



Benalla and District Inc.

## Newsletter – May 2020

U3A Benalla & District Inc

P O Box 674

Benalla 3672

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

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

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

President: Dorothy Webber

5762 2116

[president@u3abenalla.com](mailto:president@u3abenalla.com)

Secretary: Geraldine McCorkell

P: 5762 2134 M: 0408 522 662

[secretary@u3abenalla.com](mailto:secretary@u3abenalla.com)

Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to [newsletter@u3abenalla.com](mailto:newsletter@u3abenalla.com) by 25 May 2020

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### President's Report

What a trialling time we are all having. I must say I am up one day and down the next. Missing what was my normal life. I wonder if our old normal will ever return.

I have been receiving a Newsletter from U3A Network Victoria each week, so we the Committee are keeping in touch with the Network's recommendations.

A number of our Convenors are running their Courses by email, we have been having Zoom Meetings and some Courses have started using Zoom. Your Convenor will contact you if this is one of your classes. Of course, this is not available to all.

We may be able to run a future Meet and Mingle as a Zoom meeting. We could listen to a guest speaker using the mute feature, so all we would hear is the speaker.

As we are all missing our families and friends, make use of Technology and be thankful we have it. If you need tech support, I may be able to help, no promises - 0421263071.

Stay Home and Stay Safe.

Dorothy Webber, President

### Group Reports

#### Armchair History – Tudors

I set out to not merely tell the story of Henry & his wives, but also to tackle the more important story of the breakup of the Catholic Church. We briefly looked at the efforts of translators to have bibles published in the language of the readers and how the Church opposed change. Luther was the key figure in the upheavals and when we re-start classes I will continue to look at the religious changes in Europe.

It is important to contemplate changes outside of England at this time.

Circa 1400. Beginning of the Italian Renaissance. English travellers and merchants bring the ideas back to England & Scotland.

1453 Fall of Constantinople to the Turks. This ended the division of Christianity between Roman and Eastern administrations of the Church, leaving the Russian Orthodox Church as the major force in the East

The spice trade became more difficult and expensive resulting in exploration for new routes to India. This encouraged developments in mathematics, astronomy and technical developments such as the compass which Chinese and Arab traders had used for many centuries.

Spain, England and other countries established colonies dependent on slaves.

1492 Fall of Granada and end of Moorish rule in Spain.

15<sup>th</sup> Century. Creation of a Muslim Empire in India by Babur, a contemporary of Henry VIII.

Do not restrain yourselves by focusing on the Tudors and events in a small island!

Terry Case

## 'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

We are underway with our social distancing project, sharing stories written on monthly topics on the website.

Seven '[Making Waves](#)' stories (our topic for March) are now available to all visitors to [our web page](#). I really enjoyed reading these stories - an underlying theme was the anxiety involved and resilience required to 'make waves' and the reinforcement of personal integrity which can result.

April's topics 'Anzac Day' and 'Taking a risk and winging it' or 'Taking the plunge' are currently being added under password for class members to read and comment briefly upon. Here are some triggers to use when writing comments -

- *Did you relate to the story? Did you empathise with the writer?*
- *Did the story trigger memories for you? Perhaps with an example or two.*
- *How did you react to the story? How did it make you feel?*

The topic for May is 'Turning Point' - for an example, follow this link to Life Matters' '500 words'...[Leaving London on the Brink of War](#).

The topic for June is 'I grew up in ....' –a prompt for creative exploration of lots of childhood memories.

If a monthly topic doesn't appeal to you, consider drawing from your 'Ideas Piggy Bank' or little book of 'triggers'....(choose two elements from either of these sources and write a story of about 250 words or so on each) or write on a universal topic such as 'The year that made me'; 'New in Town'; or 'Someone who Shaped me'.

New members welcome!

Bev Lee

## Be Connected – Drop In

The value of being able to use our tablet, iPad and computer during this time of isolation is very important. We hope you are using Email to keep in contact with friends and relatives.

There are also programs such as Skype and Face Time which we have covered as part of the Be Connected program previously. The value of using these programs now is enormous.

You can refresh your involvement with these programs by looking up [www.beconnected.esafety.gov.au](http://www.beconnected.esafety.gov.au) and then going to the Topic Library and scrolling down to find the Learning Module you are looking for. Connecting to Others is the Module which takes you through Skype, WhatsApp and how to use Face Time.

We look forward to continuing our online journey when U3A resumes face to face classes.

Margaret Jenkins

## Bushwalking

### Easy Walks - Beechworth, the Splendour of Autumn – Cancelled!



The May 2020 U3A Easy Walk was scheduled to take us to the historic town of Beechworth that dates back to Victoria's gold rush era. The town offers many nationally significant buildings, magnificent old avenues and a large number of parks and gardens. Plantings of the trees began in the 1860's, many are protected by heritage regulations. The morning walk would have taken us through this area of the town; the Chinese Gardens and by Lake Sambell, originally the site of The Rocky Mountain Mining site. The afternoon walk plan was to explore the various walks around the precinct of Mayday Hills, a decommissioned State Lunatic Asylum. The main building, which dates back to 1867, has been declared architecturally significant by the Heritage Trust of Victoria as a fine example of Italianate-style; many of the 67 other original buildings remain. The gardens cover an area of 27 acres, planted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a botanical setting of exotic trees and shrubs donated by the Royal Botanical Gardens in Melbourne. The National Trust (Victoria) has classified over 200 Mayday Hills' trees as significant. The return drive would have been through part of the rugged Beechworth Historic Park along the scenic Gorge Rd overlooking Beechworth.

If you are interested in further information on the History of Beechworth, Walks, Mayday Hills, go to [explorebeechworth.com.au](http://explorebeechworth.com.au) then click on menu for sub-headings. If your interest is in the names of the Mayday Hills' 200 trees classified by the National Trust (Victoria) go to [explorebeechworth.com.au](http://explorebeechworth.com.au) click on menu, click on Beechworth Treescape then download Treescape brochure.

*Gone Missing*: A CD of "Wildflowers in the Reef Hills, Benalla" by Vaughan Cowan; contains around 90 wildflowers recorded by Vaughan and Marion Cowan over the decades. If you find this CD, it would be appreciated if you could please return it to Margaret Walshe when convenient

Wendy Sturgess  
Margaret Walshe

## Coin Collectors

"Hello Coin Collectors,

Just a few lines to ask if you are all going OK with coronavirus isolation and trust it can be turned around sooner rather than later.

I have now made a start on sorting my collection by delving into a couple of boxes and surprise "surprise", I have found a few things that I had forgotten about, including a series of \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10 notes with consecutive numbering. I was happy to find the folder with the four commemorative florins being the 1927 opening of Parliament House Canberra; 1934/35 Melbourne Centenary; 1951 50 years of Federation and the 1954 Queen's visit. Also realize I have quite a few English and NZ coins and uncirculated sets.

That is enough for the moment, however if you have a snippet or two regarding coins, notes etc., I would be pleased to use it for the next newsletter.

Regards,

Alex"

Alex Adkins

## Collectors

While meetings are on hold, people can still explore what others have collected on the Internet to while away some of the hours in self-isolation. Here are three collecting websites to get you started.

1. [www.collectorsweekly.com](http://www.collectorsweekly.com)

Interesting and diverse articles such as:

- from hospital gowns to paper couture - the unlikely origins of 1960s disposable dresses;
- unpublished children's notebooks reveal poignant view of history;
- making beauty amid the ugliness of World War 11 Japanese American camps;
- love tokens - how Victorians fell in love with pocket change; and
- tacky treasures - tv lamps of the 1950s.

2. [www.collect.com](http://www.collect.com)

If you go to the site and click on antique trader, you will find some good stories on collectibles, ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery and art.

3. [www.atchuup.com/weirdest-collection-of-things-ever/](http://www.atchuup.com/weirdest-collection-of-things-ever/)

43 people who collect strange things, from hotel do not disturb signs to 3500 dalmatian spotted items.

Prior to the rules for travel being brought in, I was able to add three more vintage tins to my collection, which I think numbers about 350 now. They were a Peak Frean budgerigar tin, a large Willow floral tin and a Plaistowe birds of Western Australia chocolate and confectionery tin. The Plaistowe factory in Perth began operation in 1915 and in 1930 Plaistowe manufactured more than 400 confections. Plaistowe was acquired by Nestle in the 1990s and the Plaistowe brand only applies now to cooking chocolate and cocoa.

Jacque Schwind



## Creative Writing

For our Creative Writing class, we have continued writing using a selection of prompts to choose from and sharing our work. This time though we have shared with the whole class via email. The class members have been encouraged to share feedback with the authors to help us develop our writing skills. Our first attempt at this was on 13 April. The prompts were:

- There was a secret meeting in the morning and she had to be there.
- For months I had been crying myself to sleep every night.
- It came in the mail

“It came in the mail” was the most popular topic. While they were very different, some of these stories tended towards the theme of unknown relations making contact. Some were not happy stories with tragic or sad endings, but others had a happy or quirky ending. One has left us hanging to know what will happen next.

I now plan to review the process with the class and look at what changes could be made to refine the process.

Joy Shirley

## Demystifying Psychology

I hope you are well and have been able to find benefits in this most amazing reality checking time. There are small signs that reactions to Covid19 are being rolled back. I notice Coles customers can again enter and exit from any door. Whoever would have predicted that would be a measure of community well-being? Still, there is a way to go before handshaking and friend cuddles are back on the agenda.

Families and community groups have been very resilient with their creativity and lateral thinking. My tribe "met" on Zoom for the first time in mid-April. What a hoot!! Out of four families, two had sound and video, one had video and no sound, and I had sound and no video. However, with a bit more research, my skills were up there with U3A colleagues who met to discuss how Zoom could be used for some U3A groups. Such a relief! Seems it doesn't take long to grasp Zoom, an on-line (needs internet) meeting app (application) that is downloadable (added) to your device (mobile phone, lap-top, desk-top, tablet or ipad). Zoom is used by all types of groups to talk with and to see each other.

Following the Zoom meeting I sent out a call to the Demystifying Psychology Group for volunteers for two experimental “zoom” internet meetings. A BIG shout out and thank you to the lovely guinea pigs who joined in the experimental meetings and/or offered great ideas. The following is based on your input:

Starting on Friday 15th May, Demystifying Psychology will host twice monthly “zoom” internet Discussion Groups on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday from 2 to 3 pm and the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday from 10.30 to 11.30 am. The discussion groups will continue until we receive notification that groups such as ours may recommence. *All U3A members are welcome.*

The purpose of the *Demystifying Psychology Discussion Groups* is to enjoy informative, relaxed chats and to share ideas. You can bring a topic, join a topic, or just listen. Have a look at U3A Benalla website for some pre-covid19 background - <https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/demystifying-psychology>

Find out about how to participate in the *Demystifying Psychology Discussion Groups* on Zoom by reading ‘*Demystifying Psychology – An Invitation to all U3A Members*’ on page 9 or by going to our page on the website.

Hope to see you at our Zoom discussion group on the Friday 15 May at 2pm!

Jane Rushworth  
0437 621 575

[janerushworth2101@gmail.com](mailto:janerushworth2101@gmail.com)

## Exercises for Fun

Hope you are all getting some exercise whilst in isolation. Mel and I have been researching how we can all keep in contact without breaking any rules, in these unusual times. Presently, we are working on a programme that could possibly connect us all to our Exercise Class, through the Internet. It involves you downloading a free app called "Zoom cloud" on your mobile phone, or your tablet, iPad or laptop at home. If we can get the programme to run successfully, we will let you know more. In the meantime, stay safe.

Helen Jeffree

## Film as Literature

We decided to watch a film of our own choice during the month. During our scheduled Film as Literature class time, we will write up some thoughts about the film and share this with the rest of the class. This worked well for our April 8 time. There was a wide range of films watched and it was interesting to read about these. I would be interested in watching some if I can source them, and I am sure other member of the class would also be interested in following up on some of them. Films watched included *Brassed Off*, *Arthur Newman*, *Bran Nue Dae*, *The Physician*, *The Stranger* (a Netflix series), the new *Phryne Fisher* movie, *Lion*, and *Shaun the Sheep*. In general, the class members enjoyed the process and are interested in continuing until we can resume our usual class sessions.

Joy Shirley

## Games

On-line 'Game of the Month' – *'Word with Friends 2'*

One way some U3A Benalla members are keeping in touch with friends while social distancing is by playing 'Word with Friends 2', a form of online Scrabble.

Just type 'Words with Friends 2' into your Apps search engine and follow the instructions.

Hint! Begin by playing people suggested by the app, then progress to playing with family and friends!

*'Country Bumpkin' on Word with Friends 2*

## Garden Appreciation



Hello fellow gardeners! I trust you are enjoying Autumn in your own patches.

Shirley Kearney and I have been using our daily walking exercise to appreciate some really beautiful gardens in Benalla. There are neat ones, cottage and native ones, some very modern designs with fabulous garden sculptures on display. All are a credit to our locals.

The lakeside garden area is a picture with its ever-changing colours, shadows and mist. We hadn't taken much notice of until we started our early morning exercise.

We do miss our family and friends, coffee mornings and afternoons at the Northo.

I've been doing lots of gardening, reading and Shirley has been knitting.

Hope to see you all soon. Stay safe and healthy.

Cheers, Gwen Turner.

0438627010 /57627017

Big hello from Shirley...



## Garden Team

Our team is working on a variety of projects while they are split into smaller work units. It has been good to catch up with reports and photos.



"Afternoon tea as always! Many thanks to Kirstin & Marcus for the delicious apple pie!"

Left - "Shared proof of Frank's dedication"

Elspeth Maconachie

## German – Conversation

The German Conversation Group has continued to be very active during April. Group members have been allotted a phone friend and an email friend. Weekly emails have been sent and phone calls have been made to improve our German writing and speaking skills. The month of May will see us changing communication partners so that we can continue emails and phone calls with a new group member. We have started a Perpetual Sentence which will gradually reach each group member over the next couple of weeks. This should be an interesting story when we all get together again. Horst has written and emailed some pieces for us to read in German. This is an excellent learning opportunity for all of us. Reading, spelling and grammar can be learned from these pieces. The Play will be a highlight for the group. Act 1 is on schedule to come out at the beginning of next month.

Most importantly, we are still communicating, learning and keeping in contact. Stay safe everyone.

Janet Martens

## Investment

There have been a number of positive responses to having a Zoom meeting for Investment on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 at 2pm. For those who wish to attend you will get an invitation on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April. Each person attending needs to download the **free Zoom app** onto their device, so that they can attend the Zoom meeting which normally lasts for up to 40 minutes.

YouTube videos can help you understand Zoom. 'How to Use Zoom' <https://youtu.be/fMUxzrgZvZQ> will help you to help set up Zoom and enter Zoom meetings while 'Zoom Basics – Using Zoom to set up Classes and Meetings' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5VU8cmEnTs> takes you carefully through the process of setting up a Zoom meeting.

During the past week I have been asked if our monthly selections could continue. This would mean that the grid is sent out to you all on the Thursday before our meeting. The grid will be closed at close of trading on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April.

One of our members has suggested the topic "Investment Properties in the COVID-19 environment" for our meeting on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May. It would be good to hear the strategies members or their agents have used when dealing with tenants during this unusual time.

Hope you are all well and looking after yourselves.

Margaret Jenkins

## Let's Talk Books

Hello everyone! In this time of social isolation, I have spoken to a number of our members and they are taking great solace in reading. If you don't get a mention this time, I will be ringing you for the next Newsletter, so don't feel left out.

I have reread *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout because I bought her new book *Olive Again* and needed a refresher, followed by *The Dutch House*, Ann Patchett, I am now into *Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel, heavy going but I think I will enjoy it.

Janet has read and mostly enjoyed *The Glass Room* by Ann Cleeves, a bit corny features 'Vera' from the TV series. *From Frasers to Freezeout* by Ian Stapleton, a history of the Treasure family and the Dargo High Plains, *Virals* by Kathy Reichs, too terrible to finish, *Woman in a Green Dress*, by Tea Cooper, this also was pretty corny, and *Bushranger Country* by Alan Sharpe, story of most of Australia's bushrangers.

Heather has read *Escape from Kabul*, *We That Are Left* by Lisa Bigelow, set in Melbourne in 1941 made for good reading, *Tuscan Rose* by Belinda Alexander, *Miss Muriel Matters* by Robert Wainwright, an Australian girl, who went to the UK to work joined the suffragette movement, and chained herself to the fence of the House of Commons, demanding women get the vote.

Lyn has continued with her interest in history with *Mrs. Kelly* by Grantlee Kieza, the astonishing story of Ned Kelly's mother. *Daughter of the Empire* by Raymond Feist, a story of magic and murder, *The Temptress*, passion and murder in Happy Valley.

Lorraine has read *The Eye of the Needle* by Ken Follett whilst Noelle found 2 books on her top shelf by Andre Brink a South African author, *Chain of Voices* an historical account of apartheid in the country north east of Cape Town. The second book *Wall of the Plague* is written in a similar vein to Geraldine Brooks, a relevant line in the book is *anything that can keep one person away from another is a wall of the Plague*. Rings true in the present time.

Rae has enjoyed *Wearing Paper Dresses* by Anne Brinsden, a story based in a small settlement in the Mallee, a beautifully written compelling story with well-drawn characters and an understanding of country Australia, loved this one. *The Glovemaker* by Ann Weisgarber, an enjoyable, engrossing easy book to read, this is set in the USA in 1888. Deborah Tyler, a glovemaker, lives in an isolated settlement of a few Church of Latter-Day Saints families. The families had moved by wagon from the larger Latter-Day Saints communities because they didn't agree with the multiple wife policy. An interesting insight to the Latter-Day Saint movement.

So, keep reading and you will receive a phone call from me very soon to see what you have been reading.

Geraldine McCorkell

## Music Appreciation

"Keep the Music Going" has been the catchcry of the MSO in this time of social distancing. Under that banner the MSO has been posting - on YouTube - recordings of recent performances. Given that that April was originally planned as a more or less "off" month concert-wise for the orchestra, this initiative proved serendipitous when it came to selecting music for our one and only presentation this month (one and only because of the Easter holiday break early in the month).

So as our contribution (for this month anyway) to "Keep the Music Going" in our part of the world, the music selected included Beethoven's "Septet", Vaughan William's "The Lark Ascending" and Martinu's "Madrigals" - all by the MSO or musicians from the orchestra. There was a small snippet from Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" performed by the Mariinsky Ballet Company (the MSO had posted a recording of a Stravinsky double bill concert featuring the complete "Rite of Spring" and the melodrama "Persephone", but a stage presentation

is much more appealing) and the programme was rounded off by Beethoven's "Seven Variation on a Mozart Duet" (from the Magic Flute).

You can find details of the music and the YouTube links in the programme notes which are posted on the Music Appreciation page of the U3A website.

Bill Squire

## Patchwork



Having been in touch with many of you, thanks for your photos. Keep them coming! It is good to be able to post the pictures on Facebook and the website.



Dorothy Webber

## Singing for Fun

Not much to report for the month of April apart from an experience from a Melbourne friend of mine. She is part of the Open Door Gospel Singers who are continuing to sing on a Monday evening at 7.30pm in a closed Facebook Group.

You need to apply to join this Group. However, approval seems to happen very quickly. The Leader is Shaun who I am told is a professional conductor. The words appear on the upper portion of the screen whilst the conductor is in the lower section. Shaun seems to handle the accompaniment and the words and keeps the session moving quite well. He also has a very positive attitude.

So, if you would enjoy a singing outlet, I suggest you have a look at this. The songs are different to what we are used to. But the session is still enjoyable.

Hope you are all well and keeping yourselves happy and occupied.

Margaret Jenkins

## Tech Savvy Talks

During the month Les Rodgers recommended watching a YouTube video called 'Simulating an Epidemic' - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=3&v=gxAaO2rsdIs&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=gxAaO2rsdIs&feature=emb_logo). "You may need to watch it a couple of times to fully appreciate it, but hey, what else have we got to do?" A class member replied to Les 'Should send a copy to Trump'!

Bev Lee, Tech Savvy Talks member

## 'Musings during the Pandemic'

### Joy Shirley – 'What I have been doing'

"It is perhaps tempting to sit around wondering and worrying rather than getting on and "doing". I had a thought about how to keep active and shared it with my Film as Literature and Creative Writing classes. This is what I thought: keep to a routine that matches as much as possible the routine I would normally follow.



For me this means:

- Walking the lake for as long as it is allowed each weekday morning (the Monday walk replaces the U3A exercise class; the others are part of my normal routine)
- Monday afternoon do something around writing. On the second Monday this involves a Creative Writing class activity; the other weeks involve writing for the Memoir Writing class, other writing or doing an online writing course
- Tuesday afternoon watch a film. This is the time that I am usually ushering at BPACC.
- Wednesday morning once a month was U3A Play Reading, so I will sit down and read...and not feel I should be doing something “more productive”
- Wednesday afternoon knitting at the library is replaced by either a knitting project or an online knitting class to learn new skills (or other craft class). On the second Wednesday afternoon I will follow a plan for keeping the Film as Literature class operating.
- Thursday is a little less clear as it was the day my husband and I would go out somewhere together, but we can still plan to do something together during the day at home
- Friday was shopping and lunch with friends – we still need to do some shopping, but add catching up with friends and family via phone/email/Facebook etc

By putting this plan in place, I am sure that I can keep mentally and emotionally active and happy. There are obviously other times when I will be writing or involved in a myriad of other activities, but it provides a starting routine to work with. I feel that routine will help me through.”

*Joy Shirley convenes ‘Creative Writing’ and ‘Film as Literature’, a member of groups including ‘Exercises for Fun’, ‘Play Reading’ and ‘As Time Goes By’ and is also a key person involved in organising ‘Benalla Rugged Up’, Benalla’s yarn bombing event now in its third year.*

## Ray O’Shannessy ...

Ray O’Shannessy remembers a polio epidemic during his childhood in a story for ‘As Time Goes By’

“... I attended Villa Maria with my brother Basil, two years older than me, and 24 other children until I was ten. After that, another two years on my own. It can't be said that we grew up together because we rarely related. He mixed with an older group of kids, I with the younger ones. I recall that, in about 1939, when Infantile Paralysis was an epidemic, Basil was a victim. He was sitting down eating his dinner one day and when he went to move, his legs wouldn't function. A couple of the senior kids had to lift him from his chair and carry him back to the classroom. Thence forward he was carried everywhere - to the toilet, to the dining room, to the classroom, to bed. How long this went on I don't know. From memory he was well again at school holiday time, so this procedure didn't have to be followed at Swanwater. To the best of my knowledge Basil never suffered any later ill effects....”

*Ray O’Shannessy is a member of ‘As Time Goes By – Memoir Writing’. You can read a collection of Ray’s stories at <https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/rays-page>.*

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## U3A Newsletter and Website during the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Convenors** - please continue to send in **reports** if you have made alternative arrangements for your groups to continue or if you have things to report on (for example, events occurring when ‘Exploring the Universe’)

**Members** – please send in your **thoughts, ideas, stories, interesting ‘snippets’** or **photos** of you in your study during social distancing and isolation; or of creative projects you have finished, and more.

Please send items to [newsletter@u3abenalla.com](mailto:newsletter@u3abenalla.com) by 25<sup>th</sup> May.

For more information contact Heather 0418 353 244 or Bev 0478 607 838.

# Program News

## Demystifying Psychology – An Invitation to all U3A Members

Starting on Friday 15th May, Demystifying Psychology will host twice monthly “zoom” internet discussion Groups on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday from 2 to 3 pm and the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday from 10.30 to 11.30 am. The discussion groups will continue until we receive notification that groups such as ours may recommence. All U3A members are welcome.

The purpose of the Demystifying Psychology discussion group is to enjoy informative, relaxed chats and to share ideas. You can bring a topic, join a topic, or just listen. Have a look at U3A Benalla website for some pre-covid19 background - <https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/demystifying-psychology>

How to participate:

1. Download the “Zoom” app to your device. View at <https://youtu.be/fMUxrgZvZQ>
2. Join one or both monthly meetings on:
3. 3rd Friday afternoon 2-3 pm (beginning 15 May; link #1 below) and/or
4. 1st Wed morning 10.30-11.30 am (Beginning 3rd June; link #2 below).
5. Topics will be generated by discussion group participants - current interest is Forensic Psychology
6. Format
  - a. 15 minutes - outline of key themes/research/concepts of the chosen topic.
  - b. 24 minutes - group discussion.
7. No need to book in - simply join by activating the meeting link.
8. Curiosity mandatory ... no other pre-requisites.

NOTE - help to download Zoom is available:

☒ PC users - general inquiries - call me 0437 621 57

☒ Apple users - call Jenny Sawyer (Tech Savvy Convener) 0409 545 18 (Thanks Jenny :))

1 Use this link/password/meeting ID for every **Third Friday PM** discussion group

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77011313324?pwd=eU5FUWNxQjNoQUhranJFNEQxSIFndz09>

Meeting ID: 770 1131 3324

Password: 6Fq8Ce

2 Use this link/password/meeting ID for every **First Wednesday AM** discussion group

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72159430694?pwd=WkVwUXI3ckJvWlc3dW1ZZm5mZzRhUT09>

Meeting ID: 721 5943 0694

Password: 4MysKx

For more information, contact Jane Rushworth 0437 621 575 [janerushworth2101@gmail.com](mailto:janerushworth2101@gmail.com)

## Zoom

*‘Zoom’ is mentioned many times during this newsletter, with a number of U3A Benalla committee members and convenors actively learning about and using Zoom meetings. This following article by U3A Benalla member Andi Stevenson was first published in the [Tatong Tattler, May 2020](#).*

Less than a decade ago, yet another video conferencing program was started up, striving to be more user-friendly than others. When in 2020 the entire planet went into lockdown, use of “Zoom Video Communications” skyrocketed. Spread like a viral pandemic, in fact. Having used Zoom all of half a dozen times, I offer the following observations.

Zoom can be pleasant, and useful, once you get the hang of its limitations. Only one person can speak at a time and there is a lag, so it needs to be a managed forum. It does demand a reasonable internet connection. Good luck up there in the hills.

The free version of Zoom limits the session time to 40 minutes, with up to 100 people. (If you want 100 people you will need a very large monitor.) Sometimes, before 40 minutes are up, a notice pops up to say 'your time has been extended'. A trick I've heard of is to have half a meeting, then a break, then the other half, so still fit in an hour-long meeting for free.

First download Zoom. Go to Settings, then test your video and your microphone. Testing the video is not a matter of vanity; the others might want to see more the top of your head. Check the lighting for where you set up. Test that the microphone works. The Host schedules the meeting & emails the invitations. These contain the code to join the meeting, and also a link, which will download Zoom, but try to have done that already. Copy the code into the "Join Meeting" box, and then the password. Do use a password, and don't put the invitation out in the public display; that just leads to "Zoom-Bombing" (un-intended guests).

Do use a 'waiting room', for the host to let people in. They'll pop up on the screen, either in equally-sized squares ("Gallery View") or in smaller boxes with whoever is talking taking up the bulk of the screen. Those settings are top Right. Look in the lower left to enable/ disable Audio & Video. There is a slight lag. It is best to signal a desire to speak, then wait until given the stage. Raise a hand, or wave a stuffed toy. The built in way to 'raise a hand' has the shortcut Alt+Y. The Host will then see a hand by that person and can respond. It is best if the host guides who is to speak.

On Zoom, there is only one audio, and the software will channel whoever it perceives to be making noise. If two people talk at once, the sound jumps between them. Any sound, a cough or a rustle (or laughter, especially where stuffed toys are being waved) will attract the microphone. Hence it pays to Mute yourself, and only un-mute when speaking. If muted, holding down the space-bar will temporarily un-mute.

If the internet connection is poor, the video might freeze & jump a bit, or turn off, leaving audio with a box with the person's name. I guess so long as the connection can support audio, this is better than nothing.

There are alternatives to Zoom, and some reviews for the Tattler would be good.

Once Zoom became wildly popular, security issues were spotted. These things get noticed when the user base is amplified by several orders of magnitude. I understand they are avoidable with proper settings, and that Zoom is striving to improve its use for ordinary folk. Do not file-share on Zoom; do use a password, and a waiting room. Go through the settings. Google "Zoom Security" for further tips.

Happy Isolation –

Andi Stevenson

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## This Time Last Year!

What was happening at U3A Benalla in April 2019?

Link here to the [May 2019 Newsletter](#) for some valuable reminiscence therapy!

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