June 24th, we are travelling to Chiltern.

Gwen Turner 0438 627 010

Garden Team

It has been lovely to be joined by a new band of garden enthusiasts and it will be interesting to see one of the new gardens when we gather at Ray's, 29 Riverview, on May 10th. I know the hosts have found the progress in their gardens most encouraging.

Elsbeth Maconachie

German

We are now halfway through the first semester. The small size of the group means that it is run as an informal tutorial. Each time we have conversation in German. One of our members whose first tongue is German has a particular interest in our pronunciation. Pleasingly, there is now often just one or no correction required.

Our comprehension lags somewhat, but our vocabulary is ever expanding. This month the theme was around major life events, particularly death and dying. The focus emanated from discussion around the many POW camps around Tatura in the 1940s, the video and photographic records in the Tatura Museum and the subsequent German War Cemetery there.

Members contributed a piece about the train numbering system for reading and translating and another by T. S. Eliot for dictation and translation.

By way of revision, we did a large word find puzzle on new words thus far. Two more songs have been revisited.

Pauline Bailey, Convenor

Investment

We did not have an April meeting of Investment due to Good Friday falling this year on the first Friday of April. However, the next meeting of Investment will be on Friday 7th May 2021 at 2pm in the U3A room.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

Once again, our group of enthusiastic readers talked and swapped books for a couple of hours, so enjoyable. Our thanks go to Lorraine for providing a venue for us until the Library can accommodate a group of more than 10.

Shirley enjoyed the *Prison Diaries of Jeffrey Archer*. Gerard Menuhin has written *Tell the Truth and Shame the Devil*, have you asked yourself why the world is always at war, there are some answers in this book. *My Own Words*, the first book written by Ruth Bader Ginsberg since becoming a Supreme Court Justice in 1993,

is a collection of writings and speeches. Ruth had an enduring influence on women's rights and popular culture. A very good read. Another hard to put down book *To Love a Sunburnt Country*, book 4 of The Matilda Saga, author Jackie French. It is 1942 in war torn Malaya, Nancy dreams of Australia and a young man called Michael. *The Unconquered* is part of short stories written in 1943 by Somerset Maugham, hard to come by at the moment, recently enjoyed. *Death Comes to Pemberley*, a delightful 2011 British novel by PD James continues the theme of Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*. *The Paying Guests* by Sarah Waters, it is 1922 in south London and a widow and her daughter are obliged to take in lodgers, a love story that is also a crime story. Author Ake Edwardson has continued the Inspector Winter novels with *Frozen Tracks*, enjoyed. *The Return of the Dancing Master*, a new Detective Stefan Lindman novel, set in 1945 Nazi Germany. Very readable was *The Kennedy Curse* by James Patterson set in Ireland, the true story. *The Insiders* by Ivan Durrant. *The Queens Secret* an historical fiction by Karen Harper, an intimate and engaging look at the Queen Mother. The usual crime readers enjoyed James Patterson, Lee Child, Michael Connelly. We agreed that books set during the War were being overdone. *The Girl in the Painting* by Renita D'Silva, *Water under the Bridge* by Lily Malone, *Ghosts of the Past* by Tony Park, *Orphan of Cemetery Hill* by Hester Fox, *In the Valley of Blue Gums* by J.H. Fletcher were all greatly enjoyed by our group.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball

Lifeballers this month worked on their game skills under the watchful eye of experienced player, umpire and roving Lifeball Ambassador, Rupe Cheetham. We were pleased to hear Rupe's support and encouragement, and also happy to find our skills are competitive with other clubs. Hopefully as we improve, there will be a return to some Fun and Friendship days with other regional clubs, where we can compete in mixed teams.



We have welcomed a couple of new players and look forward to maintaining numbers through the quieter winter months. Remember, if you can walk, you can play Lifeball--it's a fun, safe and active way of keeping fit, with a lot of laughter thrown in.

Anyone interested is welcome to come and watch a game on Mondays at 10am. Convenors Marlene Pitts 0407240943, and Julie McNeill 0407823031 are also happy to talk through any questions.

Julie McNeill

Meet and Mingle

May's Meet and Mingle will be held on Wednesday 19th May at the U3A area in the Seniors Centre. We are fortunate to have Kathryn McQualter, a dietitian from Benalla Health to speak at the May Meet and Mingle. The topic of her talk will be **Climate Change and Health**.

Margaret Jenkins

Music Appreciation

Music across the ages could be a sub-title to our April musical selections. Spanning from the baroque period to the present day our group looked at and listened to works by Jean Féry Rebel (*Les Éléments* – 17th century); Beethoven (4th Symphony -18th century); while Verdi (*Macbeth* ballet music), Berlioz (*Beatrice & Benedict* Overture) and Grieg (*String Quartet No.1*) all belonged to the 19th century. The 20th century composers were: Ravel (*Pavane for a Dead Princess*), Shostakovich (9th Symphony) and Aaron Copland (*Fanfare for the Common Man*). The 21st century was represented by present day American composer Joan Tower (*Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman* – although the first of these (there are six in all) was composed by her in the 20th century as a response to Copland's *Fanfare*). All in all, a lot of music over a large expanse of time, but enjoyable and instructive, nevertheless. The music recordings and the notes for each session are all available

on the Music Appreciation page of the Benalla U3A website if you would like to check things out in more detail. Better still, why not join us – 2nd and 4th Fridays at 10am in the U3A room.

Bill Squire

Page Turners

Kate Grenville's novel, *A Room made of Leaves*, was enjoyed by our group. Grenville made good use of her skills to construct an imaginative narrative of parts of Elizabeth Macarthur's life. Elizabeth is now historically regarded as the founder of the wool industry in Australia. Her husband, John, lived in exile in England for 16 years after being a key instigator in the revolt deposing Governor William Bligh. During this time Elizabeth expanded and improved their flocks while John negotiated for more land and promoted the sale of fine wool to the English woolen mills.

Grenville warns readers she does not stick strictly to facts as she invents an affair between Elizabeth and the Colonial Astronomer, Mr. Dawes. However, the novel provides accurate descriptions of life in the new colony of NSW: the struggles in the first two years of settlement and her life at Elizabeth Farm at Parramatta. A good read for all who enjoy historical novels.

Meg Dillon

Patchwork

It has been a busy month for the Patchwork Group – two afternoon sessions followed by an '5th Thursday' all day 'special'. Here are some of the quilts brought along for 'show and tell' during the month.



Dorothy Webber

Play Reading

Eight keen readers participated at our April meeting. We read from the play *Crown Matrimonial*. A thought provoking and interesting play set in Marlborough House between 1936 and 1945 focusing on the private family drama of Edward VIII and the Royal Family leading to the abdication. The play portrayed the major constitutional crisis and the private and public conflict that ensued.

There was much discussion on the completion of our read, comparing present day conflict involving Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. Jill also provided us with historic information on a number of members of the Royal Family in relation to the family tree.

Next month, on John's suggestion we plan to read the hilarious *The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomens's Guild Dramatic Society's Production of Macbeth*. Some members will recall we have read this play some time ago and we all went home smiling!

Jenny McKenna

Politics and Current Affairs

Can anyone help Scomo? He lost the immunisation targets. Where did he leave them? It's to the back of the queue... look over there! It's adman with a new campaign on consent. Oops! The fun bit about milkshakes upset the punters. What's next? Biden's meeting - quick action needed. Steal or borrow a climate policy. Whew! Is it getting hot around here.?

Terry Case

Saturday Cards – 500

Interest in Saturday Cards is growing with two new players at the last session. It is such a fun way to keep the brain busy, trying to remember Trumps (not the one in USA), Bowers and Jokers. U3A members are most welcome to come and join in.

Heather Wallace

Singing for Fun

April has seen Margaret Merriman introduce us to a new song “Dona Dona” which is in a minor key and slightly different to what we have been used to. No doubt we will enjoy the melody of the song over coming weeks.

Brian Greed has introduced us to several songs we sang in 2019 including Sweet Caroline. Whilst we haven’t sung these songs for 12 months, they are easily sung and enjoyed.

Kieran Smith has chosen a mix of Irish and Australian songs for some of his sessions. Everyone seems to be enjoying the Irish songs and it is a good balance that Kieran has struck.

Gwen Barnes has been providing great accompaniment on the piano.

Morning tea has been reintroduced with everyone bringing their own cup to fit in with the COVID requirements.

We were sorry to hear that Marjory Geeson had a fall at home. However, we are pleased to report that Marjory is recovering well. We hope to see her back at singing soon.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

‘Timely tertiary education sparked Johnson’s farm gender equality work’

Benalla’s Alana Johnson, originally a farm girl from Branxholme in the Western District and instrumental in establishing the Victorian Rural Women’s Network and Australian Women in Agriculture group, spoke to Stock and Land on April 6.

Brought up on the farm, Alana was the first and only child of five in her family to go to university, largely because her mother and grandmother had lived isolated farm lives of limited choices and did not want the same fate for Alana.

But Alana told the group, she was lucky that when she was in year 12, the Whitlam government was elected and brought in free education. Eventually she majored in sociology at La Trobe University and then went on to do a Bachelor of Social Work degree.

“We (other enlightened, university trained women) went back to the country, but not to live the life our mothers did. And there was a real sense the people we partnered with had to accept that things were going to change.”

“Before that so many farm women had been fundamental to farm operations but were never considered farmers,” she said.

In the early 1980s, Alana and then teacher Cathy McGowan, approached Victorian Farmers Federation president Peter Walsh, to have women allowed a vote in VFF affairs, where previously only a male farmer vote was available.

“Peter took it on and was instrumental in changing the rules and Victoria became the first state to automatically have two votes available from every member’s farm,” she said.

“Significantly too, and at a similar time, Beth Randell and Liz Chapman were heading up Forum in Benalla. They were instrumental in staging the first Women on Farms day in Victoria in 1983 or 1984. About 150 women attended and it has been an annual event since, most recently at Port Fairy,” Alana said.

Also, at about the same time, the Victorian Labor government listened to the needs of farm women – Alana was undoubtedly one voicing those needs - and set up a rural women’s unit in the Department of Agriculture.



Alana was the founding president of Voices for Indi, which initiated the renowned democracy project in the electorate, and continues to activate discussions about the community minded approach to politics and the role of Community-minded Independents. Recognised for rural activism and leadership, as convenor of the North East Rail Alliance Alana recently announced through the Ensign that the ARTC had accepted the "local solution" for Benalla, ie. relocating 1.3 kilometres of track to the other side of the railway station, doing away with the need for an overpass.

The next Stock and Land, on Tuesday May 4 at 10am, will feature Molyullah's Carla Gardner talking about permaculture and the history and genetic importance of heritage poultry.

David Palmer

Sustainability

Due to Easter, we only had one session this month.

As many readers would be aware there has been much discussion in the media about the impacts of climate change, the decline of coal, the 'gas led' recovery and of course emission reduction targets.

Many members had watched the Four Corners program on the "Gas Led Recovery" and the issues presented during that program led to much discussion. A report from the Australian Energy Market Operator that declared "there will be no gas shortfall" also contributed to the discussion.

The topic of battery storage was also raised during these discussions and we read an article about some research conducted by the Australia Institute titled, "Renewables plus batteries offer Australia the same energy security as coal." This led to discussion about how battery storage can provide stability to the grid. Questions were raised about how long battery storage could maintain grid operation in the event of major breakdowns. This is something we need to explore a little further.

John Lloyd

Tech Savvy Beginners – 2021 Apple

In Session 3 we explored the Bookmarking function which enables you to save a website. When tapping on the Bookmark symbol you get three choices: Bookmark, Reading List and Search History.

We looked up the program for The Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre 2021. And yes, there are lots of interesting shows coming up. E-tickets are becoming more commonplace having your phone linked to your tablet will make things easier.

We also entered data into our Contact List and our Calendar.

In Session 4 we watched a You Tube video explaining iCloud. There are many to choose from and if you would like to know more try watching one. Bookmarking is a tricky function to use at first, so we practised again by choosing a favourite iPad stand.



Finally, we began exploring the Camera App and will be moving on to some photo editing next time.

Jenny Sawyer

Tech Savvy Beginners – Android

Tech Savvy Beginners (Android) is now underway on the third Wednesday from 12.15 to 1.45 pm. Our new Convenor Robyn Lukey reports having undergone 'trial by fire' in her second session, with the room unavailable at the beginning of the session; photocopier jams; new students to orientate; patient students

waiting, all with different learning needs; and more. However, Robyn remains enthusiastic, committed and looking forward to the next session.

We are very keen to provide additional mentoring support in this class - if you are a confident Android Phone and/or tablet user and enjoy mentoring and supporting others to develop skills in using them, please contact Robyn on 0403 164 931 or Bev on 0478 607 838. We would love to hear from you.

If you would like to go on a waiting list to join the class, which is run in a relaxed, small group format, please contact Robyn Lukey on 0403 164 931 or email robynluky51@gmail.com.

Bev Lee

The News – Fact or Fiction

This group is learning how various editions of the daily newspapers report so differently on a number of items. The views of the owners of these papers become very obvious, especially when reporting on Climate change, politics etc. The second part of the session concentrates on a topic that attendees feel needs further discussion. Come along and be enlightened. This group is held at the Hub on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10 - 12.

Convenor - Brian Harker

Wine Appreciation

Our last trip on Wednesday 28 April was to Dal Zotto Winery, with lunch at the popular Whitfield Hotel.

The weather was magnificent all day and the drive to Whitfield revealed vegetation in all its resplendent Autumn glory.

The attention we received from Stephanie at Dal Zottos' was friendly and informative. We were treated to a large range of white and red wines which appealed to most people's palates.

Our meal at the hotel was served outdoors in the delightful garden.



Next Meeting – On Wednesday May 26 we will visit **Pfeiffer Wines**, located on the large sweeping bend at 167 Distillery Road, Wahgunyah, Victoria.

There will be a tasting fee at Pfeiffers of \$10 per head, refundable on purchase of \$80 of wine per couple. Please have money ready at the car park.

Lunch will be at **The Pickled Sisters** attached to Cofield Winery.

Meet at the tennis court car park in Barkly Street behind Aldi at 10 am. Please contact Heather or Keith by Sunday 23rd May to let us know if you will be attending.

Keith and Heather Rogers 03 5762 4086 or 0429 876 999

Program News

Would you like to propose a new program to pilot in second Semester?

If you have (or someone you know of has) an idea for a new course or activity, there is a Program Proposal form on the [Convenor's page](#) of the web site which provides a guide to issues which need to be considered. Check out the [Program Suggestions](#) page to get an idea of courses which have been developed over the past few years. You can send your idea through the Contact us box on this page or talk to President Dorothy Webber or Vice President Margaret Jenkins about it. If you would like some help developing a course proposal, contact Bev Lee on 5762 8171 or bevlee47@gmail.com. Generally, when the course proposal is 'firmed up', it is presented to the Committee of Management for approval.

Remembering John Avery

U3A Benalla member **Judith Borthwick** worked with John Avery at Dookie Agricultural College for many years and later edited the U3A Benalla Newsletter during much of John's incumbency as U3A Benalla's President. Judith searched the old newsletter files on her computer for a photo and article she remembered being sent to the Ensign at the time of John receiving his Life Membership award in 2012. She was delighted to find them and be able to share them in this newsletter. As Judith commented, John's excitement and pleasure in receiving the award is clearly evident in the photograph.



“At U3A's annual Christmas function held at Whitfield on 28th November (2012), a delighted and surprised John Avery was presented with a Life Membership Award and an Outstanding Service Certificate for his outstanding service in fostering the aims and objectives of U3A in Benalla Rural City.

In congratulating John, President Geraldine McCorkell stated that this award is not given lightly, John is the first person to receive such an award in the club's 20-year existence, and it is well deserved.

John was president of U3A Benalla for seven years and it is due his tireless efforts that the club has grown and is in a sound financial position. John still continues to be a member of the U3A executive and serves on several committees.”

If you would like to contribute your reflections to an article on John's contribution to U3A Benalla, please forward them to Newsletter Editor at newsletter@u3abenalla.com.

What's On

Saturday, 1 May

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 3 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Collectors - 'Teapots'

10:00 Lifeball

10:00 Art Appreciation – 'Northern Abstraction'

13:30 Games

16:00 Meditation

Tuesday, 4 May

10:00 Demystifying Psychology Discussion Group @ Coinda Hub

10:00 Page Turners

10:00 Stock and Land – Carla Gardner

14:00 Armchair Traveller – Kieran Smith 'From London to Kathmandu'

14:00 Let's Talk Books

Wednesday, 5 May

09:15 Easy Walks – Warby-Ovens National Park

09:30 Play Reading – The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild...

11:30 John Avery – Funeral - St Joseph's Church

Thursday, 6 May

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 7 May

09:30 Sustainability

14:00 Investment

Monday, 10 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball

14:00 Creative Writing

14:00 Garden Team – Ray's, 29 Riverview

Tuesday, 11 May

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs @ The Hub

12:15 German

14:00 Tech Talks

Wednesday, 12 May

09:15 Mid-Week Walks – Mt Meg (near Thoona)

10:00 Recorder Group

13:30 'A Taste of Art'

13:30 Film as Literature – 'The Father'

14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 13 May

09:00 Birdwatching – Pine Gully, Warby Ranges

10:00 Harmony Group @ The Hub

13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 14 May

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Armchair History - The Hub

Saturday, 15 May

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 17 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Coin Collectors

10:00 Lifeball

16:00 Meditation

Tuesday, 18 May

10:00 The News - Fact or Fiction

14:00 Exploring the Universe

Wednesday, 19 May

10:00 Meet & Mingle – 'Climate Change & Health'

12:15 Tech Savvy Beginners (Android Phones)

14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

Thursday, 20 May

10:00 Singing for Fun @ The Hub

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 21 May

09:30 Sustainability

12:15 Chat 'n Chew – The North Eastern Hotel

13:00 Demystifying Psychology - Course Session

Monday, 24 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball

14:00 As Time Goes By - Memoir Writing

Tuesday, 25 May

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs @ The Hub

12:15 German

14:00 A Different View of German History

17:00 Newsletter Deadline – Convenors' Reports

Wednesday, 26 May

10:00 Wine Appreciation – Pfeiffer Wines and The Pickled Sisters Café, Wahgunyah

10:00 Recorder Group

13:30 'A Taste of Art'

14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

Thursday, 27 May

09:30 Garden Appreciation – Euroa Arboretum

10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub

13:00 Family Research – 'In Search Of ...'

Friday, 28 May

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Armchair History

Monday, 31 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball

14:00 Garden Team

Tuesday, 1 June

10:00 Demystifying Psychology Discussion Group

10:00 Page Turners

10:00 Stock and Land

14:00 Armchair Traveller

14:00 Let's Talk Books

Wednesday, 2 June

09:15 Easy Walks – Murray to Mountains Rail Trail

09:30 Play Reading

14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 3 June

10:00 Singing for Fun

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 4 June

09:30 Sustainability

14:00 Investment