



Benalla and District Inc.

## Newsletter – November 2019

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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### President's Report

Our Seniors Week Morning Tea was a great success! Many thanks to all the workers who put it together, the Recorder Group for their performance and the Collectors group for displaying a broad range of collectables for the pleasure of our guests.

Once again, thank you to the BBQ team from the Lion's Club for our lunch.

On the 25th of October, 26 of our Convenors met and shared their experiences. Such a positive group of great people, we at Benalla are so fortunate that they share their expertise with us. On a personal note, many thanks go to Pauline Bailey for her words after the meeting.

The Program Committee have been working on the timetable for Semester 1 2020. It is now almost ready to go to Benalla Council.

Our last Meet & Mingle for 2019 will be held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Once again, the Singing for Fun Group will entertain us and the Patchwork Group will display their work.

Come along and join us.

Dorothy Webber, President

*Vale Helen Mitchell*

Helen Margaret Mitchell died on 17 October 2019, aged 89 years, following a long period of ill health. A service to celebrate the life and times of Helen was held at the Uniting Church, Benalla on Thursday, 24 October 2019. This celebration of Helen's life was attended by foundation, early and current members of U3A Benalla.

Helen Mitchell was the inaugural U3A Benalla President in 1996 and held this position for 1997, continuing her involvement and interest in our U3A for almost two decades. In 2002, she chaired the U3A Benalla *Health and Well-being in Later Life* seminar with the aim of working with allied health professionals and other organisations. Attended by 120 participants and service providers, the outcome resulted in extending opportunities for members. Successful ongoing U3A Benalla programs such as, *Singing for Fun*, with the initial sessions held in the Mitchell home, *Lifeball* and *Easy Walks* were added to the program. U3A members were also invited to attend appropriate established programs at Community Health, Aquatic Centre and other groups.

Helen enriched the lives of her community with her diverse interests including ongoing education; public health issues; local government; music and the arts, holding several senior positions. U3A Benalla extends sympathy to Helen's husband, Graham and to their family.

# Group Reports

## Armchair Traveller

Thanks to Bill Paris for his excellent talk on his recent trip to Rumania, Bucharest etc at our October meeting. We are having a break in November for Cup Day but will be back with Margaret Jenkins in December. Margaret will be showing slides of her trip to Norway.

Ray O'Shannessy

## Art Appreciation

In early October we listened to an enjoyable lecture by Meredith on the 'Working the Land' exhibition in the Simpson Gallery. All artworks in this show are out of the Galleries own archives. Some have been recently framed and have never been on show before.

The 'Working the Land' exhibition, which mostly highlights rural life in the colonial era, is well worth attending. The paintings are of high quality and full of interest.

There will be no 'First Mondays' session in the Gallery on the Cup long weekend. The December talk will run as usual on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 10 am – Eliza-Jane Gilchrist, 'Strange Garden' in the Simpson Gallery.

Neville Gibb

## 'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

'Fiesta of Festivities', the theme for this year's Benalla Festival in early November, was our topic for October. Although a somewhat 'tricky topic', group members were able to take a slant which resonated with the group and added to our shared understanding of a 'Fiesta of Festivities'.

Joy teased out the concept of a 'Fiesta of Festivities' then wrote about many of the festivals and festivities enjoyed in Benalla. Betty explored the range of festivals offered in Benalla in poem, following this up with a quirky poem about Molyullah's Easter Fair. Bev also wrote about Molyullah's Easter Monday event, but this time as remembered in the 1950's, when Irish and Scottish dancing; the Molyullah Gift running race; horse races (accompanied by bookies in crumpled tweed suits) were on the program of events.

Margaret shared an engaging memoir of Violet Town's Centenary Celebrations of 1949, bringing with her festival programs and photographs to accompany her written memories of the event. Neville then took us all to Spain, to Pamplona for the 'Running of the Bulls' festival! He remembers wondering how political events at the time impacted upon the thinking of the people participating and attending, and now wonders how political events and realities may be affecting people who, seemingly blissful, participate in Benalla's 'Fiesta of Festivities'.

Our task for November is to keep a notebook close by in which we note any 'triggers' which lead us to reminisce about a time in our lives. We may be talking to someone, watching television or a film, driving somewhere, reading a book. We are to choose one to three of these and write about the memories evoked – keeping the total words to 500 – 750 words. As it's taster time - please feel free to join or rejoin us on 25 November from 2 to 4 pm. Bring a story to share!

Bev Lee

## Bird Watching



Nine people attended our trip to the Mt Meg Nature Conservation Reserve on Chesney Vale Road on 9 October 2019. The reserve is located in the Chesney hills overlooking Winton Wetlands. It was a lovely spring morning, and we enjoyed watching the bird activity all around us, as well as the spring wildflowers. Three Rufous Whistlers constantly called and chased each other. We observed 2 pairs of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, several Grey Fantails and later a Striated Pardalote, all feeding on insects in the canopy. A colourful male Mistletoebird perched in the sun and was admired by everyone. We did well to find a pair of Western

Gerygones, small grey warblers with a beautiful song. It was also good to see several spring migrants from northern Australia; 2 male White-winged Trillers and a pair of Sacred Kingfishers.



The walk into the reserve led to Lawford's Hill. We only followed the track part of the way, but a few people were interested in making another visit to explore this lovely reserve a little further. Most of the group then headed to the nearby Mokoan Hub café for lunch and a coffee. Our full bird list can be viewed on eBird site at:

<https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S60882378>

**Next outing Thursday 14 November 2019:**

We will make a morning visit to the natural features reserve on the Broken River, off Farrell Road just south of Benalla. Please meet at the car park behind the Seniors' building at 9.30am. You will need a hat and sturdy footwear, a water bottle and binoculars if you have them.

Kathy Costello

## Brain Games

We spent much of the October session straining our brains on puzzles with odd names like Samurai Sudoku, Kakuro, Number Pyramid, JigsawDoku and Ensaimada with more restful interludes of drawing, word invention and logic patterns.

Elsbeth Maconachie

## Bushwalks

### Easy Walks

The spring wildflower walk on part of the Sunrise Track, Warby - Ovens National Park was our challenging walk for the year. We welcomed our former Convenors, Vaughan & Marion Cowan, thanks to Vaughan for leading the walk. Marion's keen eye sighted & named some stressed indigenous plants in the parched soil due to lack of substantial rain. Although steep & rugged in places, the 9 intrepid walkers managed well ... Congratulations. The rewards were, enjoyable company, the impressive Xanthorrhoeas coming into flower, views east to Mt Buffalo & the mountain range on a near perfect spring day.

Wendy Sturgess

*Wednesday, 6 November 2019 - Yarrawonga* A walk along the foreshore of Lake Mulwala to Chinamans Island. Originally an area used by the Aborigines to hunt for food & to gather fruit & seeds from the Riverine vegetation. Later a market garden undertaken by the Chinese immigrants. The area has been rehabilitated with walking tracks overlooking the Lake & the Murray River with interpretive signage. Following lunch we will visit the Yarrawonga Weir, completed in 1939; the largest of the 14 weirs along the Murray River downstream of the Hume Reservoir. Lunch: As this will be our last walk for 2019, we will lunch on the PS Cumberoona departing 12 midday for a BBQ Lunch and 1.5 hour cruise around Lake Mulwala, cost \$28.00, payment on boarding at 11.45 am. NOTE: Walkers, please meet at the Seniors Complex, Fawckner Drive, Benalla carpark at 8.45 am; bring water & nibbles. People wishing to join us for lunch & cruise only, meet at the PS Cumberoona, Yarrawonga at 11.45 am. As numbers are required by the PS Cumberoona, please confirm booking with Margaret Walshe, ph: 0357623906/0427005202 by Wednesday 30 October '19. U3A Benalla "Taster Time" - Come & enjoy the Mighty Murray River.

Margaret Walshe

### Mid-Week Walks - Mirimbah

October's mid-week walk along the Delatite River track at Mirimbah, was 9km return.

Nine walkers were thankful that our leader, John Boehm, had chosen perfect weather and the perfect month to walk, as the Delatite River was in full flow, thanks to snow melt.





Luckily for us, many log crossings had replaced the need to wade across the river...only one still remaining, which gave us wet feet!

After lunch, the return trek was mainly downhill, so back at the lovely Mirimbah Park, we enjoyed afternoon tea. Rupert tuned in to his inner child by trying out the playground swing. Welcome to new walker, Wendy, from Mansfield. We hope you can join our group again.

Bev Thornell

*Wednesday, 13 November 2019 – Nillahcootie S-3-3*

This walk starts from the Nillahcootie storage and heads through forest country following road and tracks

Meet at the 'The Centre' Tennis Courts Barkley St

Meet 8.15 am Depart 8.30 am

Leader: Sue Pendergast 0428401690

John Boehm

## Cards – 500

Come along on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month to spend a convivial couple of hours playing the game of 500. A good way to sharpen the brain power in enjoyable way.

Heather Wallace

## Chat n' Chew



Chat n' Chew's long-term convenor, Shirley Kearney, was presented with a bunch of flowers and thanked by the group at October's lunch at 'The Northo' for her work over many years in arranging the Chat n' Chew lunches.

Shirley's call for someone to take over her role has been taken up by U3A committee member, Lorraine Knox.

Thank you, Shirley, for convening Chat n' Chew so capably, and to Lorraine, thank you for taking up the role of Chat n' Chew Convenor.



## New Group!! Coin Collecting

Writing in the September Newsletter that coin collecting has been an interest/hobby of mine for a long time, I invited anyone with a similar interest to contact me with the view of forming an interest group within U3A. Since then I have had a positive response and six of us met on the 8th Oct. A Course Proposal was completed and submitted. The Committee is quite happy for us to meet as a Coin Collecting Group and has given us meeting time from 12.15 pm to 1.45 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at the U3A rooms.

The first meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th November. The second meeting on 4th December.

I am pleased that some keen interest has been shown by people who have been putting coins aside and like me have not yet sorted or catalogued their collection. I am looking forward to seeing your coins and sharing our stories.

As this is a lunchtime meeting, bring some nourishment along and tea and coffee will be available. To register your interest or answer any queries please phone me, Alex Adkins, 0427 820 287, or come along on the day.

Alex Adkins

## Collectors

Our excursion to Dookie was most enjoyable. Our first stop was at the Dookie CWA gardens where we had morning tea. These small and well kept gardens provided a pleasant venue with tables, bench seats and a barbeque, all under cover.

We then back-tracked the short distance to the Doll Museum which is housed in the old Bakery building. The oven is still in the building and we were shown just how large it was being capable of cooking 600 loaves per

day. There were trays of pie tins and the paddles used for getting bread in and out of the oven. It takes days to get the oven to the temperature required for cooking. Pam, the owner, cooked Christmas dinner in the oven one year and they ate in the bakery.

There were over 2000 dolls on display in the museum. This amazing collection showed dolls of every shape, size and colour. There were dolls in prams, dolls in cots, rows and rows of dolls on shelves and one doll with broken leg had her crutches with her. The dolls were beautifully dressed and presented. As well as dolls, there were toys, games, a collection of old tools and much more.



Following this we headed to the Chateau. A historic house at Dookie which is being renovated. Brian welcomed us to the Chateau told us something of the history of the house which dates back to 1886. Helen served a delicious light lunch in the dining room where we heard more history of the chateau. We then visited the former maid's quarters before heading off home and toured the garden.

In a busy week the Collector's group had a display on the stage at the Senior's morning tea which caused some interest. Our varied display had a collection of tins, a green depression glass and Bakelite canisters, a beautiful 1940's wedding dress and photo of the wedding party and a display of footy memorabilia.

Judith Borthwick

## Creative Writing

This month we started with a word challenge, looking at words that began with "DW" and PY". The dictionary has very few words that begin with DW or their derivatives. For example, Dwell and Dwelling. With PY, there are words like Pyramids and Pyrotechnics.

It is interesting how often there are coincidences in our writing. This month two of our group shared a story that included mentioning ghosts and spirits that could not rest. Our creative writing is developing, with one story ending with the thought that it was up to the reader to decide how the story ended – how the spirits were put to rest. We also had one about a sad old lady who wanted the world to stay unchanged, back in the horse and carriage days, but did want the pain she was experiencing to stop – so one sort of change was acceptable. And one story included all three of the prompts provided.

Our topics for **11 November** are a choice between:

- Helena reined her horse back to a walk. She needed time to think.
- Two years ago, I swore I'd never come back here again.
- I refused to let them see me cry.

And remember, we are now starting our session at **2:30pm**.

Joy Shirley

## e-Book Group

In *The Last Painting of Sara de Vos*, by Dominic Smith, a painting by a fictional woman painter of the Dutch Golden Age, becomes the centre of three dramas in three different centuries. Sara de Vos paints a haunting image of her young daughter, a victim of the plague. Then in the 1950s Marty de Groot, a wealthy American businessman inherits the work, until it's stolen from his apartment and replaced by a forgery done by Ellie Shipley, an art historian who needs some fast money. Finally, and much later, she is forced to confront the reality of her deception when both the forgery and the real artwork end up with her as part of her brief as a curator at a Sydney art gallery. This novel cleverly bridges the historical and the contemporary, while showcasing the author's mastery of detail in the descriptions of painting technique, not to mention the characters who inhabit the esoteric art world.

PS: Those with U3A kindles, please don't forget to bring them to our next meeting on Dec. 3rd

Helen Scheller

## Exercises for Fun

We are all becoming very proficient in our Exercise Class each Monday, and our Marching has greatly improved over the year. Sadly, we will be finishing up for the Christmas season, at the end of November. The last Monday 25th Nov. will be our last class for this year. We will resume Classes the 1st Monday in February, 2020. Hope to see you all then. Meantime, have fun!

## Exploring the Universe

### A massive exploding star releases the building blocks of life

Around 1680 the light of a massive exploding star should have been observed on Earth; yet there is no record of it. When Cassiopeia A, located only 11,000 light years from Earth ran out of fuel and collapsed inwards it blew up as a massive supernova. It should have been one of the brightest objects in our sky.

This light travelled 11,000 light years to reach us, a short distance in cosmic time. (Light travels at approximately 300,000 km/second.) Recent studies from the Chandra X-ray Observatory has found that this massive explosion was shrouded in thick dust and recoiled inward.

NASA images and data and the Smithsonian Institute's supercomputer produced this film of how the building blocks for our DNA are blasted into space. Cassiopeia A is a magnificent remnant of gas and dust that glows brightly in many types of light that our eyes can't see, particularly x-ray. This light is transferred into colours that we can distinguish and scientist can estimate the amount and quantity of the elements that the heat that such an explosion produced and the path of the shock wave that is coloured blue. Near the centre of the image is a dense object the star remains that have collapsed into a neutron star.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2018/01/supernova-star-explosion-elements-cassiopeia-a-spd/>

A tour of Cassiopeia A. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RYADIIW7vk>

**Mars Update.** After our visit to Cass A. we swung by planet Mars for a recent update. NASA's Insight Rover is still in trouble with its drill either blocked by a large rock or finding the dense Martian type soil too difficult.

A new film has been released on Gale Crater. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-uAz82sH-E>

We visited the Mars Yard in the U.K. via video, where conditions are replicated for Mars and saw testing of European Space Agency's next rover due to be launched in 2020 when planet Earth and Mars are nearing their closest alignment. It will search for life below the surface of the Planet.

Bev Morton

## Film and Literature

Our movie for discussion this month was *"Abominable"*.

The film was a challenge as it was a children's' animated film. Many had not seen an animated children's film and were surprised to find it enjoyable and entertaining.

When teenage Yi encounters a young Yeti on the roof of her apartment building in Shanghai, she and her mischievous friends, Jin and Peng name him "Everest" and embark on a quest to reunite the magical creature with his family at the highest point on Earth.

The film was advertised as Animation, Adventure, Comedy. It certainly was an adventure story for the children involved but we did not agree that it is a comedy. There are a couple of humorous moments worthy of a chuckle, but these did not turn the film into a comedy.

In talking about the film we thought about it like an old style "goodies and baddies" film. There were the children trying to save the yeti – the goodies – and a scientist and a collector of unique things, both of whom wanted to capture the yeti for their own less than worthy purposes – the baddies. As part of the quest, almost all the characters grew – Yi grew to understand that her dead father was always with her, Jin learns that there is more to life than clothes and girls. Even the selfish collector learns that the yeti needs to return to his own home. And the children as a group learn about persistence.

Most of the class rated it as either 3 or 4 out of 5.

Our film for discussion in November is *"Downton Abbey"*. There are also a couple of other films screening at BPACC that could be of interest – *"The Australian Dream"* which is the Adam Goodes documentary, and *"Ride Like a Girl"* Michelle Paine's story and we may have time to talk about these if any of the group have seen them. Anyone who has watched any of these films is welcome to join us on 13 November at 1:30 in the library to join in the discussion.

Joy Shirley

## Garden Appreciation

Meet at U3A car park at 9:30 am. Morning tea and our first garden will be at Bill and Helen Squires, 15 McNulty Drive 57626334. Tea, coffee and hot water supplied - bring a plate to share.

We will drop into Wilma and Kevin Green's garden to see Kevin's garden art on our way to Geraldine and Garry McCorkell's farm garden for lunch. Our lunch will be catered for, by Helen Kerekes at a cost of \$12 per person. Money for lunch \$12 needs to be paid before the November outing - it can be left at the Red

B4 book shop. Mark envelope U3A Garden Appreciation and your name. Please advise me if you are coming and any dietary requirements. Gwen 0438627010 or 5762 7017.

Gwen Turner

## Garden Team

Willing workers arrived on Sept 30th with generous armfuls to populate my sparse new garden on Goomalibee Road and made remarkable progress.

Next we visited Kirsten and Marcus on Oct 14th where the team was just as numerous and helpful and the post-weeding feast just as delicious (and the coffee far better) We look forward to another productive session at Shirly's on Nov 11th and plan to finish the year with Deslie on Dec 9th.

Elspeth Maconachie



## German - Intermediate

Sessions in October have followed a similar format to that in September.

Pronunciation work continued with honing of the German phonetic alphabet and short readings.

Presentations covered 2 quite different topics. Two members shared their memories of coming to Australia as post-war immigrants. Others spoke about German language internet programmes.

The grammar continued a closer look at adjectives, including comparatives and superlatives. At the other session we looked at interrogative, relative and possessive pronouns.

Our repertoire of songs increased at each session.

Pauline Bailey

## History - After the Victorians

We had been looking at the ramifications of the Peace Treaties following WW1. We turned our attention to India, Britain's richest and most important colony. The Indian Congress Party had been promised political progress as so many Indians volunteered and served in both the Middle East, Turkey and on the Western Front. Like other groups such as the Suffragettes they were betrayed and it was left to Ghandi & Nehru to lead the party in the post war period.

Gandhi implemented his non-violence campaigns to shame the British. Gandhi's followers were brutally attacked on the orders of the Government, but the protests turned the tables on the British and it would lead eventually to Independence.

Terry Case

## Investment

At the October meeting of Investment we heard about a book written by Nicholas Darvas titled "How I made \$2M in the Stock Market". Whilst the book related to the New York stock exchange in the period 1957-59, the objectives outlined were similar to many current investors' aspirations. The use of his "box theory" with a suitable automatic buy order and a stop-loss to minimise losses appeared to have merit. The second topic for the afternoon drew on a paper written for the Actuaries Financial Services Forum in May 2018 titled "[Seven major Trends affecting Australians in Retirement](#)". The topics covered included the loss of confidence and trust in institutions operating in the retirement income system, reducing home ownership, changing life and health expectancy, growing health and aged care costs, changing work patterns and decreasing age pension dependency.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 at 2pm in our U3A room.

Margaret Jenkins

## Let's Talk Books

Quite a few good reads this month. Kelly Rimmer author of *The Things We Cannot Say* set in Poland during World War 2 and then America, this was a must read. *The Lavender Keeper* by Fiona McIntosh set in the same era was very much enjoyed, a follow up book *The French Promise* has been published so more about that when it has gone around the group.



*Trial for Fakes* written about the Art fraud of artist Brett Whitely's paintings was fascinating, whilst the investigation into the deaths of *Dr. Bogle and Mrs Chandler in 1963* was a fizzer, nothing new to report there. *An Improbable Friendship* two iconic women from enemy camps Israeli Ruth Dayan and Palestinian Raymonda Tawil and their 40 year peace mission. They are still friends to this day. Another good read was *When We Were Orphans* by Kazuo Ishiguro, set in England in the 1930's. A talking book that was good value, *An Uncommon Woman* by Nicole Alexander, was set in rural Queensland. An author not widely read by our group Penny Vincenzi has written a sizzling story *Almost a Crime*, of marital infidelity between a charity guru and her lobbyist husband. During a discussion about Bryce Courtenay's *Four Fires* the question was asked is it a good read because it was set locally? *The Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See, Korean Women Divers borrowed from the library was very good. *The Butchers in Berlin* had too many characters. *Red Joan* by Jenni Rooney received the same comment as the film, very dry and left readers in mid air. An unusual book *The Memory Craft* by Lynne Kelly a writer from Castlemaine has researched methods of storing memory, we could all learn from that I am sure.

*No meeting in November – Melbourne Cup Day, next gathering on the 4<sup>th</sup> December.*

Geraldine McCorkell

## Meditation

Meditation is held the first and third Monday of each month, commencing at 4.00pm. Join this group and learn the benefits of relaxation and meditation.

Caroline Sims

## Meet and Mingle

The October Meet and Mingle was held during Seniors Week with a morning tea and entertainment from the Recorder Group. An invitation was also extended to the Senior Citizens to attend this combined event. A BBQ luncheon followed, with the help of Benalla Lions group. A short Be Connected session was presented by Margaret Jenkins, giving an outline of what is covered in the Be Connected activities.

## Music Appreciation

### What's in a Name?

Camille Saint-Saens and Anton Dvořák suffered a common complaint – their respective names: Saint-Saens' from mispronunciation, and Dvořák's from misspelling. Other than that they were music contemporaries in the late romantic period.

Saint-Saens was music's Renaissance man, a former child prodigy whose genius extended beyond music to linguistics, literature and science. A restless creative spirit given to constant travelling - making trips to some 27 countries - it was in North Africa that he found his spiritual home — and his physical home too. There he documented many of his travels in musical works that he composed using themes collected along the way.

He was one of the most precocious musicians ever, beginning piano lessons with his aunt at two-and-a-half and composing his first work at three. At age seven he began studies in composition, and at the age of ten, gave a concert that included works by Beethoven and Mozart. Curiously, Saint-Saens' music was regarded with some condescension in his homeland, while in England and the United States he was hailed as France's greatest living composer well into the twentieth century.

"A peasant in a frock-coat", as one conductor called him, Dvořák was one of a new breed of nationalist composers who emerged during the 19th century, which included Grieg (Norway), Tchaikovsky (Russia), Liszt (Hungary), Chopin (Poland) and Sibelius (Finland). "I am just a plain Czech musician," he reflected towards the end of his life. I remain what always was: a simple Czech musician". Although he travelled widely his heart was always in his homeland. Hence, much of the music he composed reflected his native Czechoslovakia. He spent his final years as one of the most sought-after composers in Europe. Brahms even went as far as to offer him his entire personal fortune in an attempt to get him to settle in Vienna.

These are the two composers whose lives and music we studied in October. You can read more about them in the notes on the Music Appreciation page and listen to some of their music by following the YouTube links provided.

Bill Squire



## Patchwork

Our annual display is upon us again. Drop off your wall hangings any patchwork day. We already have a few and are looking forward to seeing them altogether at Meet & Mingle on Wednesday November 20th. Christmas Lunch: Thursday 5th December 12:30 pm. BYO plate to share (as always). Gift - make it fun & silly \$10 - no more!

Dorothy Webber

## Play Reading

Australian playwright Hannie Rayson's , "Competitive Tenderness", read over 2 sessions was an inspired farce. The protagonist Dawn Snow , who reformed the prison system in Uganda, is hired to reform the local Government in the City of Greater Burke.

The play was topical and satirical. A comedy of 2 acts, taking a swipe at corruption, bureaucracy, romance and many other areas that involved local government, systems and policies. Our play readers continue to develop their skills adapting well to the portrayal of various characters, most times with little preparation! We welcome any newcomers to 'come and try' particularly our November - December sessions before the beginning of our 2020 program.

Jenny McKenna

## Politics and Current Affairs

We were shocked to hear Ian Gray had died suddenly whilst traveling overseas.

Ian was such a vibrant character who could be provocative, but with a cheeky smile and generous laugh that invited us to share his good humour. Ian was going to join our convenors next year and I was looking forward to him co-hosting a new current affairs subject. We will miss him.

Terry Case

## Recorder Group

A winning trio - the Meet and Minglers, the Recorder Players and plates of delectable morning tea.

"Fanfare" was a rousing first item - a call to action, listen, good things are coming. And come they did: "Allemande" a song from the sixteenth century, " La Mourisque" our resident French song, the beautiful "Skye Boat Song" sounding so good in three parts, "Turn the Glasses Over" and "Row Row Row Your Boat" played in round form and the sweet, sweet "Home Sweet Home."

And then...a glitch in the proceedings. We had to restart "Maggie" because, as we all know, music sounds a lot better when we get the timing right. We finished with "Music Alone Shall Live" - a fitting anthem for our Recorder Group.

Pat Treleaven

## Singing for Fun

At the October meetings of Singing for Fun we have seen our three leaders Faith Hicks, Brian Greed and Margaret Merriman decide on their selection of songs for our forthcoming concerts in November and December. Our pianist Gwen Barnes has been ably assisting our leaders on the piano.

Our first concert will be at the November U3A Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 20 November 2019 at 10am in the main auditorium at the Seniors Centre in Fawckner Drive. Members of the choir are asked to bring a small plate if possible for morning tea which will follow our concert.

The second performance is scheduled for Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December at the Royal Freemasons Homes at 107 Thomas Street Benalla at 10am.

Our third concert will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 10.30am at Coinda which is in Kilfeera Road Benalla. This will be followed by a social lunch at the Benalla Golf Club for those interested.

Margaret Jenkins

## Stock and Land

### 40-year olives feature on local tree farm

For our October session on Tuesday October 1, we travelled to the 75 acre Specialty Trees tree farm operated by David and Jill Rush, 13km from Benalla on the Mansfield road.

David's father, a returned soldier from the Second World War, won the block in a soldier settler ballot, in the early 1950s. Originally about 300 acres, it fronts the Broken River and David and Jill took over from his parents in 1995.

Although in the tree production business for nearly 25 years, the Ruses about 18 months ago, sold the farm and business to Specialty Trees, Narre Warren. Its object is to grow advanced, environmentally sustainable, containerised landscape trees for local government, the landscaping industry and retailers.

At Benalla, highly fertile alluvial soil that once grew lucerne, is ideal for nurturing hundreds of thousands of trees. They range in size from tens of thousands of budded bare rooted twigs 100mm or so tall, currently worth a few dollars, to several dozen heavily lopped 35 to 40 year old olive trees in 100L contained root balls sold as works of art starting at \$8000 to \$10,000 each. The irrigated budded stems will grow to nearly 2m tall over summer on the rich soil.

Principal of Specialty Trees Hamish Mitchell was on hand with David to explain the intricacies of tree production to our dozen-strong group.

Hamish said most advanced trees die of over watering. But many die too from being planted too deeply. Where towards the lower part of any trunk, the trunk flares, that must indicate that the tree goes in no deeper, he said. And in the tree production business, with trees being transplanted maybe three times to bigger and bigger containers, the chances of misplanting are enormous.

Advanced trees, often bought by property developers, are seriously subject to fads, fashions and climate change, Hamish said. Regarding the latter, he said Brazilian jacarandas just did not grow in Melbourne a decade or so ago; now they are almost the tree of choice there



David Palmer

## Sustainability

We started our first session in October with reports from people who had attended 'School Strike 4 Climate' rallies in Shepparton and Wangaratta. The general feeling was that the rallies were worth attending.

We then spent some time discussing the "Greta Thunberg phenomenon" and watched a video of her address to the UN summit on climate change - which our Prime Minister did not attend!

We also watched the recent Foreign Correspondent program about three young women leaders of climate action in Germany, USA and Australia. These young women, teenagers or early 20's, were most impressive with what they had done to organise large climate movements in their home countries.

One of the articles discussed was by Tim Flannery, Climate Councillor and well known climate activist, who said that climate deniers are a threat to our children, and that the lack of climate action by our government leads him to believe that his 20 years of climate activism has been a colossal failure.

In the week leading up to our second session in October there had been lots of climate protests by the Extinction Rebellion groups causing quite a lot of disruption to people in our capital cities. There was much discussion about how annoying these protest were and if they would achieve their goal of more action on climate change.

This lead to discussion about how civil disobedience, or non-violent resistance, had resulted in significant achievements in the past such as the civil rights movement in the USA and Gandhi in India, and even our own 'anti-Vietnam War' marches.

One of the articles we read summed up the situation as follows. "Whatever your views on civil disobedience, the climate emergency would be far less serious if governments had taken action decades ago. Further inaction will only lead to more numerous and active social movements, driven by the same mixture of love and rage that provoked Extinction.

John Lloyd

## Tech Savvy Beginners - Be Connected

The highlight of October 2019 was the Get Online Week lunch held in the U3A room on Wednesday 16 October. About 50 U3A members and others attended and enjoyed the BBQ cooked by the Benalla Lions Club in the U3A entrance area. We were pleased that the numbers attending this BBQ were substantially up on

the first BBQ held in July, so obviously the sausages and hamburgers together with coleslaw and bread provided was enjoyed by all.

During the lunch we had vocal entertainment provided by David Palmer with Neville Gibb accompanying him on the piano.



Later we used the overhead projector to outline several aspects of what can be looked up on line. These included finding out about the NBN, any health aspects that interest us and managing money. We also had a discussion on the breadth of the Be Connected Program and a demonstration of two of the modules which showed the various buttons on a tablet and their uses and setting up PIN and fingerprint identification on our device.

Full sessions of Be Connected have continued during each Wednesday of October. This month we have looked at Online Hobbies such as Researching family history, exploring Google Earth and using on line journals or

Blogs. We have also navigated looking up the train timetable from Benalla to Melbourne as well as taking photos with our devices.

This series of Be Connected is finishing at the end of October. It has been pleasing that so many of the participants have come each week and we have seen their skills develop during the four months that we have run Be Connected. I would like to sincerely thank the Mentors who have come each week to help participants – without them the participants would not have made as much progress as they have. Thank you, Jenny Sawyer, Lin Ryan, Pat Treleaven, Dorothy Webber and Geraldine McCorkell.

A Summer Series of Be Connected is planned for Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 at 10am. Any U3A member is welcome to attend. We will be catering for both iPad and Android users.

Margaret Jenkins

## Tech Savvy Talks

We got down into the weeds with nanotechnology this month with a presentation to The Royal Society in the UK, by Professor of Nanoscience Neil Champness.

He explored the future of nanoscale machines and addressed the question of “Can we build a machine from molecules at the nanoscale”. Professor Champness research is highly cited, he being one of the top 100 most cited chemists 2000-2010 and 2015-2016. The presentation was fairly long so we started 9 minutes in. It was not a highly technical and included numerous very impressive graphics and video clips of simulations and actual molecular scale processes. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJW3KfjM2aw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJW3KfjM2aw)

After a coffee break we had a presentation of a session from a four day Exponential Medicine conference. The presenter was a futurist and catalyst in biological technologies and is a Distinguished Researcher with the Autodesk Inc Bio/Nano Programable Matter group. He is also a founder of the Pink Army Cooperative, a company which is aiming to make open source viral therapies for the treatment of cancer. Many people will recognize Autodesk as the software company that produced Autocad over 30 years ago which revolutionized drafting and design. It was surprising to find them so deeply involved in software involved with biology and nanotechnology. The graphics in this session were amazing, perhaps not surprising having been produced by a leading edge software company. Of particular interest was the approach of 3 D printing of a specially designed virus to treat cancer in a dog. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDQBd9cVZAc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDQBd9cVZAc)

Les Rodgers

## Wine Appreciation

On a perfect Spring day in late October, the U3A Wine Appreciation group (minus group organisers the Rogers, who were away) assembled at the wonderfully situated Gapsted Winery near Myrtleford. Our numbers were down, but winemaker Tony was happy to outline the 25-year history, workings and varietals of Gapsted Winery. The cool climate, long ripening period and high rainfall of the Alpine and King Valley Regions assist in the production of high quality, luscious whites and refined reds, which include some newer Italian varietals. We were happy to taste any on offer and perhaps buy samples. The view from the Cellar Door's expansive dining veranda, overlooking the vineyard across to the distant hills, was so picturesque, we were reluctant to leave. Lunch at the nearby Savoy Club in Myrtleford completed a sociable day for us all.



Next month, the U3A Christmas break-up replaces our normal Wine Appreciation outing. Our Christmas luncheon will be held at the Goorambat Railway Hotel on Wednesday November 27th. Lunch & Bus \$40 - Lunch only \$35. A form is included with this newsletter. For further information or to RSVP, contact Heather Rodgers 5762 4086.

Bev Thornell

## Program News

Planning is now well underway for 2020, with at least two new courses on the agenda, 'A Taste of Art' with the Broken River Painters and 'Demystifying Psychology' with Jane Rushworth. The new 'Coin Collecting' group have decided to begin this month – see their first report earlier in this newsletter for further details. E-Books has a new name 'Page Turners' and there are other tweaks. More details in the next newsletter!

Vacancies exist for 2020 for convenors of

- **Collectors:** Collectors has been running successfully at Benalla U3A for the past four years. Retiring convenor Judith Borthwick 5762 3442 is happy to be contacted by a passionate collector interested in running this group.
- **Revise your Shorthand as you Train your Brain:** We would like to offer a three session summer school pilot of this course currently being offered at U3A Melbourne. We are looking for a convenor for this group. If you are interested, please contact Heather Wallace 0418 353 244.
- **Line Dancing** - There's a possibility of U3A offering Line Dancing next year as Dawn Shaw is finishing her group at the end of the year. Dorothy is putting it out there to see if any of our members have the expertise and would be interested in Convening this group in 2020 for U3A. If you are interested or know someone who may be, please contact Dorothy - [president@u3abenalla.com](mailto:president@u3abenalla.com)

Do you have a skill or interest which could contribute to the life of U3A? Contact Program Coordinator Terry Case 0427 621 700.

## Member News

Margaret Jacob, a member of Chat n Chew and the Wine Appreciation group for a number of years, passed away recently. Dorothy fondly remembers Margaret as she regularly drove her and Stella to these activities. Margaret's Funeral Service is next Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at the Uniting Church. An invitation has been extended by the family for U3A members to attend.



Christmas is coming.....



## U3A BENALLA CHRISTMAS LUNCH/BREAKUP

Hosted by the U3A Wine Appreciation Group

**When:** Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Where:** Goorambat Railway Hotel

**Cost:** Meal and bus \$40.00 – own transport \$35.00

The bus will leave from the Benalla Bus Depot at 11.00 am sharp.

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**Name/s:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**By Bus:**                \$40 pp        \_\_\_\_\_        **Cheque:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cash:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Own Transport**        \$35 pp        \_\_\_\_\_        **Cheque:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cash:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form together with your payment - either:

- Post to U3A, PO Box 674, Benalla, 3672
- Leave at RedB4 bookshop (next to Hide's Bakery) in an envelope marked U3A Christmas luncheon
- Bring to U3A Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November

**Payment to be received by Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

**For further information: Heather Rodgers: 0357 624089**

# What's On

## Friday, 1 November

09:30 Sustainability  
14:00 Investment

## Saturday, 2 November

13:30 Card Games - '500'

## Monday, 4 November

09:30 Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Lifeball  
13:30 Games  
16:00 Meditation

## Wednesday, 6 November

09:30 Play Reading  
12:15 Coin Collecting  
10:00 Bushwalking - Easy Walks - Yarrawonga

## Thursday, 7 November

10:00 Singing for Fun  
13:00 Patchwork

## Friday, 8 November

10:00 Music Appreciation

## Monday, 11 November

09:30 Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Collectors  
10:00 Lifeball  
11:45 German - Intermediate  
14:00 Garden Team  
14:30 Creative Writing

## Tuesday, 12 November

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs  
14:00 Brain Games

## Wednesday, 13 November

09:00 Recorder - 'Learning New Notes'  
08:15 Bush Walking - Mid Week Walks - Nillahcootie  
10:00 Recorder - 'Full Group'  
11:00 Tech Savvy Talks  
13:30 Film and Literature – 'Downton Abbey'

## Thursday, 14 November

09:30 Birdwatching – Broken River natural features reserve  
10:00 Harmony Group  
13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

## Friday, 15 November

09:30 Sustainability  
13:00 Tech Savvy Projects - Community Projects

## Saturday, 16 November

13:30 Card Games - '500'

## Monday, 18 November

09:30 Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Lifeball  
14:00 Publishing Your Writing  
16:00 Meditation

## Tuesday, 19 November

10:00 History - After the Victorians

14:00 Exploring the Universe

## Wednesday, 20 November

10:00 Meet and Mingle - annual showcase of music and patchwork

## Thursday, 21 November

10:00 Singing for Fun  
13:00 Patchwork

## Friday, 22 November

10:00 Music Appreciation

## Monday, 25 November

09:30 Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Lifeball  
12:00 German - Intermediate  
14:00 As Time Goes By - 'Triggers'

## Tuesday, 26 November

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs

## Wednesday, 27 November

10:00 Recorder  
11:00 Christmas Luncheon -

## Thursday, 28 November

09:30 Patchwork  
09:30 Garden Appreciation - two Benalla gardens plus McCorkell's farm garden  
10:00 Member Services Group  
13:00 Tech Savvy Projects - Family History  
15:00 Tech Savvy Talks at the Northo

## Monday, 2 December

10:00 Lifeball  
10:00 Art Appreciation - 'Strange Garden'  
13:30 Games  
16:00 Meditation

## Tuesday, 3 December

10:00 E-Book Group  
10:00 Stock and Land  
14:00 Armchair Traveller - Norway - Margaret Jenkins  
14:00 Let's Talk Books  
14:00 Member Services Group

## Wednesday, 4 December

09:30 Play Reading  
10:00 Bushwalking - Easy Walks

## Thursday, 5 December

10:00 Singing for Fun - Concert at The Freemason's Homes  
13:00 Patchwork – Christmas Lunch 12.30pm

## Friday, 6 December

14:00 Investment