



Benalla and District Inc.

## Newsletter – October 2021

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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### President's Report

I am writing this report for Dorothy, who is taken up with family matters. Today, as I write, the weather has rained, hailed, the sun has come out and disappeared. It doesn't seem to be able to make up its mind what it wants to do, a bit like our life at the moment. Once again, we are up and down and unsure whether we are in or out.

The Seniors building is available again for up to 20 people in the whole building at any one time, so some classes can be held. A general email is often sent out by Len, at the request of convenors, to let members know if classes or groups are meeting. We are also making a valiant effort to keep the calendar on the website up to date. If members are unsure, please ring the convenor to check what is happening. Some members are deciding not to go to their group until the news on COVID improves. It would be great if members could ring or contact the convenor to let them know they are not coming.

A small group enjoyed Chat 'n Chew in September. Those who attended had a very nice lunch - it was lovely to see people socially, even if only briefly.

Committee members are still hopeful that we will be able to hold our Pizza lunch on Wednesday 20th October to celebrate 'Get Online Week'. Check your emails and the website for updates closer to the day.

[Chrismont Winery](#) has been booked for the U3A end of year celebration on Tuesday 23 November. The cost of the 2-course meal will be \$50 and the bus fare \$10. The bus will leave the Benalla Bus Lines depot at 11.00am. There will be an application form and more details in the November newsletter. Fingers crossed that we will be able to gather for our annual luncheon once again.

In conversation with Shepparton U3A it was revealed they have a ukulele group who would like to combine with our Recorder group to entertain us at our final Meet and Mingle for 2021. What a toe tapper that would be, however with Singing for Fun and Recorder groups unable to meet, we may have to wait another year.

In the meantime, keep smiling and coming to U3A when we can, our social interaction is a very necessary part of life in retirement.

Geraldine McCorkell, Secretary

### Email address updates

We recently needed to change the U3A Benalla and District email address used by our secretary, Geraldine McCorkell - it is now [u3aben@gmail.com](mailto:u3aben@gmail.com).

The direct email address of the U3a Newsletter has also been changed to [newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.u3abenalla@gmail.com)

You will now receive a 'bounce back' notice if you send articles or monthly reports to the previous address. It would be wonderful if you could make the change in your address book/contacts list to ensure that when you send in newsletter reports in future they don't automatically go to the old address.

Heather Wallace, Newsletter Editor

# Group Reports

## A Taste of Art

Unfortunately, there isn't much to report. The first date of our program, which was to be Wednesday 8th September, couldn't go ahead due to the latest restrictions.

On Wednesday 22nd there was an Earthquake! Consequently, a number of the U3A members pulled out.

The next dates will be 6th and 20th October when we hope to get underway with some real painting and hopefully produce some work to put on show in Benalla hospital in time for Christmas.

Any new members are welcome to come along on these dates at 1-30pm to Barc Hut 11 at the airport.

I can be contacted on 5762 2373.

Carol Perry

## Armchair Traveller

After a COVID break we will get back into action at our usual venue on Tuesday 5th October at 2 pm. The presenter will be Brian Greed. Keep well.

Ray O'Shannessy

## Art Appreciation

The Benalla Art Gallery cancelled its September 'First Mondays' public program, 'The other web', with Kim Westcott, following the State Government's announcement of lockdown throughout regional Victoria, from Saturday 21 August. No session has been scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup>, and there is usually no session on the first Monday of November. Hopefully a last session for 2021 can be scheduled in early December.

In the meantime, it is possible to visit the many interesting exhibitions inside the gallery! Check in using QR codes at the Gallery entrance - if you do not have a smart phone, please speak with reception for assistance checking in. Masks must be worn inside the venue. Capacity limits apply and are signed throughout the building. Please maintain physical distance from other patrons where possible, including while in exhibition spaces, queuing at reception, and throughout Munro & Sargeant café. Having covered all bases, 'enjoy'!

### Benalla Art Gallery Exhibitions

Simpson Gallery | [TEMPORAL ARTEFACTS](#)

Bennett Gallery | [FEM-AFFINITY](#)

Ledger Gallery | [RE-GENERATION](#)

Upcoming | [VCE SHOWCASE](#)

Munro and Sargeant | [STRONGER TOGETHER](#)

Online | [IN AND OF THIS PLACE](#)

## 'As Time Goes By' – Memoir Writing

Our first session in the U3A meeting room for over three months began with the sharing of earthquake and lockdown stories! After a warm up activity, 'Share a story with another class member about a time when you got into trouble...', Neville and Val shared [Right Here, Right Now](#) stories, with Neville responding to being in lockdown, and Val writing about the house she is living in right here, right now, including her recent experience of the earthquake!

Sometimes our monthly topics are rather tricky- '[If only I...](#)' was one of these. Marg McCrohan described her ambivalence about writing on a topic which had caused anxiety and loss of sleep, while Joy reframed the topic by beginning 'If only I had NOT... I would not have ... (positive outcome)'. Barry's story could have been titled 'If only I'd ... *listened to my parents*'. Ray wrote two captivating vignettes – 'If only I'd known ... (*there were 263 steps to the top of the tower*)' and 'If only I ... (*hadn't become distracted*)', while Bev's story ... 'If only I'd... *learned French at School*' had a humorous twist. In a memoir piece written at a deeper level, Michelle shared a moving story ... 'If Only I'd ...*stayed with my aunt and uncle*'.

It was lovely to welcome Marg Nelson back and to hear her ['Crash'](#), ['Curved Ball'](#) and ['Stock and Land'](#) stories.

Coming up in October, our first topic '**This (.....) Life**' draws upon The Australian Weekend Magazine's 'This Life' story format. *The brief* - Write a 500-word story under the broad theme of 'This Life', inserting your

theme in brackets in the title as the topic emerges. Examples in the Weekend Magazine have included 'This (Downsizing) Life' by an 80+ year old about planning to farewell loved home; 'This (Number 8) Life' about growing up as 'Number 8' in a family of nine children. If you are having trouble getting started, check out last year's stories at [u3abenalla.weebly.com/this-life](https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/this-life).

Our alternative topic is '**A test of courage**', *the brief* - 'Has your courage ever been tested? Tell us a story of your bravery, or when you should have been brave but couldn't summon the courage'. If you would like to read an extended brief or check out some stories on 'A Test of Courage' there is further information on the '[As Time Goes By](#)' page on the website.

It's taster time – if you would like to join us in October and November, perhaps bringing a story chosen from one of our monthly topics, you are most welcome.

Bev Lee

## Be Connected

In addition to Jenny's Sawyer's *Be Connected* classes on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays of the month from 2 to 3.30 pm, we are currently piloting a small group 'Zoom' short course for beginners and on-line mentoring sessions for members keen to try hosting Zoom sessions themselves. There are also some useful 'self-help' resources on the website – go to <https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/using-zoom.html>. If you are interested in learning to attend or host Zoom Meetings, please fill out the online application form at <https://u3abenalla.weebly.com/news/are-you-interested-in-learning-how-to-attend-zoom-meetings> or call Margaret Jenkins on 5762 6944.

Also related to *Be Connected*, U3A Benalla are celebrating **Get On Line Week** with a Pizza Lunch at the Senior's Centre on Wednesday 20 October at 11.45am. Depending on how many people are allowed in the Senior's Centre that day, plans have been made to use the verandah outside our U3A room for some tables and chairs so that we can enjoy the lunch without breaking COVID regulations. If you have neighbours or friends who would like to join our computer classes next year, please bring them along to the lunch so that we can provide them with information regarding the various digital classes available in 2022.

Margaret Jenkins, Bev Lee and Jenny Sawyer

## Bird Watching

### U3A Birdwatching to visit Winton Wetlands on Thursday 14 October 2021

Provided COVID restrictions allow us to have up to 10 people (and hopefully more) for an outdoor activity, there will be a morning birdwatching outing to Winton Wetlands on Thursday 14 October. Some water is currently flowing into the main wetland for the first time since 2016, providing significant areas of marshland along roadsides and other low-lying areas. It is well worth a look, as a number of different waterbirds have moved into the area.

We will meet at the Mokoan Hub café on Lake Mokoan Road at 10am. Bring sturdy walking shoes, a hat, any food or drink you need for the morning, and binoculars if you have them. Maybe mosquito repellent, although mozzies weren't a problem on my recent visit.

I hope we can stop for tea or coffee at the café before heading home.

Please let me know if you plan to attend, and if you need any help with transport. If we are limited to 10 participants, it would be worth booking early.

Our September outing to Reef Hills State Park was cancelled because of COVID restrictions. We missed out by one day.

Kathy Costello Mobile 0447 625755

## Bushwalking – Easy Walks

The ever-changing patchwork of Covid lockdowns and easing restrictions meant that our planned September walk to Kwat Kwat lookout did not take place. On a positive note, it now means we have three interesting walks already rescheduled into 2022 and we will hopefully have a year free of interruption.

The remaining walks for the year are the wetlands walk at Tahbilk (October), and the rescheduled Oxley Milawa walk for November. Details of a December Christmas break up will be in the next newsletter.

In some good news for the month, the Warby-Ovens National Park is now an internationally recognised conservation area, one of only four Australian sites admitted to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Green List. This is a great effort by Parks Victoria and local volunteers, and reminds us what an amazing richness we have available for our walks.



### Wednesday October 6th: Wetlands Walk, Tahbilk

This walk will be through the wetlands at Tahbilk in the grounds of the winery. We will stroll along 6kms of trails and boardwalks, past billabongs and the river flats of the Goulburn. The wetlands support a wide variety of flora and fauna.

Enclosed footwear must be worn, and the trails can be slippery, so consider walking poles. A gold coin donation is required at the entrance. Please bring a picnic lunch, as the previously planned cafe is unavailable. Please confirm with Glen Chessells by Monday October 4th on 0431201077 or [gchess@hotmail.com](mailto:gchess@hotmail.com).

Meet at the Seniors' Complex Carpark, Fawckner Drive, at 9.30am. Members are asked to confirm with Glen if they need transport or can provide it.

### Wednesday 3rd November: Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Oxley to Milawa

The group this month will take to the beautiful King Valley for a Rail Trail walk. Starting at Oxley, the walk of approximately 7 kms along a relatively flat path will lead us to Milawa for lunch at one of the local cafes, Covid restrictions permitting. Car shuttles will be arranged on the day, and for those looking for more exercise after a relaxing lunch, a further 2km brings us to the Milawa Cheese Company. The walk introduces the 116km Rail Trail which winds through north-eastern Victoria.

As always, hat, drink, sunscreen and walking poles are recommended, and we will meet at 9.15am. Please confirm attendance with Glen as above by Monday 1st November, also check to confirm lunch arrangements.

If new members are unsure of their ability for these walks, please check with convenors Glen Chessells as above, or Julie McNeill 0407823031. Car sharing is usually available, with a small contribution to costs.

Julie McNeill

## Bush Walking – Mid Week Walks

The September walk to 'The Paps' was canceled due to covid lockdown.

### Next Midweek Walk - Wednesday 13 October - NED'S LOOKOUT

A wildflower walk along tracks. Bit of a steep climb onto Ned's lookout. Lovely views of surrounding farmland.

Meet at Barkly St tennis courts behind Aldi 8.30 am leave at 8.45 am.

**Rating:** 5 - 3 - 3 (Easy)

**Contact:** Angela Stratton 0419 38 41 87

John Boehm

## Chat n' Chew

September's luncheon was held at Ella Goose, where a delicious lunch was had by all who attended. A big thank you to those who attended, as a few people did not turn up and failed to let Lorraine know.

Chat n' Chew will be held at the Benalla Golf Club on the Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October at 12.30pm Lorraine chose this venue because members can be inside or outside, depending on lockdowns. This will be the last Chat 'n Chew for the year as November will be Christmas lunch. Please leave a text on 0427 376 991, with your name if you want to attend, or if for some reason you are not able to be present on the day.

Lorraine Knox

## Coin Collectors

Our Coin Collectors met on Monday 20th September at the Senior Citizens rooms. We had a roll up of six of our regulars for our show and tell.

Doug advised the Group that the Olympic and Para Olympic 2021 coins can be purchased from Woolies in Benalla and that the Benalla PO can order in coins from RAM (Royal Australia Mint) David who has an extensive coin and note collection gave the Group the history of the dollar coin from its introduction in 1984 to replace the \$1 note including 1992 when no dollar coins were minted to 1995 when collector coins were first introduced.

Rupe presented four interesting gold sovereign coins that belonged to his father. Two were full sovereigns dated 1925 and 1926 (George 5 head) and 2 were dated 1902 and 1908 (Edward 7 head). Rupe told the story of his father having these sewed into shirt by his mother to avoid losing them in a robbery, prior to him sailing to England in the late 1920's.

Jill displayed some coins from her father's collection and spoke of the issues around how to clean coins. The general consensus was hot water only as chemicals can cause the coins to lose their lustre and deteriorate.

Wendy presented her Legends of Anzac folder collection of commemorative coins. These consisted of folders and coins issued through local newsagents.

Doug brought along coins from his pre-decimal collection of pennies including two pennies of note. The 1925 penny is the lowest minted penny, with 170,000 produced, other than the 1930 penny with around 1,800 minted. He also had a 1914 penny, the third lowest mintage of 700,000. Both specimens were in very good condition.

As a group we talked about continuing with a variety of themes for our meetings. At our next meeting we decided that David would bring along some Variety coins (collectable coins with errors) including a CUD coin (Coin Under Developed), Rotated coins, coins with Privy and Mint marks. Our YouTube videos will also continue with PJ's Coin Capers channel and next meeting will include mint/privy marks and forgeries.

Doug Smith

## Community Singing

Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions we were unable to hold Community Singing with Brian Greed in September.

There will be an Email sent to everyone if we are able to hold Community Singing in October.

Margaret Jenkins

## Creative Writing

Out of lockdown and we were able to meet face to face again!

The September writing topics were:

- **She had just two choices. She could forget all about it and move on, or ...**
- **I have a friend who says she is the only person in town who ...**
- **They walked down the drive and across the road**

As usual we enjoyed a varied range of stories and pictures created using words. Stories were a mixture of disturbing, slightly humorous and perhaps mystery. And, is often the case, some of the stories could lead to a sequel.

Our topic for discussion for the class was "emotion" – how can we show emotion rather than telling our readers. For example, "tears streaming down her face" could indicate sadness, or perhaps happiness or laughter, depending on the context, without actually telling the reader. A challenge for our next class is to include some "showing" of emotion rather than "telling" in our writing.

The topics for our September class are:

- **"But why did William murder his brother?"**
- **She stood in the teeming rain, oblivious of the water soaking through her thin nightie**
- **She opened the envelope uncertain of what to expect**

With a pathway out of lockdowns, we will hopefully meet up for our next class on 11 October.

Joy Shirley



## Demystifying Psychology

*“NEWSFLASH”*: see below reference to Fair Work Commissions comment on mandatory Covid Vaccinations and the workplace.

September closed with a study of the Psychology of Covid. We concentrated on “being told what to do” and ethics in a Covid era.

Being told what to do:

We’re familiar with the speed of change in both our day-to-day activities and the leadership advice that has impacted our lives. In the following TED Talk, Alannah Shaikh discusses the 2020 May Economic Forum’s response to Covid 19.



(Click on photo or go to <https://youtu.be/Fqw-9yMV0sl>)

Her key points are:

- The psychological and behavioural aspects of this crisis are not being taken seriously enough.
- Psychological distortions are shaping governments' responses around the world.
- But this crisis also presents an opportunity for states to take these factors into more beneficial consideration.

Alannah Shaikh – the recommendation about mask wearing is one example of the type of change that we have accommodated during Covid-19.

It surprised me to discover that during Covid 19 we “really want is to be told what to do” and that we enjoy being bossed around. Researchers found:

- Shut international borders - 8/10 respondents agreed.
- Support for state governments – 8/10 respondents agreed
- 7/10 respondents agreed that “sometimes people's freedoms need to be restricted to keep Australians safe “,
- 8.5/10 respondents said “Yes” to vaccines (strongest amongst young and older),
- And on the vexed topic of “Should vaccinations be mandatory?” 53-60% Labour/Greens and Coalition voters agreed, and 16% One Nation voters agreed. (See # 3 below).

Reference: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-05-24/annabel-crabb-australia-talks-survey-analysis-covid-19/100142792>

What surprised me about this research was that, rather than enjoying being told what to do, I thought I had trust in effective leadership at a time of great uncertainty. I found some answers in these articles:

1. Five things we learned about crisis leadership during covid-19  
Reference: <https://www.anzsog.edu.au/resource-library/news-media/five-things-we-learned-about-crisis-leadership-during-covid-19>
2. Three reasons why Jacinda Ardern’s coronavirus response has been a masterclass in crisis leadership  
Reference: <https://www.anzsog.edu.au/resource-library/news-media/three-reasons-why-jacinda-ardern-s-coronavirus-response-has-been-a-masterclass-in-crisis-leadership>

The authors propose that “direction-giving”, “meaning-making” and “empathy” are outstanding characteristics of good crisis leadership. This made more sense than the thought of enjoying being told what to do.

## Ethics in a Covid era:

There is nothing straight forward about ethics, so I'll leave you to explore topics of interest in the session power point below. The session content included:

1. There are many models to help us understand and apply ethics.
2. Ethics can be divided into types
  - a) Utilitarian – greatest good for the greatest number of people,
  - b) Deontological – the idea that people should be treated with the greatest respect and dignity,
  - c) Virtue – considering what virtues make the best public relations professional.
3. Ethics and Covid Vaccines. "NEWSFLASH" Since the U3A session on 17 Sept this document has been sent to me. The document pages are not numbered. Scroll three quarters through the document to the heading *PART 2 –VACCINE REQUIREMENTS IN RELATION TO COVID*. See document at : <https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/decisionssigned/html/2021fwcfb6015.htm>
4. Ethical distribution of health resources and standards of care in Covid.
5. Impact and expectations on businesses – "Rustik Café and Foodstore" a local example.

With such a lot to cover on this topic, I hope you cherry-pick something interesting and enjoy yourself.

### **October meetings:**

- Tuesday 5 October – **Zooming** 10:00-12:00. Zoom link is - <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78665666828?pwd=RHLjU1RQL3hDa2tRdWRnN3Jja3hsZz09>  
Meeting ID: 786 6566 6828  
Passcode: 43VUdg

Topic: **Part 1 - The elephant in the room .... • Intelligence and • Memory**

- Friday 13 October – **Face to Face or Zoom\*\*** at 1:00 – 3:00pm – *\*\*Location to be confirmed - number limits in the Seniors Building are currently impacting on U3A's Friday afternoon timetable.*
- Topic: **Part 2 - The elephant in the room .... • Intelligence and • Memory**

Jane Rushworth 0437 621 575

## **Exercises for Fun**

Hoping everyone is keeping fit and well, during this time of lockdown.

It's a great excuse to do a few odd jobs that have been waiting for a time like this to be done!!

Maybe you have had the chance to do the gardening, to stop those Arteries hardening, or taken a walk around our beautiful Benalla Lake.

Whatever happens, I hope we are all back together soon, and enjoying our Exercise Group once again.

Have fun.

Helen Jeffree

## **Exploring the Universe**

### **The Hunt for 'Dark Matter and Dark Energy in the Universe.**

Everything that we have observed in the Universe only adds up to 5%.

At 'Exploring the Universe' we joined the hunt for the missing mass and energy that make up approximately 95 % of the Universe. We reviewed films of physics laboratories deep underground in working mines in the northern hemisphere that are seeking to detect this mysterious force. The detectors are isolated from any sort of interference by placing them underground.

In the early 1930's Astronomer Fritz Zwicky checked calculations in a cluster of galaxies and realised that something didn't add up. According to measurements of visible mass, single galaxies were rotating too fast to be bound together, yet something unknown was preventing them from flying apart. There must be something else there. He called it 'Dark Matter and Dark Energy.' "Dark" meaning we don't know what it is. The theory was confirmed in 1970 but at that stage it was thought that the Universe was static and would remain this way forever.

In 1998 the Hubble in-space telescope observations proved that the Universe is expanding and that acceleration is increasing with time. Scientists calculate that roughly 27% of the Universe consists of Dark

Matter and the other 68% is called Dark Energy. No one knows what these mysterious gravitational forces are. The latest theory is they may be particles that don't interact with matter in any way that we can see or recognise. Einstein's mathematical theory supports this. He was the first to realise 'that empty space is not nothing'. If it can't be proved, there are some who think we may need a whole new law of physics!

Stawell in regional Victoria is the site of the first underground physics lab being built in the southern hemisphere. Still under construction 1,025 metres underground in the working goldmine, its crystal detector will search for tiny hypothetical particles called 'Weakly Interactive Massive Particles.'

The detectors will be identical to those beneath Gran Sasso in Italy's Apennine Range to confirm science results there.

The project is being funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments, Melbourne University and the Italian Institute of nuclear Physics.



References:

NASA Science.

'Zwicky: the outcast genius who unmasked the Universe', John Johnson, Harvard University Press.

Professor Dave Explains the Frontier of Science. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thxksmN9yk>

Bev Morton

## Family Research

Back together again after Zoom sessions in July and August!

In 'pains and gains', Andi described finding that her grandfather had lost his appeal against 'a maintenance order' - leaving her wondering exactly what that was about! Barry found an uncle who had abandoned his family; continued his research on Hansard re land titles in the Shire of Swan Hill; and in an ongoing search, found Lewis Ignatious O'Connor listed as a butcher. Robyn was delighted at finding photographs of the Antique Mart her grandfather owned in Hamilton and accessing other photographs of the building following contact with the Hamilton Historical Society; also, at finding in the electoral rolls that he was a wheelwright.

David shared a solution to an ongoing problem with Ancestry.com freezing – a change from Firefox to Google Chrome. He continues to be perplexed about a photo taken in Glasgow which he thought was of his grandfather's sister but decided it couldn't be as it was taken between 1880 and 1884. On comparing it with a photo of his grandfather's sister taken when she was older, he noticed the two women had similar features.

Marg described enjoying phone contacts with relatives as she writes stories to share in class. Bev reported back on writing a 'vale' for her 103 yr old aunt and godmother, who had been a milliner in Flinders Lane during the early 1930's. Bev had been able to draw upon an interview with her aunt during a visit to see her in Sydney in 2010, when her aunt was 94 and still living in her home. We talked about the importance of talking to our older family members if we have the opportunity.

We waited with bated breath for Margaret's report, as we'd heard there had been important developments in her search to find her mother. Margaret's mother left Margaret and her brother and sister with their grandparents while her husband was at war in 1941-2. We sat spellbound listening as Margaret described her disappointment after receiving DNA results a couple of months ago, then her joy at being contacted by a half sister who had completed a DNA test *after* Margaret had received her own results. A joyous, serendipitous result! We all decided that Margaret's story surpassed the case studies in the handout - '[Unlocking Family Secrets - the emotional impact of genealogical research in trove](#)' - Ashley Barnwell, University of Melbourne, Trove.

Family Stories this month related to '[Memories Treasure Chests](#)' - boxes, shelves, drawers, old suitcases etc - containing objects and artefacts relating to our family history. Stories were captured of forebears by drawing upon photographs; recipe books; a telegram; newspaper reports; a kimono; military items including a dog tag and British War Medals; a stainless steel 'charm' bracelet; a triple strand of simulated pearls; membership badges, a gold pen, watches, an autograph book; a willow pattern saucer and more.



David brought in two boxes – a box of his mother’s containing an eclectic selection of ephemera, from a hospital tag from David's birth to a cutting from the Kilmore Free Press regarding his involvement in a motorcycle crash in 1969, along with assorted receipts “of no particular significance”. His father's box was more ordered, containing memorabilia related to a lifelong passion for shooting.



Next month's topic? **‘A black hole...’** Write about a ‘black hole’ you are still perplexed about in your research. Who does it involve? What do you know about them? Where is the gap in your research? What do you think may have happened ie. What are your ‘hypotheses’/What is your hunch? Why do you think you are still finding it hard to make a breakthrough? Where to next?

Bev Lee and Marg McCrohan

## Film as Literature

Once again, the lockdown prevented us from meeting face to face in September. Some members of the class were able to watch at least one the two films we had chosen for discussion this month. They shared their thoughts with the class via email.

The following are the films that some of the class members talked about:

**“Dream Horse”**: Based on fact, the film revolves around a decaying Welsh mining town and the need for locals to have some hope in their lives. They form an alliance to buy a horse (Dream Alliance) and the plot follows the horse’s rise to fame, with the various problems needed to be overcome. It was a very pleasant film and the ending credits are a must – don’t miss them. Overall, the class rated it as 3 out of 5.

**“From the Vine”**: A man who was born in Italy experiences an ethical crisis when he is asked to change the focus of a manufacturing company which had previously been focussing on sustainability. He travels back to his hometown in rural Italy. With a few locals he tries to reinvigorate his grandfather’s old vineyard to produce wine. It was a light drama with a touch of romance and a hint of comedy. There were talking leaves and gargoyles which in retrospect could have been a mechanism for the lead character’s internal thoughts and conflicts. It was a feel-good film that most of the class enjoyed and was rated at around 3 out of 5.

With BPACC and other cinemas in regional Victoria again open, the film for our October class will be **“Buckley’s Chance”**. This is an Australian film set in Western Australia. A year after the loss of his father, Ridley and his mother, Gloria, move to Western Australia to live with Ridley's estranged grandfather Spencer. Ridley ends up lost deep in the outback on a quest to try to get home. A second film for people who are unable to see “Buckley’s Chance” is **“The Rose Maker”**.

Joy Shirley

## Garden Appreciation

On Thursday 28 October we will meet at the U3A Car Park at 9.30am for a car boot morning tea (BYO your own morning tea), before leaving for our visit to Park Lane Nursery, 95 Park Lane, Wangaratta.

Lunch will be at The BBQ Garden and Providore, 37 Gladstone Street, Glenrowan - a light lunch of picking platters, local produce, gelato, coffee and tea, etc.

It was nice to catch up with you at Benalla Gardens on 23rd September.

All arrangements are subject to Covid-19.

Please let me know if you are coming. Stay safe.

Gwen Turner 0438 627 010

## German

Having not met face to face in August and the more contagious Delta variant ravaging the Shepparton community, a decision was made to move to remote interaction. Predictably, no sooner than this was arranged the emergency abated. Nonetheless, rather than be left frustrated again, the intention is that we shall not meet for the remainder of the year.

The format is similar to that when Covid restricted U3A at the beginning of last year. That is, the phone is the medium for spoken expression and email for written expression. The difference is that all communication is to Horst, whose first language is German.

All members have elected to write in German and most have taken the opportunity to have work corrected. This is akin to have individual tutoring and is wonderful for having individual needs addressed. Participants write about anything of their choosing.

Half the members have taken up the option of speaking by telephone. Often hearing difficulties have been the reason for not doing so. We are sticking to the usual fortnightly structure, making times for the next phone call before hanging up.

This seems to be ticking along well. We are indebted to Horst for his willing commitment to the group. If there are others out there who would like to be involved, please let me know.

Pauline Bailey 0434 147 605

## Investment

The September meeting of Investment was held by Zoom. We welcomed 10 participants including Pat Richardson from Wangaratta who is conducting a group similar to our group through U3A Wangaratta.

Australian equities marked the end of the current Reporting Season in August with an eleven-month run of gains, the longest streak in 78 years. We noted the increased dividends paid by a number of companies, including the large miners which had profited from a high iron ore price for an extended period. We noted that the Iron Ore price had decreased considerably in the last month.



We discussed the fact that large amounts of cash were available for shareholders through the Buy Backs offered by both Commonwealth Bank and Woolworths. Wesfarmers were also having a return of capital to shareholders.

We looked at 10 franked income stock ideas for Australian Investors discussed in a special report by Morningstar. These were projected returns for 2021/2022 and needed to be assessed against current charts for each stock.

The next meeting of Investment will be by Zoom on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 at 2pm. The reason for this is that the Senior Citizens are playing bowls on Tuesday (not the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday), Friday and Saturday afternoons, and there is a limit of 20 people in the whole building at any time. An invitation to the Zoom meeting will be sent out nearer the time.

Margaret Jenkins

## Let's Talk Books

I have negotiated for us to meet next Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October at 2pm in the Seniors Building. We will be in the auditorium (big room). Bring all your reading with you and we will even be able to have afternoon tea. Hooray!

I was talking to Anne Nelson this morning. Anne takes out 10 books a month from the Benalla Library. That is some reading, Anne! Books that Anne enjoyed this month included:

*A Month of Sundays* by Liz Byrski. "A book club is more than wine and laughs" was the beginning of the review of this book. Four women who were members of a bookclub but had not met face to face for many years, were invited for a month to Leura in the Blue Mountains. Each was asked to present a different

favourite book each week for discussion. The books have an unexpected ending for each of them. A most enjoyable read.

*The Widow of Rose House* by Diana Biller. A young widow returns to New York and buys a dilapidated mansion to restore it and her reputation, only to find out that ghost rumours abound - a good story to be told here.

*Hitler's Brothel* by Australian author Steve Matthews. Two sisters separated by War, Ania is imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, her sister Danuta's search for her sister leads her into the dangers of the Polish underground. Each does what they must to survive. 60 years later there is an opportunity to seek justice or revenge. Interesting reading.

Thank you, Anne, for your input this month. Meanwhile I continue to read *The Missing Sister* by Lucinda Ryley. A book with as many pages as The Bible, I am sure. Too heavy to read in bed, but once again a 'cannot put down' book from Lucinda. Lucinda was born in Ireland and the book contains some history of the 'troubles' in Ireland seeking independence from the British. It is well researched.

Heather is reading *Shuggie Bain*, by Scottish American writer Douglas Stewart in his debut novel. The story unfolds as Shuggie, the youngest of three children, grows up with an alcoholic mother in the 1980's in post industrial working class Glasgow. Sounds a good read.

Geraldine McCorkell

## Lifeball

Sadly, even with the easing of regional restrictions after lockdown this month, we were still unable to return to the court. Hopefully the return of indoor community sport outlined in the roadmap will go ahead as planned, and we will manage to get a few games in before Christmas!

With a (covidsafe) picnic to celebrate a milestone birthday for one of our players, we have kept our spirits up. Anyone needing to confirm the return to playing, or to talk about joining, can contact convenor Marlene Pitts on 0407240943.

We anticipate returning on Monday 25th October, 10am at Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre. As the roadmap gives a date of 26th October, however, members are asked to check beforehand with Marlene.

Julie McNeill

## Meet and Mingle

September Meet and Mingle saw a small but enthusiastic group of U3A members listening to Senior Constable Lisa Atkinson and Leading Senior Constable Paula Allen from Benalla Police speaking on Scams.

Lisa's talk emphasised the need to be vigilant when working online. The Scams encountered can be initiated by phone or Email and can cover a range of topics such as unexpected money scams, prize and lottery scams, identity theft, investment scams, dating and romance scams as well as charity and medical scams.

Mr Moussa Taouk who produces cheese at his goat farm at Glenrowan will be the guest speaker at October's Meet and Mingle which will be held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 10am.



Margaret Jenkins

## Music Appreciation

After an enforced absence of two months, it was a joy to be able to gather again in late September. Only one session, of course, this month, picking up where we left off in our programming. Major work under the spotlight was Brahms' "romantic" 3rd Symphony. (Brahms was quite romantically inclined by nature but lacked the courage to commit himself in love and remained single all his days. It is a matter of conjecture where Brahms' romantic inclinations were at the time of the composition, but it is thought there must have been someone in mind at the time). Other (smaller) works in our programme included Elena Kats-Chernin's bouncy "Dance of the Paper Umbrellas"; Prokofiev's light and tuneful 1st Symphony (a delightful foil to the mood in Russia at the time of its composition -1917); and Haydn's Symphony No. 96, nick-named the



“Miracle” symphony, although mistakenly so. For each of the four works the story behind their composition proved as interesting as the music. You can read about them and listen to a performance of each by following the links on the [Music Appreciation](#) page of the U3A website.

Bill Squire

## Page Turners

August and September saw *Pageturners* unable to meet due to that nasty bug. We had to be satisfied with solo reading. The August book, ***Mayflies* by Andrew O’Hagan**, was a great read about masculine friendships that last over time. The charismatic leader of a teenage boys’ gang, Tully, like Jimmy his mate, uses education to rise out of their working class backgrounds and both become successful after scholarships get them through higher education. They keep in touch but in their 50s, Tully discovers he has an incurable cancer and asks his old friend to arrange euthanasia in Switzerland for him. While the this may sound grim, it’s a big-hearted book about courage, loyalty and friendship.

Our September meeting was to have read ***The Lying Life of Adults* by Elana Ferrante**. This book is about two years in the life of a teenage girl growing up in a middle-class family that has secrets. Her aunt Vittoria is shunned by her parents who have successfully risen out of their humble origins, while Vittoria still lives in a desperately poor part of Naples. Giovanna wants to get to know her aunt and with her parents’ consent starts a series of visits that shatter her views of her father and the comfortable life they lead. Her parents’ marriage breaks up and Giovanna’s life becomes increasingly turbulent as she navigates her way through the many lies her family conceals as well as trying to get through the frustrations of adolescence.

Both books are good reads with an emphasis on complex relationships by authors who are very close observers of the human condition.

Meg Dillon

## Patchwork



The Patchwork group met twice in September, with the installation of a beautiful wall hanging featuring quilted fishes and ‘show and tell’ at our ‘third Thursday’ afternoon session.

Our ‘fifth Thursday’ all day workshop provided the opportunity to share stories about the earthquake, community news, anxieties about almost constant exposure to scams, and more, all while meditatively piecing together patchwork pieces, embroidering, or knitting, at times with the hum of sewing machines in the background.



## Recorder Group

Chatting with convenor, Janet Douglas, it appears the Recorder group hasn't been able to meet for months. It is very difficult to stay masked and play the recorder! Reed instruments such as the recorder are also subject to more restrictions than other instruments. It seems rather unlikely that the Recorder Group will be able to play at the end of year 'Meet and Mingle'. However, they are keeping in touch by email and trying to take time to practise!

## Saturday Cards – 500

Unfortunately, cards on Saturday has been put on hold during the lockdowns we are currently having. It has been months since we last met! It will be so good to get back to our enjoyable activity when things get back to some normality. It is hoped that we can meet again soon, however we are proposing to change our meeting days to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of each month. I will contact those who have been missing out on cards as soon as we can meet again.

Heather Wallace

## Singing for Fun

At the moment only ten people are allowed to meet in The Hub, so our Singing for Fun and Harmony sessions had to be cancelled in September.

We missed the opportunity to wish one of our Leaders, Margaret Merriman, a happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in person. Marg is celebrating not only her birthday, but also the birth of her grandson Angus.

Hopefully Singing will be able to recommence soon. I will send an Email to everyone when this can happen.

Margaret Jenkins

## Stock and Land

Wild dogs are a particular concern for farmers in areas bordering on the bush. The guest speaker at Stock and Land on Tuesday 5 October will be Scott Stowe, who speaks to farmers about local wild dog management at community meetings across North-East Victoria. Scott will talk about his role and the challenges wild dogs present to farming communities. Tuesday 5 October, 10 am to 12 midday, U3A meeting Room.

David Palmer

## Sustainability

Over the last several weeks the media has been full of "Will the Prime Minister declare a target of Net Zero emissions by 2050, or will he not?" And of course, there has been the issue of the resistance from the Nationals.

The Nationals don't seem to have the support of the agriculture sector for their resistance as the major farming and livestock groups have set their own target for emissions reductions. It seems that the Nationals are more concerned about coal miners in NSW and Queensland, as the writing is certainly on the wall for the phasing out of coal.

We recently viewed a Foreign Correspondent program, "*Old King Coal*", which looked at what was happening in Spain, where the government has declared an end to coal mining and coal fired energy. The program interviewed some of the miners who had been able to take government funded early retirement and others who had moved to different government sponsored jobs. There was some criticism from former miners about this transition program.

We have often talked about the need for a national transition plan in Australia to help coal mining areas cope with the decline of coal mining. At our most recent session we discussed an article about what had happened in the Latrobe Valley with the sudden closure of the Hazelwood power station. The Victorian government established the Latrobe Valley Authority, with a \$226 million rescue package designed to retrain workers and entice workers to the Valley. It seems that this transition plan has worked well, as the gloomy predictions for the Latrobe Valley following Hazelwood's closure have not eventuated, and there has been an increase in employment rates. Members felt that what had happened in the Latrobe Valley could provide some guidance for a national transition plan.

John Lloyd



## Tech Savvy Beginners – Apple

After COVID Restrictions and Lockdowns have curtailed the U3A program this month Tech Savvy Apple completed three sessions; Sessions 12, 13 and 14.

We discussed how computing technology is becoming increasingly more evident and important in our lives. This seems to have been accelerated by the pandemic.

This month we have explored the FaceTime, Zoom, MyGov, Emails, AppleNews, ABC News, BorrowBox, and AppleBooks.

When emailing we learned how to attach a news article and also just part of an article by using the Select, Copy and Paste functions.

So, when unable to see friends and family the iPad can help you communicate with them.



Jenny Sawyer

## Tech Talks

At our last Tech Talks we listened to an interesting lecture by Les where he acquainted us with his response to damage to an amplifier after a power surge. Les showed us the wiring diagrams involved in electrical circuits and what is required in the theory and practicality of replacement and repair of a complicated piece of equipment.

After that we relaxed by watching two videos relating to Quantum Mechanics and Dark Matter. Quantum Mechanics is the study of the very small which is nevertheless surrounded by large areas of space and not subject to the forces of gravity. We know Dark matter makes up a large percentage of the universe but we have not yet been able to prove its existence. Neither of these subjects are part of our normal discourse but are important matters which in time will eventually have to be understood by everyone. By listening to lectures we hope in time we will gradually begin to comprehend.

We finished up by watching a video on the History of the Sydney Opera House. The Sydney Opera House took a long time to build and was the subject of many Political battles and was often used as a political football. It is however an example of both style and substance. It is undoubtedly a Work of Art that was fortunately not destroyed by the government's desire to finish the job as soon as possible after they dispensed with the services of the Architect.

Neville Gibb

## Wine Appreciation

Our trip to Sam Miranda's Winery in Oxley had to be postponed for the third time in late September. Hopefully we will be able to meet there in October, the weather will be kind so that being outside is a possibility, and it will be 'fourth try lucky'! All being well, we will meet at the usual place, but an hour later, at 10.30 am on Wednesday 27 October.

[Chrismont Winery](#) has been booked for the U3A end of year celebration on Tuesday 23 November. The cost of the 2-course meal will be \$50 and the bus fare \$10. The bus will leave the Benalla Bus Lines depot at 11.00am. There will be an application form and more details in the November newsletter.

Keith & Heather Rogers 5762 4086

**Celebrate 'Get On-Line Week'**

**Pizza Lunch**

**Wednesday 20 October**

**U3A Meeting Room 'and environs'**

**11.45 am - 'Delta willing'**

# Covid Chronicles

## What is amusing, distracting, uplifting you during Covid lockdowns?

*From Jan Andrews –*

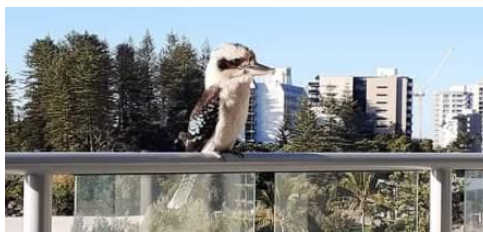
“I coped surprisingly well in recent lockdowns, owing to being in a sixth-floor beachside apartment in Coolangatta for 2.5 months.

Dozens of available walks, many cafes downstairs, endless beaches, whales, rainforests, mountains, art galleries, rainforest cafes, boogie boarding and sun-lounging on the balcony to the sound of surf and glorious views.

The pool for more exercise and the spa for injured muscles was okay too!

Home now to lockdown, but daffs still out, bluebells & other hundreds of bulbs still to come out, and wildflowers galore.”

*Lucky Jan!*



*From Bev Lee –*

“During lockdown I’ve been looking out of other people’s windows around the world! An article in ‘The New Yorker’ introduced me to a website called [WindowSwap](#), which plays videos taken from other people’s windows. I’m missing the beach and ocean terribly, so I’ve particularly enjoyed looking out the window at a beach in Trinidad, Tobago; towards the beach at El Palmar, Panama, and out an open windowed balcony towards North Bondi Beach, Sydney. It’s best to click icon for ‘loop on’ not ‘loop off’. Click on ‘Open a new window anywhere in the world’ at the bottom of the screen to change views. The content is crowdsourced, and anyone, from anywhere, can upload a video. Looking out of other people’s windows in this way is quite meditative.”

*From Neville Gibb – an extract story ‘[Right Here, Right Now](#)’...*

...“On an individual level some of us have enjoyed the lock downs more than others. ...

...I would say my day is this.

I get up and feed the birds. I try and commune with both Cockatoos and King Parrots. The Cockies are introverted and uninterested in me. The King Parrots are much more friendly and appear much more intelligent, but are intimidated by the Cockies.

I indulge myself in long showers because there is no hurry to be anywhere.

I prepare myself a vegetarian breakfast that I hope includes all the required nutrients for a healthy body.

This procedure takes approximately an hour, but I have the time and I listen to the BBC as I am preparing the ingredients. The microwave oven makes this an easy exercise. What did we do before we had microwave ovens?

I check the daily TV guide and set my recording box up to record anything worthwhile that is being transmitted on that day. I have the ambition to not watch what is on TV at the moment but to watch what I have considered worth watching on TV. Hence, I record a number of programmes in order to watch them at a later time.

I have a leisurely breakfast, catching up on what I have recorded over the past few days or even past few weeks.

I sometimes have a post breakfast snooze. This can be guaranteed to always fill up my energy tank.

I cannot get through all these rituals before 12 noon.

In the afternoon I might go out and inspect the garden. And consider what I should be doing for its upkeep.

But I can always claim that the lock down says I should be inside and return to the safety of the lounge with its relaxing pillows.”

*Neville Gibb*

# Program News

## 'Get Online Week'

U3A Benalla are planning to celebrate '~~Get On-Line Week~~' with a **Pizza Lunch** at the Senior's Centre on Wednesday 20 October at 11.45am. Depending on how many people are allowed in the Senior's Centre that day, plans have been made to use the verandah outside our U3A room for some tables and chairs so that we can enjoy the lunch without breaking COVID regulations.

If you have neighbours or friends who would like to join our computer classes next year, please bring them along to the lunch so that we can provide them with information regarding the various digital classes available in 2022.

## Program changes

*Seniors Centre:* A maximum of 20 people are currently allowed into the Benalla Seniors' Centre at one time. Most of our classes have resumed with the exception of Exercises for Fun. U3A classes on Friday afternoons and Saturdays in the Seniors building are being rescheduled, as the Seniors are using the 20 people allowance for indoor bowling then.

*Coinda Hub:* A maximum of 10 people are currently allowed in Coinda's Hub at one time. As we use the Hub for larger groups, groups will be unable to meet at the Hub until further notice.

Hopefully 'indoor community sports' such as Lifeball will be able to recommence in late October.

The updated [U3A Benalla Covid Safe Plan \(v5\)](#) is now available.

## Tech Savvy Device 'Library'

We currently have iPads and Android smart phones available for members to borrow to develop basic skills and/or 'try before you buy'. Contact Bev on 5762 8171 or [bevlee47@gmail.com](mailto:bevlee47@gmail.com) for further information.

## New Courses and Activities for 2022

Could you, or do you know anyone who could, teach Ukelele? run a Field Naturalist/Land Care group? facilitate a 'Poet's Corner? Do you have another idea for a new course or activity? Chat to a committee member about your idea. If you'd like help to develop a program proposal, email [bevlee47@gmail.com](mailto:bevlee47@gmail.com).

## Online Energy Saving Workshop

Are you on a Centrelink Pension or DVA Veteran Concession Payment (or card) and interested in accessing the \$250 Power Saving Bonus? You are invited to a free online workshop on Monday 25 October at 10.30 am. The 30 minute workshop is being offered to U3A Benalla and District by the Independent Energy Info Hub and Council of the Ageing (COTA), in partnership with Victorian Government. If you would like to receive an email invitation to attend the online meeting, RSVP [bevlee47@gmail.com](mailto:bevlee47@gmail.com) by 20 October.

## "Earthquake Tremors hit U3A Benalla Office in the Seniors Building.... paintings found on office floor!"



# What's On\*

*\*Subject to changing pandemic regulations*

## Monday, 4 October

09:30 Cancelled/Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Collectors – Sugar Bowls  
10:00 Cancelled/Lifeball  
10:00 Cancelled/Art Appreciation  
16:00 Meditation

## Tuesday, 5 October

10:00 Zoom - Demystifying Psychology – 'The Elephant in the Room' Part 1  
10:00 Cancelled - Page Turners  
10:00 Stock and Land – Wild Dog Management  
14:00 Armchair Traveller – Brian Greed  
14:00 Let's Talk Books @ Seniors (large room)

## Wednesday, 6 October

09:30 Easy Walks - Wetlands Walk, Tahbilk  
09:30 Play Reading  
13:30 'A Taste of Art'  
14:00 Be Connected

## Thursday, 7 October

10:00 Singing for Fun  
10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)  
13:00 Patchwork

## Friday, 8 October

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

## Monday, 11 October

09:30 Cancelled/Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Cancelled/Lifeball  
14:00 Creative Writing  
14:00 Garden Team

## Tuesday, 12 October

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

## Wednesday, 13 October

08:30 Mid-Week Walks – Ned's Lookout  
10:00 Cancelled/Recorder Group  
13:30 Film as Literature – 'Buckley's Chance' or 'The Rose Maker'  
14:00 Be Connected

## Thursday, 14 October

10:00 Birdwatching – Meet at Mokoan Hub at 10 am for birdwatching at Winton Wetlands  
10:00 Cancelled/Harmony Group @ The Hub  
10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)  
13:30 Executive Committee Meeting

## Friday, 15 October

09:30 Sustainability  
12:30 Chat 'n Chew – Benalla Golf Club  
13:00 Demystifying Psychology – 'The Elephant in the Room' Part 2 – Location to be confirmed.

## Saturday, 16 October

13:30 Cancelled/Saturday Games - '500'

## Monday, 18 October

09:30 Cancelled/Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Cancelled/Lifeball  
13:30 Coin Collectors  
16:00 Meditation

## Tuesday, 19 October

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

## Wednesday, 20 October

10:00 Meet & Mingle: Moussa Taouk, Goat farmer  
11:45 ~~Get on Line Week~~ Pizza Lunch  
13:30 'A Taste of Art'  
14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

## Thursday, 21 October

10:00 Cancelled/Singing for Fun @ The Hub  
10:00 Tech Savvy Beginners (Android)  
13:00 Patchwork

## Friday, 22 October

10:00 Music Appreciation  
14:00 Armchair History

## Monday, 25 October

09:30 Cancelled/Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Cancelled/Lifeball  
10:30 Energy Saving Workshop  
14:00 As Time Goes By – Memoir - 'This Life'  
17:00 Newsletter reports due today

## Tuesday, 26 October

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

*\* There may be easing of restrictions from today \**

## Wednesday, 27 October

10:30 Wine Appreciation – Sam Miranda, Oxley  
10:00 Recorder Group  
14:00 Tech Savvy Beginners 2021 (Apple)

## Thursday, 28 October

09:30 Garden Appreciation - Park Lane Nursery  
10:00 Community Singing @ The Hub  
13:00 Family Research – 'A Black Hole...'

## Monday, 1 November

09:30 Exercises for Fun  
10:00 Collectors  
10:00 Lifeball  
10:00 Art Appreciation – no session (Cup weekend)  
14:00 Investment (New timeslot)  
16:00 Meditation

## Tuesday, 2 November

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 November

09:15 Easy Walks – Rail Trail, Oxley to Milawa  
09:30 Play Reading  
13:30 'A Taste of Art'  
14:00 Be Connected