



Benalla and District Inc.

Newsletter – September 2020

U3A Benalla & District Inc

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Please send all newsletter items for the newsletter to newsletter@u3abenalla.com by 25 Sep 2020

Editor's message

The past two months have been particularly busy for our President, Dorothy Webber, who is packing up her house and downsizing for her upcoming move. Dorothy has also been helping family during this time. U3A has, however, not been far from her mind as Dorothy has still been working with U3A Victoria for the betterment of our group, as well as maintaining contact with council and other entities to ensure that our future is sound. We thank Dorothy for her continuing work during this time.

Our Secretary, Geraldine McCorkell, has been keeping in contact with members in outlying regions as well as those who are not able to travel into town, making sure they are coping with the current Stage 3 restrictions. Our thanks go to Geraldine for her time and efforts in making sure vulnerable members of our group do not feel abandoned.

There are further examples of concern and support for others in this newsletter. This is what a community organization is all about, working and supporting other people during their time in isolation.

Take care of yourselves and take the time to make that phone call to someone who you know. It will almost certainly brighten their day and be important for their well-being.

Heather Wallace, Newsletter Editor

Covid Musings

Victoria's regional Stage 3 restrictions began the day after we emailed out the last Newsletter. This photo, featuring Easy Walks group members, mandated masks in place, was taken by Wendy Sturgess at Winton Wetlands on Wednesday 5 August, their last walk for at least six weeks.



After this 'final interim Easy Walk', group member Andi Stevenson, shared this post on her Facebook page -

“So many thanks to U3A Benalla and District & those who kept things happening in our period of partial freedom; Bushwalks (Wende Sturgess & Marg Walshe) - Bird-watching (Kathy Costello) - the picnic - and the rest! And to those who will keep things happening as we dive back under (oh blimey Creative Writing is next week - where's the pen...)”

Hear, Hear!

Many members are, within the limits of Stage 3 restrictions, touching base with others through phone and video calls, socially distanced and masked care visits and lakeside walks.

Margaret forwarded this photo of U3A member Shirley Vickers, who turned 92 on the 25 August, on the newly completed ramp which allows easy access from her front door.

“Shirley was so excited she attached balloons and invited me to view it from the street – ‘Social Distancing’, of course”.



We have two stories for Covid Musings this month – thank you so much to Bev Morton and Claire Rudolph for agreeing to their publication in the newsletter.

‘Portrait of a Pandemic’

Two wild ducks are slowly crossing the deserted main street in Goorambat. There’s no hurry as there’s no traffic. This is a regular morning excursion for them and portrays life in a very small country town in our second lockdown during this pandemic. They are going to the Hotel that is closed.

With the highly infectious Covid 19 virus worsening in Victoria a “State of Disaster” has been declared. In regional Victoria we enter another six weeks of stage three restrictions. There are only four reasons to leave home - a medical appointment, brief shopping, work or study and exercise. We can’t have anyone visiting our homes. On Sunday afternoon there were joyful cries as two women friends met accidentally on the footpath.

Life on my corner block has become very quiet. I have only one neighbour who lives behind his seven-foot fence. The park and the empty Hall are on the other side and the grain silos opposite.

The tourists who thronged our small town viewing our silo art, no longer visit. There is no one admiring the bright eyes of Millie the barking owl who adorns the full length of a tall concrete silo. No eager tourists with cameras and drones record the lifelike painting of the three working draught horses on the silo opposite my house.

The New South Wales border is closed. The empty V/Line bus that now runs from Yarrawonga and connects with trains at Benalla swishes through the town six times a day without stopping. No one waits at the bus stop, no one gets off. The radio plays the rhythmic beat of the song, “Living in a ghost town!”

Passing the local cemetery, I see the stark reality of the pandemic; a funeral where the only mourners are five men in navy suits standing distanced from each other around a freshly dug grave.

A rumble on a rough patch of road heralds a truck going to the silos. Any activity over there has become company. The sound of wheat being loaded onto the truck is of welcome manmade origin!

The most positive experience is collecting our mail from the post office. Here those who are living alone have contact with other people. We smile behind our masks and greet each other with enthusiasm. Our postmistress radiates good cheer from behind her safety screen.

Bird life is restricted by human activity. With no one around varieties and numbers have increased and the bird song is beautiful. Brightly coloured parrots lift our spirits. A friendly honey eater is already conning me to share the coming fruit harvest.

Now that we have “Time,” we have no excuse to procrastinate. All those tasks that we have pushed aside can now be done.

In my quiet corner of the world, peace reigns. This day is mine to mould as I wish. There is no pressure, there is nothing I have to do, but so much that can be achieved. Friends and family have become even more important. Although they are far away, I can sit down with a coffee and the phone for a pleasant interlude.

When I was very young, I promised myself that someday I would spend some time alone. In later years I completely changed my mind. Be careful what you wish for! That time is here; right now. We look forward to better times to come.

Bev Morton

‘Right here, Right now’

This continued isolation for Covid 19 is doing my head in right here, right now!!!!!!!!!!

At times I have been talking to the walls. Any day now I swear they will answer, and I will know then that I have really lost it.

Living alone with these restrictions is not for sissies and requires dedication. Prior to stage 3 lock-down I had no great problems with the restrictions. My project was to paint the inside of the house and that certainly helped fill in the time.

Immediately after that I found myself in hospital for 3 weeks and on arrival home found myself with little energy and even less motivation. That was when the rot started to set in. I thought jail might be an easier alternative. No housework, no shopping, no gardening and best of all no cooking!

After getting out of bed on one occasion I thought to myself “Why should I make the bed? No one sees it but me”. So, I didn’t make it. I also figured with no likely visitors I could swan around for the rest of the day in my PJ’sso I did. Next day I gave myself a good talking to. I realised it would be so easy to slip into lassitude and daily monotony.

I asked a friend around for Devonshire Tea on a Saturday afternoon. The sun was shining, and we enjoyed a good chat soaking up its rays. The sun really does lift the spirits even if the air is chilly. I also organised a Trivia night on Zoom for the Gliding Club. That was the most people I have conversed with in one sitting. It was therapeutic to enjoy the company of others even if contact was via a tiny photo on screen. It was great to have a laugh.

I now set myself a target of some sort for the day to give myself a sense of purpose. It may be something simple such as clean the fridge or tidy that cupboard. I find reaching those little goals allows me to feel happier in myself.

Like us all I miss family contact and hugs I really miss my hugs.....

The fact that we know there is light at the end of the tunnel is a time to work toward.

The walls and I can’t wait.

Claire Rudolph

Group Reports

‘As Time Goes By’ – Memoir Writing

It is always a thrill when stories by ‘As Time Goes By’ group members arrive in my email inbox each month. This month’s stories, [‘Right Here, Right Now’](#), explore our experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic from many different angles and are well worth reading. Two ‘Right Here, Right Now...’ stories have been included in this newsletter; others will be published in future newsletters and included in [‘Covid-19 Musings’](#).

Becoming immersed in writing memoir-based stories is a wonderful way to stave off loneliness, particularly if living alone. Reminiscing is also supposed to be good for retaining our linguistic and other skills! If you

would like to write and submit stories on our monthly topics during this most unusual, rather surreal, time, email them to me at bevelee47@gmail.com on or around the 4th Monday of the month or arrange to drop your story in my letterbox!

Our September topic - due on or around Monday 28 September – is *'I came down with a thud'...* or *'Out of the Blue'* - 'Share your memories of a time when 'you came down with a thud', or when something happened 'out of the blue', in 500 words'.

Bev Lee

Bushwalking

Easy Walks



The final interim Easy Walk was attended by seven energetic walkers on Wednesday 5 August 2020.

We walked from the truck stop on Old Sydney Road to the Yarrawonga Road near the DK Henderson factory then returned--a distance of approximately 7 kms.

This area is full of bird life and native bushes and has been well regenerated to preserve the creek banks, which have significant erosion. The wattle is just coming into its full glory. Part of the route followed the railway line and also went past the concrete cast plant. This is the trail which connects Benalla to the Winton dam wall and then onto the Mokoan Hub. We were lucky that despite a very cold start to the day and an earlier cool wind, it was pleasant enough for the walk.

As a result of the tightening of the COVID-19 restrictions from 6 August, this will be the last Easy Walk until possibly mid-September. Please keep up to date on the website for notification of the next walk when restrictions ease.

Wendy Sturgess and Margaret Walsh

Collectors

My fondness for kerosene lamps began in 1966 when I took my mother to visit a friend, who had on display dozens of kerosene lamps. I think I sat there mesmerised by these beautiful lamps for the entire visit.

Many years later Mum, knowing my fondness for kerosene lamps, arrived back from a holiday with the beautiful milky blue lamp which took pride of place in our home. It was not just ornamental, it was kept full of lamp oil with matches beside, and well used because the power often went off, usually at dinner time with dinner half cooked and small boys needing a bath. The problem was eventually fixed but despite the



inconvenience it was lovely sitting by lamp light in the lounge room which was heated by a wood heater. This is the first lamp on the left in the photo.

We were living in Benalla when I purchased my next lamp at a clearing sale in Waller Street. I stood for hours and it was auctioned quite late in the proceedings. There was another bidder for the lamp who I think was equally keen but eventually I became the proud owner of the next lamp in the photo.

My sister and I had a holiday in England in 1997. We stopped at a village and had coffee next to an antique shop. Against my better judgement I had a quick look inside and saw the green kerosene lamp I eventually purchased. I was told it was a 1930's lamp. It is a double burner and has an unusual chimney which is flat on two sides. This was fine while we had our hire car but became a problem when we had to leave our car in Reading and travel back to London by train and then more trains to Archway station. My sister remembers wrestling with two lots of luggage while I sailed along carrying my precious lamp, quite oblivious to her struggles.

I bought the amber lamp at Camberwell Market. I would often catch a tram down Whitehorse Road and then another down Burke Road to the market during visits to Melbourne. I saw it on several visits and eventually decided that, if the lamp was still there on my third visit, I would buy it, which it was and so I did. It is also a double burner, which apparently is desirable as it shows a brighter light.

The little pink lamp, although pretty, was probably not a good buy as it's a bit wobbly. I think I bought it in Balwyn. I put it on the floor once when I was dusting in a hurry and kicked it over, but it didn't break. I thought that was a pretty silly thing to do as I could have broken it, however I put it back on floor continued my dusting, kicked it over again and this time broke the bottom of the chimney. It is now glued up and you can't see the break, but I know it's there.

None of my lamps are shown in a book I bought on lamps which features much grander lamps. Mine are far less grand but give me a lot of pleasure.

Judith Borthwick

Creative Writing

Our Creative Writing class has continued with members selecting from a list of topics to write a story and then share with the class. After reading the stories, the members are providing feedback to the authors.

The topics for our July class were:

The surface of the lake was like a mirror

The greatest thing in the world

The four beautiful people were laughing

Within minutes it was all action

The class seemed to enjoy the range of topics, with each topic used at least once. One class member even managed to weave in all four topics. Two stories created four different characters, telling about their lives. It will be interesting to see if these different characters could be used to write new stories based in future months if the prompts work.

Some members continue to also write entries for the Australian Writers' Centre Furious Fiction over the first weekend of the month. For August, we were challenged to write something humorous including a sandwich plus the words DIZZY, EXOTIC, LUMPY, TINY, TWISTED. We found this combination challenging. For example, I do not normally write humorous stories. It will be interesting to read the winning story at the end of the month. You can see them on the Australian Writers' Centre's 'Furious Fiction' page (<https://www.writerscentre.com.au/furious-fiction/>) after 26 August.

Our next class is scheduled for 14 September with a choice between the following topics:

I have already set down the details of some of the most notorious things we did.

There were other victories

Still the woman approached

We will continue to share our stories and feedback via email. If anyone else would like to write on any of these topics, please send them to me at jshirley@internode.on.net and I will forward to the class, and also share the stories from the class with you.

Joy Shirley

Demystifying Psychology

Farewell August and “hello” Covid 2.0. This is proving to be a more subdued lockdown and a long haul for many. Thankfully, we are not as limited as our Melbourne families and friends. Keep up the wry humor, stay well, look out for yourselves and yours ... and cuddle a pet.



INKCINCT Cartoons by Ditchy. inkcinct.com.au 25082020



Hugo and Charli .. my pint-sized Covid comfort.

Since May we have rambled around Forensic Psychology and sauntered down paths depending on our interests. Recently we looked at eye-witness testimony and theories of crime.

The “Monkey Thief” video and questionnaire proved enlightening. We decided that few of us would make reliable eyewitnesses.

Theories of crime were familiar to us. Theorists variously attribute crime to genes, social difficulties, who you hang out with, and plain old free will. Laws, the design of jails, and personal attitudes (amongst other considerations) reflect one or more of these theoretical explanations. We wrapped up this topic by sharing ideas based on:

- our individual view of crime,
- Government(s) views on crime as demonstrated in laws and funding decisions.

These were “idea joggers” for the discussion:

Description of 4 Theories of Crime <https://schoolworkhelper.net/theories-of-crime-classical-biological-sociological-interactionist/>

Explore your preferred Political Party websites - law and order policies.

Page 10 of Victorian Government (Labor) Community Safety Statement 2017

https://communitysafety.vic.gov.au/media/1072/djr001_g_css01_lr.pdf



On Wednesday September 2nd we started on a topic of curious interest – the psychological profile of the current President of America.

Many have struggled to make sense of his current brand of leadership.

We began to explore some theories/explanations. You never know, Benalla U3A just might come up with the answer.

The resources from this session are now on the webpage.

Cartoon: [David Rowe](#), 2016

Join us next on Friday 18th September 1:00 to 3pm. Use this link

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77011313324?pwd=eU5FUWNxQjNoQUhranJFNEQxSlFndz09>

Meeting ID: 770 1131

3324 Password: 6Fq8Ce

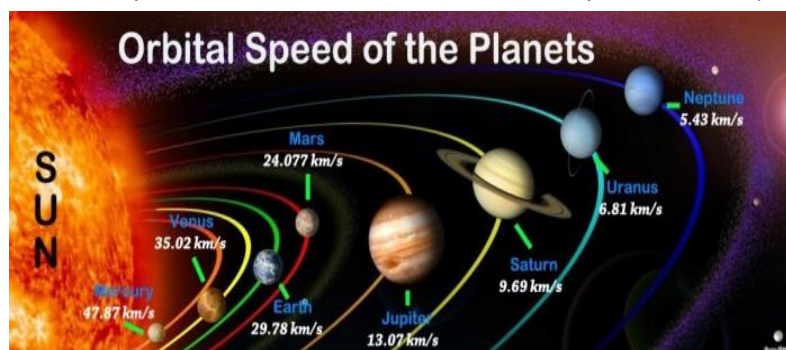
Jane Rushworth

Exploring the Universe

Highway to Mars!

International travel may be banned, but three spacecraft have departed for the latest destination, Mars.

The distance between Earth and the Red planet is rapidly shrinking. "By the time you finish reading this sentence, you'll be 40 km closer to Mars." This quote is from [spaceweather.com](https://www.spaceweather.com) on 21 August 2020.



The planets of our Solar System orbit the Sun in elliptical orbits at varying distances and different speeds.

It is like a raceway. Staying at their own distances, they overtake and lap each other.

The race that we are interested in is between Earth and our neighbour Mars.

Earth travels at approximately 107,826 km/hour. Mars is slower at an average speed of 86,871 kms/hour and orbits the Sun every 1.88 Earth years. Mars and Earth are at their closest every 26 months when they have an alignment on the same side of the Sun. This provides an ideal window to launch a space craft on a shorter journey to Mars with a saving in fuel costs. The optimal window to launch to Mars this year was from mid-July to mid-August.

Three space agencies have launched spacecraft in July - the United States, China, and the United Arab Emirates. After a seven months journey they will be captured by the gravity of Planet Mars and if all goes well will arrive in February.

The U.S. plans to land the next generation rover named Perseverance to search for life on Mars. It has the capability to drill into the soil and collect samples for collection at a later date. It is also carrying a small prototype helicopter that will be used to survey the landscape.

China also has a rover on its way to Mars, the Tianwen-1 mission. Very ambitious, it comprises an orbiter, a lander and a rover. If it succeeds it will be a triumph of technology. The orbiter has a high-resolution camera that will select a landing site for April.

The United Arab Emirates has launched an Orbiter named Hope to collect data on the atmosphere. They have a different agenda, to accomplish this before the 50th anniversary of the UAE, to inspire students in technology. Hope is a joint project with the Universities of Colorado, California, Berkeley and Arizona in the U.S.

The European Space Agency rover that we studied last year at 'Exploring the Universe' has still not passed its landing parachute tests and has been delayed until 2022.

Meanwhile, observe Mars through a telescope before mid-October if you can. It will not be closer or as bright until 2035 when NASA plans are afoot to send Astronauts to the Red Planet.

Mars: Why Now? A three-minute guide. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLnHTtL8hV8>

Bev Morton

Film as Literature

We have continued watching a film of our own choice, sharing our thoughts with the class via email. The films watched for August were:

The Bookshop, 2017: Based on the book of the same name, rated as 4/5. It had some haunting background songs and beautiful photography of the quaint seaside town and surrounds and good performances.

The King's Speech, 2010: A biographical historical drama, telling the story of King George VI, his impromptu ascension to the throne of the British Empire in 1936, and the speech therapist who helped the unsure monarch overcome his stammer. Rated as 4+/5, winning a number of academy awards.

The Piano, 1993: In the mid-19th century, a mute woman is sent to New Zealand along with her young daughter and prized piano for an arranged marriage to a wealthy landowner. Another 4+/5 film, winning academy awards.

Midnight in Paris, 2011: Classed as a fantasy/comedy/drama, Owen Wilson stars as an aspiring writer, Gil Pender, who arrives in Paris with his fiancée, Inez, played by Rachel Adams and plans to finish his debut novel. This was rated as 3/5, an entertaining and feel good film.

The Children Act, 2017: A drama starring Emma Thompson as a judge (Fiona), married to Jack, a university lecturer (played by Stanley Tucci). This film is based on the book of the same name by Ian McEwan, telling of a court ruling intervening to force a blood transfusion for an 18-yearold against his parent's religious stand. It was rated as 3/5.

Stan and Ollie, 2018: A biographical comedy-drama film based on the later years of the lives of the comedy double act Laurel and Hardy. The film strays from the truth a bit, but the result is a film that portrays the era well and was rated as 3/5.

Mary, Queen of Scots, 2018: This told of the relationship between Mary, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I. This was intriguing as a period drama and the costumes were beautiful. All actors were wonderful & I give it a 4+/5

War of the Worlds (TV series), 2019: The new series on SBS. WAR OF THE WORLDS. Rated M15+. Some scenes are subtitled. There are 8 episodes, with filming in England, Belgium and France. This is still screening on SBS and available on SBS OnDemand.

The Last Song, 2010: The parents of Ronnie and Jonah are divorced, and the children have not seen their father for quite some time. The story tells of the developing relationships between the children and their father when they are forced to spend time with him. It was rated as 3+/5

The class members continue to enjoy the process and we will continue with this approach until we are able to resume our usual class sessions. We would welcome anyone who wishes to participate by sharing thoughts about films they have watched and are interested in hearing comments about films others have watched. You can send me a message on jshirley@internode.on.net and I will share your thoughts with the class. Our next "class" is scheduled for **9 September** and comments are due around that date.

Joy Shirley

Garden Appreciation



Hello everyone!

Spring is here 😊, rain, sunshine, beautiful daffodils flowering, pears, pretty annuals and much more.

Gardens are great way to make us feel happy as they are forever changing, we can dream in them, dig and move plants, weed, walk around, exercise, read, water and feed, and sit while in our Garden.

Stay safe, keep your glass half full.

Gwen Turner



German

I started as a pronunciation coach just as Covid-19 hit and now another month has passed without the opportunity to properly speak face to face with each other. However, we seem to make progress with the help of good U tube lessons which are abundantly available if one looks for them. I hope I was able to match appropriate lessons to the various beginners or advanced members. We are now beginning to listen to and read full stories. When we can finally meet again it will be interesting to see how well members can converse in German with each other. A trip to Germany may be a while away, but when it's possible again, travel certainly helps to be able to converse. It amazes me how much I have relearned, after 60 years of living in Australia, during these last 8 months.

Horst Gunther

Investment

We had two enjoyable Zoom Investment meetings during August.

At our first meeting we looked at some Gold shares and ETF's as the gold price had recently been at an all-time high due to International tensions. We also commented on the fact that at one stage during this period the top five traded shares on CommSec had all been pay later companies, which was a different picture for the market than previously.

August is the Reporting Season and in our second session we looked at the results reported by several companies. The trend in several of these was to pay a decreased dividend. However, in other cases very good results had been tabled which were encouraging for shareholders.

These Zoom meetings provide an opportunity for all participants to exchange information, which is an excellent outcome.

The next Zoom Investment meeting will be on Friday 4th September at 2pm. An invitation will be sent out the previous day.

Margaret Jenkins

Let's Talk Books

Welcome, everyone - hope your reading has been enjoyable over the last few weeks as we continue on our merry way.

I had a chat with Helen Squires who has enjoyed *Bye Bye Baby* written by Fiona McIntosh. A schoolteacher is found murdered in an alleyway in a northern English city. Three months later a courier's body turns up in a toilet block in a rough London suburb. Two men with very different lives but a common death both bodies brutally mutilated. A heart stopping tale of brutal revenge with a chilling twist. We have all enjoyed *The Lavender Keeper* by the same author.

As usual Heather Sloan has read a few varied books. *The Beautiful Mother* by Katherine Scholes. In a remote corner of Tanzania Essie Lawrence lives with her husband in an archaeologist's camp. One morning a chance encounter with two strangers sees her making a rash promise. When she returns to the research base she has a baby in her arms. Sounds intriguing. *The Goldminers Daughter* by Alison Stuart. In 1873 Eliza Pemrose arrives in the gold mining town of Maiden Gully Creek in search of her brother. Instead she finds a tragic mystery. You will have to read this to find out what the mystery was.

Noelle has read a different but enjoyable book *My Name is Red* by Orhan Pamuk. This book was the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature. It is a philosophical thriller constructed around the clash between two world civilisations. The review said it is 'an outstanding novel'. Also enjoyed by Noelle *The Sand Archive* by Gregory Day. This was shortlisted for the 2019 Miles Franklin Award. The book spans decades from present Geelong to Paris. The book references the need to find a solution to the shifting and destabilising influence of sand on the Great Ocean Road. There is love, poetry and politics involved in this book, which received good reviews. *The Love that Remains* by Susan Francis, a memoir with secrets, life's shocking twists and unconditional love. Sounds interesting.

I have just finished *The Paris Seamstress* by Natasha Lester, set in Paris and the USA during the WW2. Quite enjoyed this one.

Keep reading and stay warm.

Geraldine McCorkell

Music Appreciation

With the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra not having planned concert performances for August, an opportunity presented itself to indulge in Beethoven in this his 250th year. Each of our two sessions, then, this month featured Beethoven compositions entirely. Works from two marvellous concerts in place of the cancelled Solsberg Festival from Switzerland featuring the festival organiser (Cellist, Sol Gabetta) opened each of our sessions, filled out by arguably the best of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas – the Pathétique – and stunning presentations of two "3rds" - the 3rd Piano Concerto and 3rd Symphony. The notes for each session provide background information for the works plus interesting insights into the artists involved. The video

links to each presentation and the accompanying notes will be posted on the Music Appreciation page of the U3A website. Check them out for an enjoyable music experience.

Bill Squire

Patchwork

When I was first married in our house with babies, I had an old desk of Laurie's as my sewing (room). This over the years moved about the house, as I made most of the family's clothing. At some time, after visiting a friend with a Horn Cabinet I have coveted one ever since. Well, late in my life I am now the very, very happy owner of my very, very own HORN. It was on Benalla Buy Swap & Sell, in the next street. So, it was meant to be. I cannot wait to set it up, but this will have to wait till the move.

This year's annual exhibition of quilts is unlikely to be held at the Senior's Community Centre in mid-November because of continuing Covid-19 restrictions. However, all is not lost! This year we plan to hold an online patchwork exhibition on our website, with a launch date of Wednesday 18th November. Just continue working on your projects with an end of year exhibition in mind as you would normally do. Send photographs of your work through to me by Monday 16 November. If you need help with photographing your quilts and/or sending them in online or on USB, let me know and I'll make contact with you to help out. Hopefully, having a date to work towards will help keep our spirits up and encourage us all to keep quilting!

Dorothy Webber M 0412263071 dotwebber2608@gmail.com

Politics and Current Affairs

Two articles this month... and an invitation to other class members to contribute articles next month.

From Convenor Terry Case – a somewhat tongue in cheek article!



“Tired of all the news about *the virus*, well by now it is all over! Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told his British hosts in July the World Health Organization was responsible for all the Brits who had died as a result of the virus. I hope the show trials of these war criminals commence in time for *the Presidential election*. Talking of which it is all rigged according to the Donald. It is all those *postal votes* which mean they cannot have a fair election, the problem is, the Democrats like those postal votes. Why join the long queues and risk that mythical virus? Surely the Republicans face the same wait. Well thanks to the manipulations and *Gerrymandering* they usually have access to far more voting booths in Republican counties than Democrats have. If you are a Black Democrat voter the polling officials are far more likely to demand to see your registration papers, which in some counties are extremely hard to get, (I mean if you are Black now just stand back so those nice people can vote). Thank goodness the South won the *Civil War*. Now don't start dredging up *false histories*, just check Face Book they will tell you straight.

Donald has told us it will be the most unfair and corrupt election and that Black gal that the Democrats have chosen is another Obama, she is not white and not eligible, besides she will tell Sleepy Joe what to do. Anyhow she is a *communist*.

Dust of the Donald's 2011 – 2016 rants on Obama not being an American, they worked then and probably will again.

Thank goodness Donald worked so hard and found a way to stop those sneaky Democrats using illegal postal votes. Yes, blocking the money the postal service uses to collect and send the votes sounds fair with me. After all those nice Republicans know they will be looked after and those automatic vote sorters won't be needed in Democrat areas. The Post Office has already informed some State Governors it will not be possible for the votes to reach counting stations before the deadline. In the last State election 20% of the votes could not be delivered by the Post in time. Hooray the Free World is safe again, it's not like Hong Kong with all those horrid riots!

I agree with Donald, the election will be rigged, I wonder if the Chinese will send observers? Nice to see the Russians are backing Donald and the Chinese, Biden. Anyhow if Biden claims to have won, Donald is saying he cannot accept the false result and he is not leaving the White House.

I wonder how the next Civil War starts?

If you want to stop my ranting, it is time to start contributing. It might be a while before normal transmission resumes. They're coming to take me away ha, ha!

P.S. By the time you read this Clive Palmer will have bankrupted those pesky Western Australian Communists and their Premier, ah Clive a true Aussie billionaire!

Please send your Looney Tunes oops, I mean contributions, to the newsletter.

Terry Case

From class member Heather Wallace –



“So much has happened since we last attended our Politics group. Joe Biden is the Democrat candidate, and Donald Trump the Republican candidate. With only two months until the election it will be a time of changing possibilities – will it be Biden or will it be Trump? Biden has been a favourite with the polls so far, but do not count Trump out. Trump has done a couple of deals in the past week which may be a telling point for his future – the UAE deal with Israel – one he has pushed through, now he is claiming to be the Law and Order President – even though his attitude to minorities has fuelled some of the problems that have occurred recently. These may reflect in the polls and change the election result.

Even Trump's sister has got into the act with her tell all recordings and interviews in the past week, though what effect this may have on the election result, we will wait and see.

Closer to home things have been heating up somewhat. Clive Palmer is taking action against Western Australian under Section 92 of the Constitution. He is threatening to bankrupt the Western Australian Government for the closing of borders.

Whilst on the subject of closing of borders, it will be interesting to see if the State Premiers and Scott Morrison can come to some agreement to make things happen. The economy in Australia is at its lowest ebb since the 'recession we had to have'. Jobs are scarce and many will have disappeared for good, with companies taking advantage of the Covid-19 situation to streamline their organisations to save money, small businesses disappearing etc. Things are going to be difficult for a long time, but it is not going to get better by Federal and State governments sniping at one another.

Then we have had branch stacking debacles in Victoria on both sides of politics. The changing of the guard with younger right-wing Liberal Party members looking to roll out the old guard in attempt to get a new breed into politics is not over yet – just watch this space.

If you wish to have an input in the political goings on in the world, why not put pen to paper and write an article for the U3A Newsletter. It would be good to hear other members' points of view.”

Heather Wallace

With Stage 3 Restrictions in place, the proposed Politics and Current Affairs discussion session in the park on September 22nd will not go ahead. Hopefully, meetings in the park will commence in October—watch this space!

Singing for Fun

Spoke with Joyce Borschmann at the end of last week and she is progressing well. After spending five weeks at Benalla Health, Joyce is now in the Rehabilitation Centre of North East Health at Wangaratta undergoing more intense physio. Joyce seemed very positive about her progress and is looking forward to coming back to her unit at Coinda. However, that will probably still be a few weeks away.

Margaret Jenkins

Stock and Land

David Palmer, convenor of Stock and Land, submitted this story to this month's 'As Time Goes By' collection of 'Right Here, Right Now' stories. We thought it would appeal to Stock and Land group members, so, with David's permission, have included it here.

"A week or so ago, I helped farmer friends marshal their cows and heifers into a crush so a veterinarian could pregnancy test them.

I don't think the cattle I've worked with over the years have ever been willing participants in an operation that forces them into a long race and then into the ultimate indignity of a 40cm probe with camera being inserted into their back ends. (For those who once watched All Creatures Great and Small, the probe was always a vet's long arm).

The heifers on this day were maybe easier to handle because they were smaller and had not suffered such treatment before. But they all emitted voluminous streams of urine and faeces, to indicate their extreme nervousness, as we herded them up to the race. Strangely they seemed more settled once they were in the race and could see their colleagues moving along it and eventually exiting its confines.

Armed with a plastic paddle to prod the girls into place - the paddles are designed to emit much more noise than pain - my job was to extract about 10 cows or heifers from a yard of say 30, into three smaller pens and ideally reduce that number to four, closest to the start of the race. That was a number that gave me room to avoid aforesaid liquid projectiles and the odd kicking hoof. Strangely I nearly avoided all that as we jostled the best part of 200 cows and heifers up the race.

Towards the end of four hours I knew I was getting tired and attempted to be even more careful around vigorous back ends. However, I eventually copped a firmly planted hoof in my left calf and not much later, one cow strongly objected to my urging and simply bowled me over as she charged to the back of the yard. The kick hardly hurt and being knocked over, thankfully, affected me little, apart from my clothes being considerably messier.

Shortly after the second incident, while questioning me about my health, the herd's owner asked me if I had noticed that the cow that knocked me over, had also jumped over me.

On reflection, 'right here, right now', I'm most grateful for that, because if she hadn't, it might have been more like a fairly gory moment from the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona."

David Palmer

Sustainability

It has been a particularly interesting month for people concerned about sustainability and the environment, with Craig Reucassel's wonderful series 'The Fight for Planet A' engaging many of us. The dilemma of how to interest people in issues surrounding climate change has often been discussed in the Sustainability class – Craig Reucassel seems to have found the key. Late August's Zoom meeting provided the opportunity for members of the Sustainability group to engage in a follow up discussion of the issues raised. This discussion will continue at the next meeting on Friday September 4 at 10am.

The articles selected for discussion at Sustainability's fortnightly Zoom meetings are being added to [the Sustainability page](#) on the website. If you are interested in keeping up with current issues in the sustainability area, just click on the links to the articles.

John Lloyd

Tech Savvy Family Research

A number of U3A members appear to be quite absorbed in family history during this second round of Stage 3 COVID-19 Restrictions. Tech savvy family researcher Andi Stevenson is using Facebook to share her discoveries to the delight of relatives and friends. It's not every day a laneway, discovered on an old Melbourne map, is named 'Stevenson Lane' after an ancestor!

Members of our Tech Savvy Family Research class Barry O'Connor and Robyn Desmier have been immersing themselves in the worlds of their forebears, with expanding folders of files and papers documenting their progress. Barry has been busy expanding on the background of his and Pamela's family trees, with three

books almost complete. Robyn recently set up an account on Trove and is now developing a Trove 'list' to keep an online file of newspaper articles mentioning her forebears.

If you attended our first class before the Covid-19 break and have any questions or require other support relating to your research, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Bev Lee 0478 607 838 and Wendy Sturges 0403 226 649

Tech Savvy Talkers

Last newsletter, when asked about a tech savvy project during Covid-19 restrictions, 'Tech Savvy Talks' member Les Rodgers described a "faintly" technical project he has underway - an automatic drip-fed hydroponic system in his frost resistant shed. Les is growing two varieties of tomato plants under high powered variable led grow lights in an effort to improve upon his total crop last year (three tomatoes) after the predators had finished, including birds, fruit fly and other nameless invaders.

"Progress on the tomato front has been limited largely due to the lack of warmth in my shed. There are two controls on the light for different colored leds. One promotes vegetative growth and the coloured one stimulates the production of flowers. I want short plants, so I have 3 or 4 in one pot. The light is pretty intense which leads to short plants. The coloured light has caused such small plants to form flower buds already. I have also taken the opportunity to raise some seedlings. I recently increased the number of hours of light per day.



3 August 2020 – under light



25 August (1)– under light



25 August (2)

Les reports continuing to monitor network speeds and problem solve on his devices... "With the lockdown, there appears to be an extremely large amount of traffic on the mobile network. My mobile phone for example is on the Telstra network. I have noticed the download speed from late morning until 11 pm is about 1mb/s, more or less. While my son was at my place recently bringing some medical supplies I asked him to check his download speed on the Optus network. It was 15 mb/s compared to Telstra's 1 mb/s. Early in the morning Telstra was 40 plus mb/s so clearly the network is suffering from heavy congestion during the hours of about 9.00 am to 11.00 pm. I wonder how others are faring particularly Aldi users who actually use part of the Telstra network.

Email using the Outlook client with Microsoft 365 has also been giving me a lot of synchronization problems resulting in errors and low speed with incoming traffic. This is happening mostly in the afternoon. An improvement resulted from deleting all unnecessary unread received emails. The system tries to synchronize these every time emails are being received. Outlook seems to be the only email client that does that. So open or delete all unread emails."

Les Rodgers

Program News

'Unfinished Objects'

Do you have an unfinished object or two you would like to finish which 'just isn't happening' or you are 'finding slow going'? We're trialling a weekly afternoon tea-break time 'Unfinished Objects' discussion group using Zoom, commencing on Monday 7 September at 2.30pm. The plan is to commence work on our unfinished object (or project) at 1pm on Monday afternoons. At 2.20pm we would take a break, pour ourselves a cup of tea or coffee, click on the link to our Zoom meeting, then join like-minded others to share news of our projects from 2.30 to 3.15 pm. After leaving the meeting we would return to work on our projects for an hour or so before packing up for the day! After a trial session or two we are thinking of asking for people familiar with Zoom to add their name to a roster to convene the sessions. If you would like to be involved but haven't learnt to use Zoom yet, this could be a great chance to learn. One of our Zoom experts will make contact and support you to do so. Phone Bev on 0478 607 838 or 5762 8171 or email bevee47@gmail.com if you would like to be involved in the trial sessions. All welcome!



Lin Ryan and Lorraine Knox at our 'Picnic in the Park' in late July – pre-Stage 3 Restrictions.

What's On

Wednesday, 2 September

10:00 Demystifying Psychology Zoom Discussion Group

Friday, 4 September

10:00 Sustainability - Zoom Meeting

14:00 Investment - Zoom Meeting

Monday, 7 September

14:30 'Unfinished Objects'

Friday, 11 September

10:00 Music Appreciation

Monday, 14 September

14:00 Creative Writing - sharing of stories by email

14:30 'Unfinished Objects'

Friday, 18 September

10:00 Sustainability - Zoom Meeting

13:00 Demystifying Psychology Zoom Discussion Group

15:15 Investment - Zoom Meeting

Monday, 21 September

14:30 'Unfinished Objects'

Friday, 25 September

10:00 Music Appreciation

Monday, 28 September

14:00 'As Time Goes By' - 'I came down with a thud' or 'Out of the blue' – stories due

14:30 'Unfinished Objects'

Friday, 2 October

10:00 Sustainability - Zoom Meeting

14:00 Investment - Zoom Meeting

Monday, 5 October

14:30 'Unfinished Objects'

Wednesday, 7 October

10:00 Demystifying Psychology Zoom Discussion Group

Friday, 9 October

10:00 Music Appreciation