



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – March 2021

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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

President's Report

Wonderful news - we are back running our full program of classes and activities.

The alterations to the Seniors Community Building have been completed and we started classes there on February 22nd.

There is a QR Code scanner and sign in sheet to check in to the building – you will still need to tick off your name on the Roll.

Hand Sanitiser to be used and COVID rules to be followed.

Coffee and Tea will be available, however the cups from the kitchen are not to be used. **Please remember to bring your own cup.**

Classes at the Cooina Hub started in the first week of February and were running well, with a lot of smiling faces, when I dropped in.

Exercises for Fun will continue to be held at the Town Hall until the end of March.

We became aware of demand for a course for beginning Android users on our enrolment days and are pleased to announce that Robyn Lukey has responded to our request to take a group. The course **'Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)'** begins on **Wednesday 17 March from 12.15 to 1.45 in the U3A Meeting Room.** Please telephone Robyn on 0403 164 931 or email robynluky51@gmail.com if you would like to attend.

A reminder of our AGM on Wednesday March 17th at 10am. We have places on the Committee to fill. I hope you may consider putting yourself forward to assist with the running of U3A Benalla and District. A nomination form is attached to this newsletter.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM,

Dorothy Webber, President

Group Reports

A different View of German History

At our last meeting I attempted to describe German Culture. German Culture existed long before the German State did and was admired and even held in awe by all other European people. It influenced most societies which considered themselves civilised.

But who was German? Who came first, Bach or Beethoven? Who considered themselves German? Where did Germany start or Germany end? Which countries made up Germany?

We listened to music that is considered German and read German Poetry that has been put to music.

At our next meeting we will concentrate on three German Personalities – Luther, Metternich and Bismark.

Neville Gibb

A Taste of Art

'A Taste of Art' sessions will commence on Wednesday 10 March at 1.30pm in our studio, Hut 11 at the airport. We look forward to welcoming the twelve U3A members coming to try some drawing and painting. Over the next few sessions from March to June we hope to reward those keen to improve their knowledge and enjoyment of this interesting hobby.

Carol Perry

Armchair History – Tudors

Two weeks ago we were just setting up as a number of phones rang announcing another shut down. I was dismayed! Two weeks later we will have our second class and catch up to where we were in March 2020 when we were forced to close. We will continue our investigation of Tudor rulers and how England and Scotland changed in this period.

Welcome to new members, and to Joyce, best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Terry Case

Armchair Traveller

The first session was held on Tuesday 2nd March at 2pm in the U3A Meeting Room in the Seniors Building. Brian Greed showed videos on some of his past overseas travels. A big welcome was extended to all, especially the new members. Looking ahead to early April, Wendy Sturgess will be presenting on her train travels overseas.

Ray O'Shannessy

'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

How wonderful to be able to meet in the U3A meeting room again to share our writing, to welcome returning and new class members and to thank those who contributed to the wonderful collections of stories published on the website over the long 2020 Covid break.

After an introduction to the course and the nature of memoirs as 'slices from life', stories were shared on the first of our summer break topics, ['One Moment, This Year' \(1920\)](#). These beautiful stories largely drew on lived experiences during the Pandemic. Stories shared for the second topic ['A love letter to travel'](#) took us away to 'Trim on the banks of the Boyne', Ireland; Hans Heyesen's home 'The Cedars' at Hahndorf; to Barcelona; Yosemite National Park; Scotland; Morang homestead in central New South Wales; and Annamult in County Kilkenny, Ireland. These stories can be found, with Claire's early submission 'Bali' and some soon to be added 'love letters' to the Camino de Compostelo in Spain; and also Mexico, on the website.

This year two 500 word topics will be suggested each month, one new to intrigue longer term members, the other a previously offered 'gem' for newer members to add to their portfolio of stories.

The new topic for March is **'Too Hard Basket'** – *write about a time when you faced a dilemma which might have to be put into your 'too hard basket'. Unravel what happened, whether it was a 'problem solved', was resolved over time or perhaps remains in your too hard basket to this day.*

The alternate topic is **'New in Town'** - *Have you ever been the new person in town? Or did someone else's arrival have a profound impact on you? Share your story in 500 words.*

An aura of joy and contentment seemed to be in the room as we said farewells at the end of the session, perhaps because we had been reminiscing about treasured travel destinations, perhaps because we could be together again.

Bev Lee

Bird Watching

U3A Birdwatching outing Thursday 11 March 2021

U3A Birdwatching will run for the first time in 2021 on Thursday 11 March. At present up to 20 participants can attend, although COVID restrictions may well be eased further by the time 11 March comes around.

Lake Benalla walking track:

We will walk around part of the walking track, looking at waterbirds and woodland birds. This walk provides a good introduction to the birdlife of Benalla and is an excellent starting place for participants who are new to this group. If the lake is still being drained to control Cabomba weed, that may bring in different birds that feed on mudflats.

Please meet at 9.30am at the walking track beside the lake, just behind the library (Weary Dunlop Learning Centre). You will need comfortable walking shoes and water, and possibly a small snack. If you have binoculars, please bring them also. We plan to finish by midday.

Wild Encounters Exhibition at Wangaratta

The Wangaratta Information Centre at 100 Murphy Street currently has an exhibition of wildlife photography by noted nature photographer and bird expert Chris Tzaros. It runs until 6 April 2021 and entry is free. I've been to the exhibition, and the photography is superb, with a variety of parrots, wrens and finches well represented. Further information can be viewed online at

<https://www.visitmelbourne.com/regions/High-Country/Events/Art-and-exhibitions/Exhibitions/Wild-Encounters-Exhibition>

Kathy Costello

Ph 5762 5755, Mobile 0447 625755, email coskoy@bigpond.com

Bushwalking

Easy Walks

Coming up - Wednesday 7th April 2021 - Mt Pilot

We will be climbing to the Mt Pilot summit, followed by lunch at Woolshed Falls. Mt Pilot and the Falls are two of three highlights in the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park.

The walk commences at the intersection of C377(Beechworth-Chiltern Rd), and Old Coach Road. From here to the Mt Pilot picnic area is about 2.7km, with a further 300m to the summit lookout, for a total walk of about 6km. Poles/walking sticks are suggested for the final 300m as it can be steep in parts. There is a parking area along Old Coach Road for those wanting a shorter trek, but the road is well formed and easy to walk. The summit lookout provides a stunning panoramic view and is a must see, for those who feel safe to do so.

After conquering the summit, we will drive to the nearby Woolshed Falls picnic area for lunch. The waterfalls and pools are close to the picnic area, for those with time to explore further.

Please confirm your attendance by Sunday 4th April with Julie McNeill 0407823031 or

juliemcneill55@gmail.com, or Glen Chessells 0431201077 or gchess@hotmail.com. Remember to bring a hat, sunscreen, picnic lunch and a drink, and consider a walking stick or pole(s).

Meet at the Seniors' Complex, Fawkner Drive carpark at 9am

Detailed direction to Mt Pilot and the Falls will be provided at the car park.

If new members are unsure of their ability for these walks, please check with the above convenors. Please also add convenors' numbers to your mobile.

Car sharing is usually available, with a small contribution to costs

Glen Chessells and Julie McNeill

Mid Week Walks

February Walks Report

Mt Buffalo - Mt Dunn 10 February

Seventeen walkers headed to Mt Dunn, in so doing were able to escape the higher temperatures on the day compared to Benalla. Temperatures were at least five degrees cooler and made for pleasant walking.

The track started at Lake Catani's day visitor site and joined the Long Plain valley track before rising to the base of Mt Dunn. Then it was a steep 250m climb to the top but not before climbing up several sections of a ladder to finally get a 360-



degree view of the spectacular surroundings.

Wildflowers were still in abundance.

Good to see quite a few walkers who had not walked for a while and one visitor.

The walk was 8 km.

Wednesday 10 March 2021 DELATITE RIVER MIRIMBAH S-3-3

An easy walk along the Delatite River starting at Mirimbah park, returning the same way.

Meet at Barkly St tennis courts 8.45 am Depart 9.00 am

Leader: John Boehm 0428 254801

John Boehm

Chat n' Chew

After a most enjoyable reunion at 'The Royal' in February, our next lunch will be at the Benalla Golf Club on Friday 19 March at 12 noon. If you are attending, please contact Lorraine on 5762 1531 or 0427 376 991.

Lorraine Knox

Coin Collectors

Welcome back! It is pleasing to know we have all weathered the coronavirus and are now able to continue our activities.

The Coin Collectors Group met at the RSL Rooms on the 22nd February. Six members attended and enjoyed a very pleasant morning's discussing Alex's proof sets of the Sydney Olympics, Melbourne Commonwealth Games, Centenary of Federation, Millennium series and Sir Charles Kingsford Smith. Thanks go to the RSL and RSL Secretary Heather Hartland for enabling us to use the RSL rooms for our session.

With the Senior Citizens renovations completed we will return to the U3A Meeting Room at the U3A allotted time of 10 am to 12 midday on the 3rd Monday of the month. Our next meeting will be on **Monday 15 March**.

Although the changed time slot has meant some members are unable to attend, our numbers have remained the same at 13 with new enrolments. Welcome Gary Edwards, Sallie Hann, David Lowing and Judy Stewart - we trust you will enjoy the Coin Collectors group.

Annette and I are moving to Echuca to live at the end of this month. Doug Smith has volunteered to organise and preside over our Coin Collectors' meeting, while Gary Edwards is happy to express his knowledge on Australian coins to help discussions.

I have enjoyed organising our group and trust you have all enjoyed the discussion as much as I have. It has been interesting to learn how, when and why we have collected coins.

I wish you all the best for the coming year and hope to visit a meeting or two in future.

Alex Adkins

Thank you so much, Alex, for inspiring and establishing the Coin Collectors group at U3A Benalla. Your understanding of coin collections and collectors and the way in which you have engaged and followed through with group members have resulted in an ongoing group of keen coin collectors. Your personal coin collection and passion for coin collecting proved inspirational! Thank you for your newsletter reports. We wish you and Annette well in your return to Echuca, where you both grew up. Perhaps you might set up a Coin Collectors group there. You will be missed. Good luck!

Collectors

Collectors had not met before the newsletter deadline, so there is no report this month. We would, however, like to extend our thanks to Jacquie Schwind, who took on the role of 'news correspondent' when I became convenor and submitted many fascinating newsletter reports, including during the Covid break. Jacquie came from Wangaratta to attend Collectors, which at times proved difficult for her. Thank you, Jacquie! Thank you also to Robyn Desmier who is taking a break from photographing the items brought to

class by our collectors each month and preparing the end of year slideshow. Thank you for all your work, Robyn.

There will be no session in April as the first Monday falls on Easter Monday. The theme for our next Collectors class on Monday 3rd May is **'Teapots'**.

Dorothy Webber

Community Singing

Brian Greed conducted the first enjoyable session of Community Singing in The Hub at Cooina on the fourth Thursday of February. Although only 13 members of U3A had enrolled for this group, 20 people actually attended the session. This included members of Singing for Fun who were delighted to have another singing session for the fourth Thursday of the month.

For the first part of the session Brian chose to use the Hub's organ and then switched to using the piano for the second part of the session.

Brian used Book 1 for the first part of the session and a Bar Menu of Songs for the second part. There were hearty renditions of Waltzing Matilda, Danny Boy and Coming Round the Mountain as well as many others.

Altogether it was a very enjoyable morning. Brian played entirely from memory without any music books and did a wonderful job of leading the singers with his music accompaniment. Thank you, Brian.

Margaret Jenkins

Creative Writing

February arrived, and we welcomed several new members to the class. We were not able to use the U3A room for our class, so we are still waiting to meet them. Instead we continued the process we followed in 2020 and contributed our writing via email, with feedback also by email. This was a much harder for our new members as they were less familiar with the process. We are looking forward to welcoming them face to face as soon as the U3A room is available. To support this, we will have a meeting on 8 March, even though it is a public holiday, subject to the room availability.

The February writing topics were:

- **She/he/name opened the door and sighed**
- **After 70 plus years I finally received a valentine gift like no other**
- **The night was dark, but my secret was darker**
- **With dawn came the realisation that ...**

There was a wide range of stories, from lost and new loves (loves from the past, a new pet), new experiences (lost in the jungle, living on an outback station), unwelcome visitors (advice or help needed, the wolf seeking access to the third pig's home), lessons to learn (need to grow up, learning there is more to saving the environment than not using plastic). There was only one story of a dark secret, and a very dark secret it was. On a lighter night we had one on the story of lost dentures – well not quite lost, just dropped in a most unsavoury place. Well done to all our writers this month.

- **The topics for our March class are:**
- **But the letter was dated 9 years before**
- **The waterfall cascaded to the depths below**
- **Who would have thought that**

For our 8 March class, we will be sharing the stories via email, with feedback discussion when we meet (assuming the room is available).

Joy Shirley

Demystifying Psychology

Like 2020 ... 2021 has been a great start to the semester program. We were lucky enough to skirt around the short lockdown and so managed to meet twice in February. A 100% improvement compared to 2020!

This year semester 1 Demystifying Psychology content will be repeated in semester 2. We meet twice a month.

After our first month at the Hub, we recently redesigned Demystifying Psychology to allow all sessions to be 'face to face' and improve visibility of powerpoint and video content during Course Sessions.

Course Sessions have been rescheduled to the third Friday afternoon of the month from 1 - 3 pm in the U3A Meeting Room (our pre-covid timeslot). These sessions are designed around planned topics and the content is displayed using PowerPoint and a large TV screen. There is a lot of opportunity for discussion in a relatively structured environment. **Our next session will be a Course Session in the U3A Meeting Room on Friday March 19th at 1pm.**

Demystifying Psychology Discussion Group sessions (held previously on Zoom), will now be held 'face to face' at the Coinda Hub on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 10 to 12 midday. Our discussion group sessions are a free-for-all and a lovely surprise. No planning goes into the session and topics are generated by participants on the day.

Depending on the busyness of "Covid Normal" calendars, participants join both or either of the Demystifying sessions.

The aim of Demystifying Psychology is to have a lighthearted look at psychology. To do this it is necessary to be familiar with some of the frequently used concepts and words. So, that is where we have started (again) in 2021.

In February we looked at:

- What is Psychology and its purpose.
- What is a theory, who are some the most known theorists, and what are "schools" of theory?
- Part of how disorders are diagnosed and described in the DSMVI (Diagnostic Statistical Manual, number 5).

.. and then we ran out of time!

In March we will complete the DSM discussion, look at preferred coping styles (and play some games around this), consider ethics in psychology (and listen to some decidedly dastardly examples of historical ethical issues), and finally the history of psychology including the influence of women in psychology.

The Powerpoint session content is now on the web page.

Here's to a great 2021!

Jane Rushworth

Exercises for Fun

Benalla Council has offered U3A the use of the Town Hall, for the Exercise Group, for all the weeks of February and March, while the Seniors' Hall is being sorted out.

We have taken up their generous offer, and find it is very pleasing to see so many of us able to exercise again in a group, after being in lockdown for almost a year.

We meet every Monday (at the Town Hall during March), starting at 9.30am. Looking forward to seeing you all there. Have fun,

Helen Jeffree

Exploring the Universe

The Space Highway to Mars has been busy this year with three spacecraft hurtling towards the Red Planet.

They were launched in July 2020 when Earth was at its closest distance to Mars. An opportunity that only arises every two years when Earth 'laps' Mars in their annual orbits around the Sun.

During February all three spacecraft have arrived at their destination and have successfully been inserted into Mars gravity field to orbit the planet. The first arrival was the United Arab Emirates' orbiter named 'Hope' that will study the planet's atmosphere and how the remnants of Mars once abundant water supply now leak into space.

The Chinese 'Tianwen-1' mission entered Mars orbit one day later. This is an ambitious program with an orbiter that will attempt to land a lander and a rover in May or June. The rover is solar powered and will explore Mars for 90 days using a ground penetrating radar, studying the soil, seeking signs of life and sub-surface water and ice.

NASA's U.S. 'Mars Mission 2020' has landed a rover named 'Perseverance' on the surface. Its task is to study and collect rocks and soil for possible return to Earth and to search for signs of ancient life. Aboard Perseverance is an experimental small, drone like helicopter. The challenge is to fly it in Mars' reduced atmospheric conditions.

Cameras on the landing equipment filmed Perseverance's descent to the surface and a microphone has recorded the hum of the rover and the sounds of the Martian wind.

Why not join us at 'Exploring the Universe' on Tuesday 16th March 2 p.m - 4 p.m at the Senior Citizens building to see the excellent film of the landing and listen to the first sounds recorded from another planet, all on our large High Definition TV.



Bev Morton

Family Research

Meeting in the U3A Meeting Room for the first time after the Covid break, we were warmly welcomed by U3A's President Dorothy Webber, who wished us a successful year.

Wendy Sturgess began the session with an introduction to the goals and nature of the group, which this year includes a family story telling component. An absorbing hour or so followed in which each person shared an overview of their research into their family to date. We were so impressed with the things people have already achieved. This included work undertaken to develop family trees, to search for missing relatives and to resolve other mysteries, often over quite long periods of time. We heard tales of travels to locate ancestors in cemeteries far away. People spoke of writing books including Marcus's 'Covid Project' written for his children and Rupe's goal of publishing the book he has written about his Cheetham forebears. We were fascinated by Wendy Webster's Early Winton Settlers project. We listened in awe as Marg described the efforts she has made to find her mother, and more. A goal setting and skills analysis work sheet was completed to provide feedback to convenors about goals, strengths, and learning needs.

Bev introduced the Family Research page on the U3A website after the break, using her family history blog to share her story, '[My Roman Nose](#)', for February's writing topic 'Family Traits'. A fascinating collection of stories followed, with traits including having an identifiable laugh; fair skin prone to sunburn and desperate efforts to tan; the vertical challenge of being of Cornish descent; persistence and a sense of humour; distinctive dark eyes and hair; a love of gardening, a nursing career and an enduring passion for trains, and more. The role of DNA results in confirming family legends of links to people in far off lands was explored.

At the end of the session Wendy presented a folder she has prepared showing a time sequence of illustrations of costumes over 200 years, explaining that it may prove useful in identifying unnamed people in old photographs. We look forward to bringing along old photos to compare with the illustrations in Wendy's folder during the year.

Our March writing topic is '**Family Treasure**' - The brief - *Write a story of 150 to 400 words (or prepare an 'show and tell' presentation) about a family treasure you are finding, or will find, it hard to let go of. It doesn't have to be an expensive treasure – it can be as humble as your great-grandmother's recipe book or teapot. If possible bring it along. Explain its importance to you and where it fits in your family tree, perhaps using a genogram to help you to do so.*

Finally, some housekeeping – please remember to bring your own coffee mug and to let us know if you will be attending for numbers and room set up by calling or messaging Wendy Sturgess on 0403226649 or Bev Lee on 0478607838.

Wendy Sturgess and Bev Lee

Film as Literature

What a treat! We were able to meet face to face for our February Film discussion. We have some new members to the class, although not all were able to join us for our first class. One of our members opened her home, making it possible for us to meet for our class. We hope to have access to a second room that is being made available for U3A use once the renovations are complete. At this stage we will almost certainly be able to meet at the Seniors Community Centre in April.

The film we discussed for our February class was “The Dry”. This was based on the book by Jane Harper. It is set in a fictional town in Australia. Federal Agent Aaron Falk returns to his hometown, Kiewarra, after an absence of over twenty years to attend the funeral of his childhood friend, Luke, who allegedly killed his wife Karen and son Billy (a baby daughter was spared) before taking his own life. Luke’s mother is sure that this was not the case and persuades Aaron to stay and investigate. Aaron is sure the deaths are connected to the death twenty years earlier of friend, Ellie Deacon, when they were all teenagers. With the help of the local sergeant, Aaron investigates the events. He eventually solves the death of his friend and family. In the final scenes, he discovers who killed Ellie. As with murder mysteries in general there are twists and turns along the way.

Three key characters are Aaron Falk (played by Eric Bana), school friend Gretchen (played by Genevieve O’Reilly) and Greg Raco, the sergeant (played by Keir O’Donnell). It was filmed predominantly in the Wimmera-Mallee area of Victoria with Minyip and Beulah key among the towns used.

The film moves back and forward between the events twenty years earlier and the current time. It does mean concentrating to keep track of what was happening when, but this does not detract from some good performances and cinematography.

The screenplay was generally close to the story, with some of the dialogue lifted straight from the book. Depiction of Australian rural life and scenes gave a true picture. There was specific mention of the houses and the pub as being authentic.

Overall a good film rated by members as a 4 out of 5 and a pleasant experience back in a cinema!

Our March discussion will be on “A Call to Spy” which opened at BPACC on 18 February.

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

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

Joy Shirley

Games

After a happy afternoon playing board games, the first Monday games group gathered to admire Stella’s rather snazzy new ‘Electric Vehicle’!



There is no ‘Games’ session in April, as it falls on Easter Monday. We next meet on **Monday 3 May**.

Dorothy Webber

Garden Appreciation

March 25th

Meet at U3A carpark at 9.30am. We are off to Beechworth. Bring your own morning tea, we will have this at a venue to be arranged. We will visit the private garden of Peter Rucins, 13 Spring Street Beechworth, then the Beechworth Galleries, the Metal Garden Sculptures, outdoor furniture and lots more. Lunch will be at the Hibernian Hotel at your own cost. A busy day.

April 22nd

A bus trip to The Royal Botanical Gardens at Cranbourne. We meet at the Benalla Gardens near the Royal Hotel at 7.30 a.m. before boarding the Benalla bus lines coach to Cranbourne. **Cost: \$40 p.p.** morning tea included. Payment will need to be paid by the 25th March - this can be left at the Redb4 Bookshop next to Hides in an envelope with your name and Garden Appreciation written on it. As the bus takes 50 numbers will be restricted. Gwen will have a waiting list if necessary. These Gardens are well worth the visit.

It is important to have your name down for any of our Garden Appreciation outings - please ring Gwen 0438627010.

Gwen Turner

German

The German language group reconvened for the year on Tuesday afternoon 23rd February in the U3A room. The topic was oral communication.

Two new members were welcomed and a group conversation ensued. The group is now conducted in German as much as possible. We looked at the Bright's Peace Pole, on which German is one of the 6 languages written. Strategies and nuances relating to different ways of speaking and understanding the spoken word were discussed, be it face to face, by phone, radio or television/internet.

To finish, we revisited 2 of the songs from 2019.

There is no beginner group this year.

Pauline Bailey

Investment

The share market has started 2021 with a slight increase in the All Ordinaries since the beginning of January, some stocks in the Information Technology and Material Sectors being the main contributors to this rise.

The next meeting of Investment will be on Friday 5th March 2021 at 2pm in the U3A Meeting Room.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

Many thanks to Lorraine for hosting our first 'Let's Talk Books' for February. The Library will not be opening to groups for some time, but given the size of our group we will have to look for a new venue. We will continue to meet at Lorraine's home in Bridge Street in the meantime.

Many and varied books were read, some enjoyed, some a little disappointing. Noelle enjoyed *The Blue Sky between Sky and Water* by Susan Abulhawa, set in Palestine it follows the lives of the Baraka family from Deit Daras to Gaza and the dispersing of the family across the world. Unusual was *The Behaviour of Moths* by Poppy Adams. From her lookout on the first floor, Ginny watches and waits for her younger sister to return to the crumbling mansion that was once their idyllic childhood home. Vivien has not set foot in the house since she left, forty-seven years ago; Ginny, the reclusive moth expert, has rarely ventured outside it. Reliable Anita Shrieve wrote *A Change in Altitude*, set in the darkness and light of Kenya in Africa, worth a read. The Memoirs and Diaries of the poet Lord Byron who died in Greece in 1824, Byron Bay was named after him, was also worth the read. *The Highland Clans* by Alistar Moffet, held special interest for our reader following her family history. *The Diamond Hunter*, Fiona McIntosh was a little disappointing, everyone was too perfect. *The Champagne War*, also by Fiona, was voted a better read. Also mentioned was a regular column in the Women's Weekly called The Reading Room, which lists new releases. *The Dressmakers Secret*, Rosalie Ham, was disappointing, but *Dogs in Australian Art* by Steven Miller was delightful and very well produced. *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles, got the thumbs up, whilst the

usual run of mystery novels, James Pattison, Michael Connelly were enjoyed. *The Cartographers Daughter*, slow to start but finished OK. *Girls with No Names New York in 1910*, Time of suffragettes, unions and the House of Mercy for girls who broke the law!! What a big read everyone had. See you all in March.

Geraldine McCorkell

Meditation

Our first session of meditation was well attended and appeared to be enjoyed by those present. Not every week will be the same, but in the quiet relaxed area we use, most of us can get into the zone, find it relaxing and, hopefully, sleep well that night. Our next session is on Monday 15th March at 4pm.

Carolyn Sims

Meet and Mingle

The 2021 Annual General meeting will be held on 17th March, 2021 at the March Meet & Mingle activity. The AGM commences at 10.00 am. For members who are interested in standing for the U3A Committee, a Nomination form can be found at the rear of this Newsletter. All members are encouraged to attend this activity and keep up to date with the status of our organisation.

Music Appreciation

With the U3A room now able to be accessed, Music Appreciation classes will commence on Friday 12th March. Sessions this year will focus on the concert programmes being offered by the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras. The general intention is in each session to select one major work from either orchestra's programme in the particular month - which we will look at in its entirety - and to select a number of shorter works in whole or in part for the remainder of the time available. A further reminder will be sent to class members prior to our first session with information about the music for that session.

Bill Squire

Page Turners

Our first book of the year was Marcus Zusak's *Bridge of Clay*. This complex novel tells the stories of the five Dunbar boys and the way fate plays with their parent's lives and theirs: who they love and lose and how they redeem some of the some of the tragedies they overcome.

The Dunbar boys bring themselves up after the death of their mother and desertion by their father. Clay Dunbar, a sixteen year old, leaves his brothers and feels impelled to go to his father's property and help him build an access bridge to replace one washed away in a flood. He labors for eighteen months with his father and in doing so learns a lot about himself, reconnecting with a man his brothers despise for leaving them. His father's loss of both his wives and Clay's loss of the young girl he loves are stories interwoven in the book.

This is a novel you either love and are curious enough to persist until the gripping conclusion, or you may find just too many story lines and characters to unravel.

Meg Dillon

Page Turners book selection for April is 'A Room Made of Leaves' by Kate Grenville.

Patchwork

We are all looking forward to being together on Thursday 3rd March. I'm sure we have a lot of catching up to do. I've had a number of calls and emails and am looking forward to seeing you all with your show and tells.

Dorothy Webber 0421 263 071

Play Reading

After a long period of recess which involved most of 2020, members are looking forward to a year of creating our own "live theatre"! With some new members coming on board, our numbers have increased and our first get together will be on Wednesday 3rd March 9.30 at the U3A meeting room.

Jenny McKenna

Politics and Current Affairs

Politics like many other groups is re-starting after the lengthy break in 2000. We missed a year of high political drama, but I think many were just relieved to get back and have a chance to talk with others.

The last week was not without disgraceful behaviour in Federal parliament. Young women working as staff in ministerial offices have been raped. The PM announced a number of internal inquiries into “the culture” of the work-place. Why do we need an inquiry when laws have been broken? The young women were not protected by their employers, who are both Federal Ministers. They did not ensure their staff worked in a safe workplace, which is mandated by law.

Whilst it is good to see the inquiry will be a multi-party affair, the P.M. did not offer to make the report public. It will require ongoing pressure to ensure the staffers get the same protection of the law as they would expect in any other work place. There is no place for blaming the victims.

The week ended with Liberal MP Craig Kelly resigning from the Liberal Party for his anti Vax messages and failing to support Governments policies, despite requests from the PM for him to follow the party line.

Not a great week in politics!

Terry Case

Recorder Group

It has been wonderful to be able to get together and have a play again after a year without being able to do it. Playing music together is such a very special kind of connection. Many thanks to Rae for offering us the use of her lovely outdoor setting at home for our first get-together. We certainly would have given the builders next door some competition! It was great to welcome two new members into the group.

Last week we were back into the usual premises and we are certainly looking forward to a year of playing!

Janet Douglas

Saturday Cards – 500

Saturday cards will commence on Saturday 6th March in the Seniors building. All the action commences at 1.30pm. As with all activities now taking place, Coffee and Tea will be available, however you must bring your own cup and food (if you wish), as we cannot use the cups in the kitchen. There is a QR Code to sign in and still tick off your name on the Roll. Hand Sanitiser to be used and COVID rules to be followed.

Heather Wallace

Singing for Fun

We started our Singing sessions in early February with about 25 members meeting in the Hub at Cooina. The Hub is a great location with good visual access to the Leaders and the pianist by all participating, and adequate parking around the back of the Hub and at the side of it. We do hope that the venue encourages more participants from Cooina to enjoy our sessions.

At our first meeting one of our Leaders Faith Hicks announced she was stepping down as a Leader after 14 years. Thank you Faith for all the time and effort you have put into both the Singing for Fun and also the Harmony group. We have benefitted from the exercises you have introduced at the beginning of each session, and for your meticulous instruction over the years. We are very pleased that you are remaining as one of the singers, and look forward to seeing you at our sessions for many years to come.

In Faith's place we welcome Kieran Smith as a new Leader. Kieran has only been with us for a couple of years, and that included our COVID shut down time. Kieran has a magnificent voice, a jocular manner and stage experience and will make a great Leader.

At that same session Brian Greed started the year with a selection of Seeker's songs, which are always favourites with the group. Margaret Merriman rounded off the session with “Wandering the King's Highway” which everyone sung with gusto. Gwen Barnes did a great job on the piano even though she has not played for us for 11 months or so.

We would also like to say Thank You to Trish Roe who has looked after morning tea for the Singing and Harmony groups for many years. Trish is still coming to Singing, and at the moment we are not having morning tea. However, we will need a volunteer to look after morning tea when it recommences.

We would also like to send a Get Well message to Gina Behrens who had an accident on Christmas Eve and Joyce Borschmann who has been in hospital recently. Hope to see you both at Singing soon.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

'New goat for cheese Winton farm working well'

After about one year developing a cheese from goat's milk business on 28ha (70 acres) at Winton, former mining engineer Moussa Taouk and his wife Vicky, are achieving returns which enable them to at least cover costs. Moussa brought his 18 month old daughter Marie with him to talk to Stock and Land's first U3A session in a year, on March 2. Their farm is between the Hume freeway and the Melbourne to Sydney railway line "which was why it was affordable," Moussa said.

Attractions from a goat farming point of view, include a 50m wide regent honeyeater plantation which encircles the farm and plantations of olives which provide snacks for the goats.

He said, "It also has a 1.8m high chicken wire fence around the boundary which is pretty handy for keeping foxes out" – "and goats in" was an audience comment.

Main improvements for the goats have involved fencing twelve 1.5 acre paddocks to cell graze and control worms, converting a shed into a dairy and making a cheesery.

Moussa and Vicky and their two children run eight Saanen milking goats which they milk by machine twice a day for a current yield of about four litres per goat per day.

Moussa said they should be getting up to six litres a day but had not achieved that yet.

"We thought they would be totally productive just eating grass but they do need absolutely top quality hay to do well".

On the marketing front, the Taouks have concentrated on the Benalla monthly market as well as the Violet Town, Yarrawonga and Wodonga markets.

Typically, they sell their cheese for up to about \$8 a kg, which as Moussa said, "compares well with dairy cow cheese at about \$7 a kg".

He said their ultimate aim was to milk about 20 goats producing four or five litres each per day. "If we were selling all that cheese – with eight goats we haven't had to throw any cheese out yet – we would have an income of about \$100,000 a year.

Guest speaker at our next Stock and Land class on Tuesday 6th April at 10 am will be Alana Johnston, a member of a fifth generation farming family, breeding cattle and growing trees near Benalla. A pioneer in rural women's leadership in Australia, Alana is a founding member of Australian Women in Agriculture and former President of the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women.

David Palmer



Sustainability

Due to the building renovations Sustainability was unable to meet during February and our first session will be on Friday 5th March.

This year we have 17 people enrolled which is the largest the group has ever been over the thirteen years it has been operating. Maybe this is an indication that sustainability and climate change are becoming important issues to a greater number of people. It would be good to see that reflected throughout the Benalla community.

There has been a lot of talk about 'green hydrogen' as a major source of clean energy and members have been provided with two articles about Twiggy Forest's ambitious plans to develop 'green hydrogen' and 'green steel'.

I look forward to starting our meetings and to the interesting discussions about such issues

John Lloyd

New! Tech Savvy Beginners (Android Phones)

We have a new Tech Savvy course particularly for beginning phone users, however Android tablet users are also welcome. We noted a demand for this course on enrolment day and are fortunate that Robyn Lukey, who had commenced as a Be Connected mentor just before the Covid Break in March last year, responded to our request to take the group. The course begins on **Wednesday 17 March from 12.15 to 1.45 in the U3A Meeting Room**. Please telephone Robyn on 0403 164 931 or email robynlukkey51@gmail.com to let her know your learning needs and that you would like to attend. *(Find out more below in 'Program News')*

Wine Appreciation

Good news! Last Wednesday, the U3A Wine Appreciation group met for the first time for 2021. Lake Moodemere Estate in Rutherglen was our destination. Set in historic gardens overlooking the Billabong and Lake Moodemere, the Winery, planted in 1886, is now home to the sixth generation of the Chambers family. Belinda Chambers was our host and her fascinating account of the family history, the importance of the Vineyard's unique terroir and the area's close indigenous links kept us intrigued. Heritage Homestead itself is full of interesting family photographs and the surrounding gardens have developed over 150 years.



Inside the Homestead's Cellar Door, our group tasted a variety of the Estate Grown white, sparkling and red wines, as Belinda explained the characteristics of each sample. Obviously quite a few tastings met with the group's approval and so credit cards were given a workout. Keith and Heather had arranged for the group to lunch at Rutherglen's Poachers Paradise Hotel. It is safe to say we all appreciated the day's outing, thanks to the Rogers' organization.

Bev Thornell

The next Wine Appreciation venue on Wednesday 24 March is likely to be Gehrig's or Gracebook, however this is yet to be confirmed. Please check the website closer to the date for further details.

Keith & Heather Rogers 5762 4086

Program News

NEW! Tech Savvy Beginners (Android Phones)

Tech Savvy Beginners (Android Phones) aims to help participants to gain skills and confidence in using their Android Mobile Phone. It is focused on achieving learning skills while at the same time having fun operating their Android Mobile Phone. It also aims to prepare learners to move on to self directed learning using the Be Connected online learning resources.

Proposed Content - The following topics will be covered:-

- Personal problem solving.
- Attaching photos to documents etc. for emailing.
- Photo enhancements, sorting & naming.
- Using your emails.
- Using the Internet
- Recording voice & sound.
- Maintenance of phone.
- Using 'Be Connected' for self help (<http://www.beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>)

The course will operate in a relaxed small group format to allow for individual learning needs.

The course begins on **Wednesday 17 March from 12.15 to 1.45 in the U3A Meeting Room**. Please telephone Robyn Lukey on 0403 164 931 or email robynlukkey51@gmail.com if you would like to attend.



NOMINATION FORM

2021 EXECUTIVE POSITIONS/COMMITTEE

Person Nominated

Proposed Role

(President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Publicity Officer, General Member, Other)

Proposer (name)..... (signature)

Seconder (name) (signature)

Nominee I am currently a financial member of U3A Benalla Inc. and I accept nomination for this position

Address.....

Telephone/s.....

Signature

Date

Return by post to the Secretary, U3A Benalla Inc. P O Box 674, Benalla 3672; or scan and email to secretary@u3abenalla.com; or deliver to the RedB4 Bookshop by Wednesday 10th March, 2021.

The AGM is being held at 'Meet and Mingle' on Wednesday 17th March 2021 at 10 am in the U3A Meeting Room. If Covid regulations prevent this meeting, an alternative arrangement will be made.

U3A Benalla Inc. AOO36654P

What's On

Monday, 1 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun (Town Hall)
 10:00 Collectors
 10:00 Lifeball
 10:00 Art Appreciation
 13:30 Games
 16:00 Meditation

Tuesday, 2 March

10:00 Demystifying Psychology @ The Hub
 10:00 Page Turners
 10:00 Stock and Land
 14:00 Armchair Traveller
 14:00 Let's Talk Books

Wednesday, 3 March

09:15 Easy Walks
 09:30 Play Reading
 14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 4 March

10:00 Singing for Fun
 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 5 March

09:30 Sustainability
 14:00 Investment

Saturday, 6 March

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 8 March

Labour Day
 09:30 Exercises for Fun
 10:00 Lifeball
 14:00 Creative Writing

Tuesday, 9 March

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs
 @ The Hub
 12:15 German
 14:00 Tech Talks

Wednesday, 10 March

08:45 Mid-Week Walks
Delatite River Mirimbah S-3-3
 10:00 Recorder Group
 13:30 'A Taste of Art'
 13:30 Film as Literature
 14:00 Be Connected

Thursday, 11 March

09:30 Birdwatching
Lake Benalla walking track
 10:00 Harmony Group @ The Hub
 13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 12 March

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

Monday, 15 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun

10:00 Coin Collectors

10:00 Lifeball

16:00 Meditation

Tuesday, 16 March

10:00 The News - Fact or Fiction
 14:00 Exploring the Universe

Wednesday, 17 March

10:00 Meet and Mingle – U3A Benalla's
 Annual General Meeting
 12.15 **NEW!** Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)
 14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

Thursday, 18 March

10:00 Singing for Fun @ The Hub
 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 19 March

09:30 Sustainability
 11:45 Chat 'n Chew – Benalla Golf Club
 13:00 Demystifying Psychology – Course session
 @ U3A Meeting Room

Saturday, 20 March

13:30 Saturday Games - '500'

Monday, 22 March

09:30 Exercises for Fun
 10:00 Lifeball
 14:00 As Time Goes By – 'Too Hard Basket' or
 'New in Town'

Tuesday, 23 March

10:00 Politics & Current Affairs
 @ The Hub
 12:15 German
 14:00 A Different View of German History

Wednesday, 24 March

10:00 Wine Appreciation
 10:00 Recorder Group
 13:30 'A Taste of Art'
 14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

Thursday, 25 March

09:30 Garden Appreciation - Beechworth
 10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub
 13:00 Family Research

Friday, 26 March

10:00 Music Appreciation
 14:00 Armchair History

Monday, 29 March

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

Wednesday, 31 March

14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

Thursday, 1 April

10:00 Singing for Fun
 13:00 Patchwork

Friday, 2 April – Monday 6 April Easter Break