



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – April 2022

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

President's Report

2022 Annual President's Report



"My five years as President has seen in the first year the move from W4 to one room at the Seniors Community Building which has now become two rooms and an office.

The continued growth of Benalla U3A is a testament to the members and the wonderful people who step forward and offer their expertise to run a Program, and the many convenors who have been leading classes for many years.

Benalla's close contact with the U3A Network has seen us run many regional meetings over the past five years. We have been complimented on our ability to run successful and professional Regional meetings. These get-togethers help all U3A's in sharing ideas particularly types of activities on offer. We at Benalla are envied for our membership numbers and are often asked how we advertise for members.

The main source of our new members is our wonderful website. My thanks go to Bev Lee who has developed and run this informative website for the past eight years. Bev spends many hours on this and other U3A Benalla activities and she has done a wonderful job.

Currently our membership stands at 306 members. This includes 34 people have joined U3A Benalla for the first time this year. We also have 4 Life Memberships.

I would like to sincerely thank our wonderful Convenors who run U3A Benalla's 44 programs. The variety of programs we offer is incredible. From outdoor activities such as Bird watching, Garden Appreciation and Easy Walks, so social activities such as Meet and Mingle and Chat'n'chew, to programs such as Politics, Tech Savvy Programs for both Apple iPads and Android Tablets, Music Appreciation, Art Appreciation Recorder, Patchwork and Singing Groups. There are many more programs which I haven't mentioned, but all are valued and appreciated. Without our Convenors there would be no programs, so thank you to all Convenors for the time and effort they spend organising, helping and running each and every group.

At this point I would like to acknowledge the marvellous work by the Convenors of two Groups who retired at the end of 2021. Firstly, to John Lloyd who started and ran the Sustainability Group for 13 years. John's continued interest and extensive reading on environmental issues set the scene for each fortnightly session. He arrived at each class with evidence-based articles from reputable writers to photocopy, distribute and discuss with class members. During the Pandemic, John distributed these articles on-line to members before sessions, some of which he facilitated using 'Zoom'. John has retired because he and Freida are in the process of selling their home at Chesney Vale and moving to the Castlemaine/Bendigo district.

The second Group to have a retiring Convenor is the very popular Wine Appreciation Group. Keith and Heather Rogers together with the late Noel Meagher ran this group together since 2013. For the last three years Keith and Heather have run the Wine Appreciation Group by themselves. Their interest in the topic has seen them regularly doing a "pre-Wine Appreciation" tour to include not only the Winery that was about to be visited, but also the establishment chosen for the lunch to follow. Thank you for your enthusiasm and for all those memorable Wineries and lunch venues the Group has visited.

In this past year we are grateful to the Benalla Rural City Council for allocating us a second room. Our timetable is full for our first U3A room, and this second room is allowing smaller groups such as Family Research--Beginners and Russian Literature to have a slot on the timetable. The technology we have installed in this second room has been paid for by Grants we have accessed from Be Connected or the Good Things Foundation, which is supported by the Federal Government.

In 2021 we applied for a Benalla Rural City Grant for a projector to be installed in this main Auditorium. In our application we told the Council that it could also benefit the Senior Citizens who share this building with us. We received the Grant. Then Council officers found more money and said the BRCC would undertake the installation of the Projector project and be totally responsible for maintenance of the equipment. This happened six months ago, and due to COVID we are still waiting for the projector to be installed in this Auditorium.

In October 2021 we celebrated Get On-Line Week with a COVID safe lunch on the veranda outside this Auditorium. It was a delightful sunny day, and we discovered this new area of this building which is extremely suitable for gatherings of about 30 people.

In late February 2022 we held a Convenors afternoon which was well attended. The purpose of this meeting was to hear how Convenors were starting in 2022, and to share with Convenors our use of Drop Box for accessing Class lists and Email addresses of Course participants. This two-way conversation proved beneficial to both Convenors the Committee.

Finally, I would like to thank the U3A Benalla Committee which has supported me throughout my five years as President, especially in the last six months. Thank you to Wende Sturgess who is retiring from the Committee as she intends to travel more in Australia. Thank you everyone."

Dorothy Webber, President's Report, as presented by Margaret Jenkins, Vice President
U3A Benalla Annual General Meeting, March 16, 2022

VALE - Laurie Webber

Condolences are extended to our immediate past President, Dorothy Webber, following the recent passing of her husband Laurie after a long illness. Laurie was well known to members as he answered the phone, took messages and was a wonderful support to Dorothy during her Presidency of U3A Benalla.

Our thoughts are with Dorothy, her family and many friends during this sad time.

Legal Information Sessions – Are you interested in attending?

We are pleased to announce that John Barry, a senior lawyer until his retirement, will give two special lectures - *Powers of Attorney (Enduring and Medical)* on Friday 6 May and *Making a Will and Estate Planning* on Friday 20 May – at 2 pm in our U3A room.

If you are interested in attending either or both, please contact Margaret Jenkins on M 0424 454 313.

Group Reports

A Taste of Art

The numbers of new artists attending 'A Taste of Art' during March increased, with three men attending for the first time. Their principal interest was to start drawing simple objects such as gum nuts and leaves, vases and other shapes which produced some promising work. We hope to help them move on to using different mediums such as watercolour, pastel and acrylics in the next couple of months.

Those who began in February continue to improve in their chosen medium and we would hope to eventually encourage them to enter their paintings in Benalla Hospital and Bouwmeesters' Bakery.

On Easter Saturday 16th April from 10 to 4 pm there will be an exhibition at the Senior Citizens Club of art, greeting cards and other craft by the members of the Broken River Painters, as well as other exhibitors.

Carol Perry

Armchair History – Tudors

Remember we are now running our sessions from 2pm on 2nd and 4th Fridays, so see you on April 8th!

Terry Case

Armchair Traveller

The gathering on Tuesday March 1st saw and heard Brian Vial and Andrea Stevenson give a very colourful presentation of their 2010 Expedition Cruise to ten different coastal destinations in Papua New Guinea. Thanks to both Brian and Andi for this outstanding presentation.

On Tuesday April 5th we will hear again from Bill Paris on some of his European experiences. May 3rd: David Palmer – 'A stroll through Southern France'. June 7th: Neville Gibb – 'An overview of Berlin'.

Ray O'Shannessy



Art Appreciation



At our last Art appreciation meeting we listened to **Ivan Durrant** talk about a painting he has on display in the Gallery. Ivan is always an entertaining speaker and is always willing to explain his passion for Art. The painting in question is of two backpackers lying on a beach and entitled 'To Kill a Mockingbird'.

In question time Ivan was prevailed upon to make some comments about his reaction to his recent retrospective held at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Ivan has had a long and varied career in Art. He has had a long association with this region.

It is worth noting that the Gallery has a wonderful exhibition on at the moment in the Ledger Gallery. A large number of Gallery owned works have been brought out and put on display.

The Benalla Art Gallery is well worth a visit. Join us on Monday April 4th at 10 am for the 'First Mondays' artist talk by **Adrienne Doig**, which will close her stunning exhibition, [*It's all about me!*](#)

Neville Gibb

'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

It has been wonderful to return to class this year, with five new members joining returning students in sharing stories in class. February's topic, **'I Was There'**, elicited fascinating 'slices of life', including meeting the Queen in New Zealand as a young Girl Guide; hearing President Soekarno speak at the opening of a new university in Aceh, Indonesia in 1962; and being there when the Russell Street bombing occurred on March 27th 1986. Stories written for **'One Moment, This Year (2021)'** described the deep disappointment of continued absence from family during Covid and unforgettable moments of pure joy at eventually being together again.

'Tree Stories' proved to be a delightful topic in March, incorporating many captivating memories of childhood. Other **'Memories of Childhood'** were also shared, memories of a happy childhood in England and 'the big adventure' of migrating to Australia; also 'early 1940's' memories of train trips to wartime Melbourne and a father's departure from Spencer Street on the 'Spirit of Progress' before leaving for the war in Europe. We will not be meeting on Anzac Day but have extended our meeting time in late May to from 1 to 4 pm. Please bring two 500-word stories and a small plate of afternoon tea or some chocolates to share!

The topics? **'Community'** - "Write about a community you participated in, taking this opportunity to write about a slice of your life's journey which may be of interest to your family. It could be a community in which you felt a really 'good fit', a community which changed you, perhaps even a community you were glad to leave behind...." and **'Long Lost Friend'** – "Have you ever come across a long-lost friend years after first meeting them? Tell us about the time when you first knew them, how you lost touch and the major changes in your life since, how you met them again, and your reflections on doing so. Are you still in contact? Explain what has happened since you came across them again." (other 'long lost'?...eg. family member, item, pet...)".

The alternate topics are **'Anzac Day'** and **'A Friendship Tested'**.

The detailed list of topics and alternates for 2022 is always available on the 'As Time Goes By' webpage.

Bev Lee

Be Connected

We had two sessions in March. Again, we discussed the Internet and made sure all participants were connected to the U3A Internet by looking for the appropriate network and then entering the passcode. If already connected previously then we checked that devices were set at automatically connect.

To save time we added the Be Connected site to our Home Page as a direct link eliminating a Google search. The ensuing lessons were focused on 'Using Email'.

- What is email?
- Creating an email account.
- Sending an email.



Jenny Sawyer

Bird Watching

Report of March outing to Loombah Weir



Twelve people attended our first activity for 2022, on Thursday 10 March.

On a lovely autumn morning we drove along Upper Ryans Creek Rd, then parked at the closed entrance to Loombah Reservoir. Most of the group had not visited this area.

We birded along the walking tracks down the hill from the parking area, in a tall forest of Victorian Blue Gum and Narrow-leafed Peppermint, with a mixed wattle understorey.

We had great views of 3 Eastern Yellow Robins chasing one another, a flock of Red-browed Finches, several Grey Fantails, Brown Thornbills, Superb Fairywrens, and King Parrots and Crimson Rosellas. Later in the walk we found a few Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and White-naped Honeyeaters.

It was interesting to look up at the dam wall and watch Ryans Creek flowing below us in a deep and narrow gorge. We also saw the pipeline that carries drinking water to Benalla. We recorded 23 bird species. Here is the link to the eBird list

<https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S104908494>

Yellow-tufted Honeyeater. Photo Jim Burnell



April: Seven Creeks Track in Euroa

Our April outing will take place on Thursday 14th when we will visit Euroa for a morning walk along the Seven Creeks track. We will leave from the car park behind the Seniors Building at 9.30am. Please bring the usual – sturdy footwear, water, any food you need for the morning, and binoculars if you have them. The walk is about 3.5 km. If you would prefer to meet the group at Euroa, we will be parking in Foy St, which is the last street on the left before the bridge. There is a good parking area there, just opposite the Seven Creeks Hotel.

Kathy Costello

Brain Games

It was serious brainwork for our second session, with emphasis on memory and some cryptic homework. Some, who clearly need the work, forgot to attend!

Elspeth Maconachie

Bushwalking – Easy Walks

March Report: Seven Creeks Walk and Euroa Arboretum

With Bev leading, fifteen enthusiastic walkers explored the Seven Creeks track and enjoyed a picnic lunch, before finishing with a stroll around the Arboretum and an encounter with a tortoise. Altogether, we managed just under 8kms, deciding to omit Balmattum Hill due to the high temperature and humidity. It was a great start to our walking year--thank you, Bev!



Wednesday April 6th: Cremona Bridge and Yarck

We meet at 9am at the Seniors' carpark, Fawckner Drive, for this walk, which has the Sir John Monash designed Cremona Bridge as its destination, and an interesting local history. With a rest stop at Yarck, we go on to Cathkin station, walking from there to the bridge for morning tea, where Andi has arranged access to a picnic area on the Goulburn. Lunch will be at Yarck Recreation Reserve, with both the Giddy Goat Cafe and the bakery close by, or byo picnic. Total distance for the morning - approx 6.5km - with additional walks after lunch from the Reserve. Please confirm with Glen by April 4th on 04311201077 or gchess@hotmail.com. Remember to bring lunch if needed, snacks, a drink and comfortable shoes.

Wednesday May 4th Jamieson

Wende will be leading this walk exploring the Jamieson and Goulburn River environs at Jamieson. Walking approximately 8kms, lunch will be byo picnic, although the general store may have some takeaway. We will again be ready to leave the Seniors' carpark by 9am. Please confirm with Glen as above by May 2nd.

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

Glen Chessells, Julie McNeill

Chat n' Chew

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

Lorraine Knox

Coin Collectors

Our Coin Collectors group continues to grow with three new members joining us at the March meeting to take our active membership to eleven. A common theme among our new collectors is, "I have had a tin of coins in the cupboard for a long while and am not sure if any are valuable". If this is you, bring them along and the Coin Collectors will look at them and give you some advice.

Pat has a tin of coins in his cupboard that he is bringing along to our next meeting, but in the meantime will "noodle" its contents with added interest.

Bill circulated at our meeting a proof 2014 American quarter dollar. He also passed around uncirculated \$200 gold 1985 and 1986 Perth Mint collectable coins.

Peter has a number of coins in jars and like Pat is noodling to bring along some specimens to our next meeting.

Rupe presented a number of coins in plastic folders in an old coin album. Coins were generally pre-decimal and from many overseas countries including England and Europe. The plastic transparent coin holders were purchased from a news agency in Wangaratta.

Jill had several coins of unknown origin, including a coin with foreign letters and the word Palestine 1927 on one face and a hollow centre. A suggestion was made that a google search was a valuable tool that may assist to identify and value a coin of interest.

Asha presented a State Savings Bank token displaying an effigy of Captain Cook dated 1970. It was noted tokens are as collectable as coins with many different varieties in existence and popular in times past.

Doug circulated to the group his carded collection of coloured 50 cent pieces depicting early model GM Holden cars including the FX, FC and Kingswood models. These coins are still available for purchase from the Ram.

David spoke to and circulated a number of coins including a full album set of coloured \$2 coins 1988 – 2021 and a number of carded 50 cent gold and silver collectors' coins.

David and Doug have a number of coin resource books that are offered on loan to the group to help members assess their collections and generally improve their collector knowledge. These will be brought to the next meeting for loan.

Members were also advised the Benalla Post Office have Ram coins on display for sale and will order coins in on request, from their Ram catalogue.

Doug Smith

Collectors

The group met on Monday, 7th March when the theme for the day was something very treasured and/or very old. An eclectic assortment of treasures was discussed including a hand-woven tartan scarf made at school; an egg slicer and apple corer. There was a china elephant with a bowl attached to its back and dolls brought out from the UK when the family migrated to Australia.

Amongst the war memorabilia was a brass bell brought back from Egypt; some war medals from the UK, an ID tag and the band off a sailor's hat from the HM Minesweeper.

Jewellery included a beautiful chain and locket, a fob watch and a very old Rolex watch in its original box. There were two sweet little china bowls in a basket weave design.

The group next meets on Monday, 4th April at 10.00am when the theme will be key rings and magnets - there is sure to be plenty of those around. All are welcome to attend this fun group.

Janet Gourley for Dorothy Webber.



Community Singing

At the March meeting of Community Singing Brian Greed chose Sammy's Song Book No 2 for the first session. Brian accompanied this session on the organ which is always a great sound.

For the second session Brian had a new Song Book which he had found on a boat cruise in the South Island of New Zealand. For this session Brian accompanied us on the piano.

It was interesting that on our way out of the Hub a visitor to Cooinda complimented Brian on the music which had come from the Hub that morning. He told Brian that the music had been enjoyed by other residents of Cooinda, and not just those attending Community Singing.

The next Community Singing will be on Thursday 28th April at 10am at the Hub.

Margaret Jenkins

Creative Writing

A great set of stories again this month. We had three prompts to choose from:

- **She stood on the balcony**
- **The reflections on the still water of the lake, did not reveal what lay beneath**
- **The hotel was deserted. Salt and pepper shakers sat on the dust covered tables.**

We started with a quick challenge identifying collective nouns for a range of animals. Some were well known, such as a **swarm** of bees. Others were less familiar – a **stand** of flamingos. We finished the exercise with sharing some ideas for a collective noun for a group of caravans. Some ideas were more creative than others – nuisance, lumbering, blockage, chaos – but also ideas such as caravan (of caravans) and convoy.

We talked about the concept of “white space” – creating space between paragraphs – and length of sentences – not too long and varying the length. Without these practices a story can be very hard to read.

Stories ranged from descriptive to whimsical. Feedback was always positive, even when it was providing ideas for improvement, such as overuse of the same word in a paragraph or adding an ending that was not necessary. Overall, the stories were interesting, varied and appreciated.

The topics for April are:

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

I am eager to see what the new topics bring for our next class on 11 April. Happy writing everyone!

Joy Shirley

Exercises for Fun

As we age, we need to exercise to stay fit and strong. It is very important to get some kind of exercise daily. Our exercises to music are ideal for Seniors, and encourage us to get motivated, to increase our fitness and strength. Remember, any exercise is better than no exercise. Take care, have fun.

Helen Jeffree

Exploring the Universe

A Journey back to the Evolution of Stars and Planets and more.

After our first session we were asked about the basics of astronomy and cosmology, so in March we stepped back in time for our newer explorers.

Our Journey started about 13.8 billion years ago with the evolution of the early Universe. In the so-called dark ages before there was light, small dense clouds that contained the first elements, hydrogen and helium, collapsed under their own gravity, becoming hot enough to trigger nuclear fusion reactions. This led to the formation of the first stars and galaxies. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VP2zzzA4KRU>

We studied the birth of stars from the dense molecular clouds of gas and dust. Viewed film from radio telescopes that have penetrated the clouds of dust to capture brilliant images of the youngest stars. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH3IPcegi0A>

Planets form in the dust rings around a young star from the leftovers of dust and gas. With less mass, weaker gravity and energy, they don't have elements for nuclear fusion. A brilliant film of planet evolution. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-StcUdmRB0>

Stars like to hang out with each other. Scientists think the first galaxies formed around one million years after the start of the Universe. They were very immature, and gravity drew them together. With merges and collisions and more star formation they eventually became the beautiful galaxies we see today.

We finished the afternoon touching briefly on the electromagnetic spectrum. To understand images taken by the large telescopes, we must first understand the nature of light and colour. Our human eyes perceive only visible light in combinations of red, green and blue. We can't see the information from infrared, ultraviolet, or radio telescopes. It's accessible to technology so in this case the colours depicted of spectral elements are presented in representative colours that we can understand.

References: European Space Agency. NASA, European Southern Observatory.

Bev Morton

Family Research

New members contributed to 'Pains and Gains, Tips and Tricks' this month, with David describing finding out more about a Great Uncle who was a saddler in Wangaratta. It is believed that when the Kelly gang was captured, they had some of his Great Uncle's saddles, however he had not sold them any!

Asha described finding details of her grandmother; while Elly described a family history full of passion and pain, intriguing us all. Her gain – finding a lot of documents related to her mother, her pain, continuing mystery surrounding her father.

Graeme shared intriguing details of a Great Grandfather who fought in many theatres of war. He is buried in a lone grave which is now on Aboriginal designated land. His GGF has a musket ball still in his body which could be of historic significance. Graeme is not sure what to do next, however will contact local Aboriginal elders to see what can be done. Graeme also shared symbols he is using to assist him to track and follow up people and events in the family records he is creating.

Returning member Jane's role as the Secretary of the Benalla Family Research Group is proving to be a gain for the class. Jane shared news of Benalla History Week events from the 26 – 29 April (keep an eye on the website for details) and news of a free Zoom webinar 'Discovering Trove'.

(For 'pains and gains' shared by continuing members, please read the full report on [our web page!](#))

Our Family Story topic for sharing after the coffee break was '[Hunch](#)'. Following a hunch to try a different variation of a person's name – 'Jas' instead of 'James'; 'Annabella' instead of 'Annie'; '...1st Duke of Kingston upon Hull' instead of 'General Hull' – resolved what had been frustrating problems for three class members. Following a hunch based on our session on DNA last year by Jim Burnell proved worthwhile, as did pursuing a hunch gleaned from reading an article about German citizens interned in Australia during WWI. Inserting an advertisement in The Belfast Telegraph newspaper proved another successful hunch, unearthing Irish relatives and leading to treasured outcomes. Finally, a hunch related to a mystery surrounding the paternity of a family member developed after finding a very small newspaper report of a 1906 trial. This named a possible candidate whose history has proven easy to find. Next step—the trial transcript!

Our April 28th session has been cancelled to provide members with the opportunity to attend Benalla Family Research Group's Australian Heritage Festival workshops that week.

April's topic, '**They were there when....**' "Did someone in your family tree experience a significant news, historical or cultural event first-hand? Share your understanding of what may have been their experience" will be shared along with May's topic '**Obituary**' at our May meeting

Bev Lee, Barry McDonald, Wendy Sturgess

Family Research – Beginners

'Family Research – Beginners' is quite a thrilling course to convene. It's full of discoveries and stories about heroes and villains, secrets, mysteries and more! I sometimes think we should be filming episodes of 'Who Do You Think You Are' for our class members, with of course, a similar budget for trips overseas and employment of local genealogists to assist them with their search!

The small classroom's new Smart TV/PC technology is proving a great asset to our class, with the large screen easy to view when making and discussing new discoveries and learning new skills on ancestry.com, Trove and Scotland's People.

Our goal of providing three one to one sessions for each class member is underway, though a few members are still to commence these. Thanks go to Judy Barry, Barry O'Connor and Wendy Sturgess for assisting me in mentoring our beginners this month.

Bev Lee

Film Discussion Group

Our films for discussion this month were ***Belfast*** and ***King Richard***

All the class had seen ***Belfast***. It was based on the troubles in Belfast at the end of 1969. Filmed predominantly in B&W, it fitted the era well. It did show some of the violence, but this was not in your face and was necessary to bring out what was happening at the time. Performances were excellent. Themes brought out were the living conditions, the importance of family, difficulties around migration and that religious differences did not matter if the people were caring and good.

Everyone found it a film worth seeing, rating mainly around 4/5 to - 4.5/5, although there was one 5/5.

A few people had seen ***King Richard***. It is the story of how Richard Williams coached Serena and Venus to bring them to top ranked tennis players. We were given a new picture of Richard Williams. Media have over the years made him out to be an ogre when it came to their training (he might not have always been a very pleasant person outside the era covered). The film showed a different side. He was certainly single minded about their coaching, but also wanted the girls to have a childhood and education. As a result, he did not allow them to join the junior tennis circuit as young as some other tennis players. For example, he saw how Jennifer Capriati struggled after her initial entry into professional tennis and he did not want this for his daughters. Performances were good.

Generally, it was well received, with a rating of 3/5.

We also briefly discussed ***Spencer***. It covered just three days at Sandringham as the marriage between Prince Charles and Diana finally broke. It was not sympathetic towards Diana, focussing more on her mental and physical problems. The character of Diana seemed to be overplayed, with some of her mannerisms too repetitive. The only redeeming feature was the comparison between Diana and Anne Boleyn when her marriage with Henry VIII came to an end.

We are again looking at two films for our April class. These are ***Marry Me***, a light romantic comedy, and ***Death on the Nile*** is a new version of the Agatha Christie book starring Kenneth Branagh as Poirot. Class members can watch either of both the films for discussion on 13 April.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation

What a wonderful day we had on 24th March. The weather was beautiful for our visit to **Shepparton's Botanical Gardens**, which feature Australian Native plants set amongst themed Gardens and bushland. We then went on to **Billabong Gardens** and the **Ruby Saltbush Café**, a Social Enterprise supported employees who help grow plants. Anthony Putt welcomed us, then gave a very interesting talk on the Complex.



On April 28th we will meet at U3A car park at 9.30am to travel to Beechworth, where we will join the **Beechworth U3A Group** at **The George Kerferd Cafe** for morning tea (own cost). After morning tea, we will drive or walk through the grounds-- hopefully the trees will be in colour! We'll then head back into town to visit **Beechworth's Community Garden**. Lunch will be at the **Hibernian Hotel**, again at own cost. I will need to know if you are attending. Please ring or text me at 0438 627 010 or email gwenturner243@gmail.com.

Gwen Turner

Garden Team



Rupe had obviously been working hard but left the group with a bit of weeding just to keep us in practice.

On April 11th we'll be in Vicki's new garden at 10 Senator Drive.

In May we have 2nd and 5th Mondays, so think if you're ready to host one!

Elspeth Maconachie

German – Advanced

The two groups have now combined and in the next months there will be only one meeting weekly on Tuesday. I notice good progress in all participants and the amount of work so far can be inspected on the U3A Weebly website – follow the link to [German – Advanced](#) then click on [Lessons](#).

Horst Gunther

German - Beginners

The content for the proposed 9-week course for Beginner German was covered in just 8 weeks. Over 7 weeks the essentials of most aspects of grammar and vocabulary were presented in English.

The eighth session was mostly presented in German. Participants sang 3 songs in German, namely the German National Anthem, Muss i denn and The Happy Wanderer. In addition, a short story in German was read, testing comprehension skills. Each member participated in a role play in various daily situations, such as asking directions, ordering food and beverages at a restaurant and visiting the doctor.

Horst joined in delivering the last session. Gratifyingly, all 8 participants elected to continue to the main group. It was a solid effort by all and came together, as hoped, by the end.



Pauline Bailey

Investment

At the March meeting of Investment, we looked at the Reporting Season in February which had just been completed. Whilst the reporting season had been strong, the shares overall for February showed a slight decrease, but nowhere near as bad as in January.

We looked at an article by Jun Bei Liu about Six Stocks which were on his radar following the strong reporting season, and then compared those stocks to six blue chip stocks which had also reported.

Due to the choppiness of the market, we then looked at a couple of gold stocks and compared these to two gold-based ETFs which are also available on the market.

After the break John Hanlon led the Group in an interesting discussion about Managed Funds. In these uncertain times overseas with the conflict in Ukraine, these Managed Funds, and also Mortgage Funds, can be a more reliable alternative to the share market. Thank you, John for your insight into managed funds.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Monday 4th. April at 1.30pm in our U3A room.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books



My thanks to Lorraine and Lyn for filling in for me on March 7th.

Noelle read her usual interesting books *Lunch in Paris* by Elizabeth Bard, *Rock Blaster* by Henning Mankell, and *Balzac And The Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie all particularly enjoyable and recommended. Joan read a *Series of Ernest Hemingway Stories*, old but good and Heather enjoyed *All Creatures Great and Small*. Rae was interested in *Mystery Stories and Escapism* and *Scottish Mysteries* by Ian Rankin. Faye read *The Floating Brothel* by Sian Rees, which told of the terrible conditions endured by the female convicts on the sailing ships with the Australian Fleet. *Birds of a Feather* by Tricia Stringer was enjoyed by Shirley and Lorraine chose these two from her stack, *Unlucky 13* by James Patterson and *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less* by Geoffrey Archer. Claire enjoyed a biography *Hepburn* by Barry Thomas and highly recommended *Desert Flower* by Waris Dirie. Corrie read *The Chloroformist* by Christine Ball and also enjoyed *The Burning Room* by Michael Connelly. Anne thoroughly enjoyed the biography of *Lisa Wilkinson*, whilst Dianne recommended *Three Sisters* by Heather Morris. Margaret was busy reading two books by J.H. Fletcher, *The Governors House* and *Dust of the Land*. Heather also enjoyed *The Dressmaker* by Rosalie Ham, most of the group saw the film made from the book. Lynn read *Banjo* by Grantlee Kieza, also appropriately at this time *A Queen For All Seasons* by Joanne Lumley. Moira read a Press cutting book review of *Dressed by Iris* by Maryanne O'Conner. As usual a varied and interesting reading month. See you all on Monday 4th April.

Geraldine McCorkell

Lifeball

It has been great to see our numbers staying steady, although we're always happy to welcome new faces- those half court games can be intense!

Lifeball is played weekly at 10am at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre and is a great game for people looking for a team sport. A walking pace ballgame, it's a safe and interesting way to maintain fitness.

To keep track of each week's numbers, players are asked to contact Marlene on 0407240943 if they will be away.

Julie McNeill

Meditation

Whilst Caroline is away, Heather Wallace has been guiding the Meditation group.

We have broken the hourly session into a couple of areas.

Firstly, using Mindfulness to fully experience the present moment while noticing (without judgement) our thoughts and feelings.

We then have a short exercise session to stretch our muscles followed by a session of Meditation which allows the body and mind to relax.

We take our mind to the mountains, or to the sea or into a forest, followed by a relaxation session with a full body scan.

At the end of the session all who attend leave feeling relaxed and more aware of their presence and wellbeing. Meditation will not be held on Easter Monday, 18th April 2022.

Heather Wallace

Meet and Mingle

After officiating at the Annual General meeting of U3A, Rosie Koop, executive officer of *The Tomorrow Today Foundation*, spoke at Meet and Mingle about the achievements of the organisation in the last dozen or so years in lifting educational standards in the city. She said in 2007, a report called *Dropping off the Edge* came out which identified Benalla people, young people in particular, as being highly disadvantaged. It said the one thing which could break this disadvantage was education. In 2010 Tomorrow Today decided to do something about this. Ms Koop described their focus on Early Childhood programs such as the PEEP program, the improved outcomes which have been statistically as well as anecdotally evident resulting from this work and the programs introduced to improve access of young people to work experience. She said that in a 2017 survey, only a bit more than 30 per cent of Benalla students were having work experience. "But then over the next two years, we boosted that [workplace experience involvement] to 90 per cent". Ms Koop said Tomorrow Today is now supported by a highly productive partnership of 124 local partners. "They run from all schools to recruitment companies, Benalla Health, employers, and Benalla Council".



John Weinert from *Road Safe North East* will be the guest speaker at the April Meet and Mingle which will be held on Wednesday 20 April 2022 at 10am in our U3A room.

John, who formerly worked for Vic Roads, will do a Power Point presentation aimed at the older driver. This Safe Driver Presentation will include new road rules which have come into law recently and may not have been adequately publicised. John will incorporate parts of his Mobility Devices Program into his talk.

U3A members will have the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the presentation. It is a great way to keep up to date with the latest road rules. We hope to see many members come along

David Palmer and Margaret Jenkins

Music Appreciation

A short month (only the one session) saw us begin with the longest orchestral work in the classical repertoire – Brahms Piano Concerto No.2. Those of our number familiar with the film "Amadeus" would have recognised melodies in Mozart's 25th Symphony while a trumpet concerto by Haydn written when the trumpet was still in its development rounded out the session.

Recordings used and session notes can be accessed on the [Music Appreciation](#) page of our website.

Bill Squire

Page Turners

March - What Alice Forgot

Liane Moriarty is a popular author of light fiction, so this book is a good holiday read over Easter.

40year old Alice suffers memory loss after an accident at the gym. When she awakes in hospital, she imagines she is 29 again, in love with her husband, great friends with her sister and pals with her best friend. Then why are they all cold-shouldering her and her husband divorcing her?

Her sister quickly fills her in on the cold, resentful and unhelpful person she became. No-one likes her and Alice has a lot of work to do to repair the relationships and become more like her younger self.

April 5: **The Promise** – Damon Galgut (2021 Booker winner)

Meg Dillon

Patchwork



Another happy day was spent patching, piecing, quilting and chatting at our 'fifth Thursday' all day workshop on Thursday 31st March. Our thoughts are with our Convenor, Dorothy, at this very sad time.

Patchwork Group Members, All Day Workshop, March

Play Reading

Well, it was a first! There was almost a full complement of attendees, including newcomers, all keen to enjoy our latest selection, when the news was announced. The plays from the Victorian Drama League, always so reliable, had not arrived.

We compromised! We made the most of the opportunity to enjoy each other's company and discuss plays and shows that we had seen, and in new member Brian's case, had performed in. Information was provided of upcoming performances in the area and the possibility of members attending live shows in the future.

We are now looking forward to reading the errant play from last month, "*Death by Chocolate*", at our next session on Wednesday 6th April, 9.30 am – 12 noon. What a way to go!

Jenny McKenna

Politics and Current Affairs

The pace is picking up towards polling day with some comment on the South Australian result. We also noted independent and female candidates and pondered what influence Clive Palmer may have. We also considered medical inequities in rheumatic heart disease outcomes. Of course, Ukraine took our attention with NATO's anxiety to avoid further escalation.

Terry Case

Recorder Group

What a joy it has been to be back playing together again! Hopefully, this year we will be able to meet much more regularly.

Music is so good for our entire being. No wonder we have been involved in music-making since prehistoric times.

Many thanks to Andi for putting down her recorder to take some photos.

Janet Douglas



Russian Literature

The Cherry Orchard, Anton Chekhov

We watched a DVD of the play in English directed by Mihalios Kakogiannis in the 1980s. This is available on YouTube for anyone who wants to watch an excellent version.

A penniless aristocrat returns to her estate [the Cherry Orchard] after spending several years in Paris with her lover. Lopakhin, a former serf but now a rich businessman, suggests a scheme to her that will save her from selling the estate. She and her lazy brother reject this idea as unthinkable and hope that something will happen to save them. It doesn't and Lopakhin buys the estate at auction intending to subdivide it for small holiday houses. A former tutor, now a revolutionary; an old valet who refused to accept his freedom when serfs were emancipated in the 1860s; a drunken doctor and a daughter who is longing to leave and

experience life elsewhere, are all part of the rich company of characters in the play that inhabit this changing society in the early 1900s.

April 13th: ***The Mother***, Maxim Gorky (1906)

Meg Dillon

Saturday Cards – 500

Saturday cards is an opportunity for members to test their memories and skills. It is not a game where we play for 'sheep stations', but a time to have a laugh whilst enjoying the company of others. We welcome members who wish to be part of this group, whether you are a beginner wishing to learn, someone who has had lots of experience or someone who hasn't played for years and want to sharpen your skills. Saturday cards are held on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month, 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

Heather Wallace

Singing for Fun

In March we welcomed back our pianist Gwen Barnes who had been unavailable during February. Everyone was pleased to see Gwen, and we enjoyed her accompaniment to many songs in our main three books.

Our three leaders Brian Greed, Margaret Merriman and Kieran Smith did a great job selecting suitable songs and leading the group. We were impressed that Margaret could manage with her broken wrist.

In April we are going to try having three Singing for Fun sessions on the first three Thursdays of April, and no Harmony session. In a group such as ours, members are often not available due to health considerations, and this year we seem to have lost quite a few altos. This is why we are having a trial of no Harmony session during April.

We are pleased to announce that Carmyl Winkler has agreed to lend a hand as a Leader in April. Carmyl joined our group last year after moving to Benalla from Tallangatta and has had experience with a singing group in Tallangatta. We look forward to hearing what songs Carmyl selects.

The next Singing for Fun session will be on Thursday 7th April at 10am at the Hub in Cooina.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

Stud grows 100-fold in 50 years

Our guest speaker for March was Tim Finger from the 1200-acre Riga Angus Stud on the Midland Highway and the Broken River, about 10km north west of Mansfield.

Tim told us his grandfather and grandmother, George and Irika Kakis, established the stud with three pedigreed females, at Orana Park, Healesville in 1972. Those three females came from the Swansea Stud at Swanpool.

As numbers grew, they moved the stud initially to Tolmie and then in 1995 to its current location.

Today farm manager 27-year old Tim, his father Ian Finger and Irika's daughter Vera Finger, his mother, run about 300 stud females on Nillahcootie Park. Tim's sister Kate works for the Birchip Cropping Group in the Mallee and is a consultant to the farm operation.

Muscling, marbling, yield and other important characteristics determining meat eating quality, are continually being refined within this female base, Tim said.

Riga concentrates on selling bulls as yearlings – their next sale is on the property on April 13 – and one previous customer, recorded 100 pregnancies from one such Riga sire, in one year. With such activity, it took him a while to grow out though, the customer said!

At our next Stock and Land on Tuesday 5th April at 10 am our guest will be Benalla man Ian Gill, who for many years produced and marketed super fine wool from his shedded sheep. As a result he established rock solid and highly lucrative contacts, largely with Italian wool spinners and elite fabric manufacturers - Ermenegildo Zegna for example. To show and feel, Ian will have samples of the wool his sheep produced as well.

David Palmer



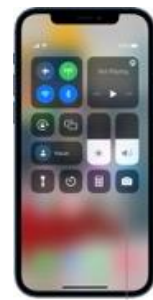
Tech Savvy Beginners – Apple

Once we got everyone connected to the U3A wi-fi we introduced ourselves and our devices.

We then watched two YouTube sites introducing iPads showing how to set up and how to customise your Home Screen.

My favourite tip was the diagonal swipe down from the top right corner. You can adjust your volume and your screen brightness.

We also looked at Settings and adjusted the display font and app layout.



Jenny Sawyer

Tech Savvy Beginners – Android



We had a productive month in March! We covered -

- How to Hot Spot using your mobile phone to connect to your tablet.
- Housekeeping/Maintenance.
- Battery performance & optimising power usage.

We also -

- watched a Be Connected video on passwords and security.
- emailed between each other for some good revision.
- discussed setting up Internet Banking - the pros & cons.

Robyn Lukey

Tech Talks

At our last Tech Talks we were fortunate enough to listen to two separate lectures.

Les Rodgers brought us up to date on the development of [Fusion Reactor Technology](#). Fusion Technology applied to the production of electricity is slowly moving from the Theoretical to the Practical and is now a problem for the Engineering Profession which needs to build the Fusion Machines. A surprising number of Fusion Machines already exist, not all of them in states advanced enough to produce practical amounts of electricity. However new machines are being built and hopefully will come on-line in our lifetime.

We also listened to a lecture by Ian Maver on the James Webb Deep Space Telescope. This telescope was only launched in late December but is now in a position to start operating. Literally, it is parked well off shore so to speak - way out in space and held rigidly in place by the gravitational forces of three bodies - the sun, the moon and earth. Such is the nature of physics it will not require any external source of energy to hold it in place. It will sit facing away from the earth and will look deep into the infra-red spectrum in space.

Neville Gibb

Wine Appreciation

On Wednesday 23 March, 19 of our members arrived at the family run Politini Winery in the Upper King Valley Cheshunt and were greeted by Lidia Politini.

We were seated in a lovely sunny courtyard looking out onto gardens and a tree studded green lawn.



We commenced our tasting with their Prosecco, which is slightly drier than the average, and progressed through seven other varieties of whites and reds, all from Sicilian grapes.

We enjoyed hearing about the history of Lidia's family, how they arrived as migrants and have built the winery into its current success. There are plans afoot for a new cellar door.

Next month's outing is to La Cantina Winery at 54 Honeys Lane, King Valley then onto the King River Café at 1143 Snow Rd, Oxley. Meeting behind Aldi's at 10.00 a.m.

RSVPs by Sunday 24th April to phone/text 0428 696 408 or email nicnakmac90@gmail.com. Until then, stay safe and enjoy yourselves.

Nicole McFarlane

Program News

'Meet and Mingle' in May - Ambulance Victoria

At the recent Convenors Meeting held in February 2022 there was a question concerning use of the Defibrillator which is stored in the main Auditorium of the Benalla Senior's Centre.

Following this question, we are pleased to announce that we have invited Ambulance Victoria to give us some information about use of the Defibrillator at Meet and Mingle on Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 10am in the U3A meeting room.

In the meantime, we have been sent the following information from Ambulance Victoria called [Call Push Shock FAQ](#) which we are adding to our website with their permission. The information is available to our Convenors and other U3A Members if required.

Photo Gallery – Annual General Meeting and 'Meet and Mingle' on March 16th



What's On

Friday, 1 April

09:30 Sustainability

Monday, 4 April

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Collectors 'Key Rings and Magnets'

10:00 Lifeball

10:00 Art Appreciation - Adrienne Doig 'It's All About Me'

12:00 Meditation

13:30 Investment

14:00 Let's Talk Books

Tuesday, 5 April

10:00 Page Turners – 'The Promise' Damon Galgut

10:00 Stock and Land—Ian Gill 'Super Fine Wool'

12:15 German - Advanced

14:00 Armchair Traveller - Bill Parris

Wednesday, 6 April

09:00 Easy Walks - Cremona Bridge and Yarck

09:30 Play Reading – 'Death by Chocolate'

13:30 'A Taste of Art'

14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 7 April

10:00 Singing for Fun

10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android

13:00 Family Research - Beginners

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 8 April

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Armchair History

Saturday, 9 April

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 11 April

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Lifeball

14:00 Creative Writing

14:00 Garden Team – 'Vicki's new garden'

Tuesday, 12 April

10:00 Politics and Current Affairs

12:15 German - Advanced

14:00 Tech Talks

Wednesday, 13 April

10:00 Recorder Group

10:00 Russian Literature 'The Mother' Gorky

14:00 Be Connected

14:00 Film Discussion Group 'Marry Me'/'Death on the Nile'

Thursday, 14 April

09:30 Birdwatching – Seven Creeks Track, Euroa

10:00 Singing for Fun

10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android

13:00 Family Research - Beginners

13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 15 April

Good Friday

Monday, 18 April

Easter Monday

13:30 Coin Collectors – To Be Confirmed

Tuesday, 19 April

10:00 The News - Fact or Fiction

12:15 German – Advanced

14:00 Exploring the Universe

Wednesday, 20 April

10:00 Meet and Mingle - Road Safe North East

13:30 'A Taste of Art'

14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Apple

Thursday, 21 April

10:00 Singing for Fun

10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners - Android

13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 22 April

10:00 Music Appreciation

14:00 Armchair History

Saturday, 23 April

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 25 April

ANZAC Day

09:30 Exercises for Fun – To Be Advised

10:00 Lifeball – To Be Advised

17:00 Newsletter reports due today

Tuesday, 26 April

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs

12:15 German - Advanced

14:00 Brain Games

Wednesday, 27 April

10:00 Wine Appreciation – La Cantina Winery, King Valley/King Valley Café, Oxley

10:00 Recorder Group

Thursday, 28 April

09:30 Garden Appreciation – George Kerferd Café, Beechworth (with U3A Beechworth group)/Hibernian Hotel/Community garden

10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub

13:00 Family Research – BFRG Festival Option

Monday, 2 May

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Collectors

10:00 Lifeball

10:00 Art Appreciation

12:00 Meditation

13:30 Investment

14:00 Let's Talk Books

Tuesday, 3 May

10:00 Page Turners

10:00 Stock and Land

12:15 German - Advanced

14:00 Armchair Traveller - David Palmer – 'A Stroll through Southern France'

Wednesday, 4 May

09:30 Easy Walks – 'Jamieson'

09:30 Play Reading

13:30 'A Taste of Art'

14:00 Be Connected