

# Annual General Meeting and Council Meeting

## Distinguished Service Awards

The highlight of the AGM day (although actually taking place at the following general meeting of Council) was the presentation of Distinguished Service Awards to three long-serving volunteers. John Mitchell (Kingston U3A) was stepping off the Executive after a series of roles including President, Vice-President, and Convenor of the Policy & Planning Committee. Jean Melzer OAM (Wonthaggi U3A) was also leaving the Executive after occupying these senior positions, while Deirdre Meredith (Manningham U3A) had served six years as Secretary in addition to other roles. In all, these three hard-working office bearers had served on the Network Executive for over half a century! And this service was in addition to their contributions to their own individual U3As.

Secretary Susan Webster noted that Distinguished Service Awards are usually presented at the behest of a Member U3A, but that these awards had been initiated by the Network Executive itself, in recognition of the exceptional service of these leaders.



*Three Distinguished Service Award recipients  
L-R Jean Melzer, OAM, John Mitchell and Deirdre Meredith*

## Appointments

Our 2010 President Ruth Hawley (U3A Ballarat) retired at the end of her two-year term, with 2010 Vice President Elsie Mutton (Nunawading U3A) now taking on the President's role. David Jensz (Manningham U3A) is our new Vice President. Joining the Executive Committee is Stan Lowe (Nathalia U3A).

Other retiring Executive members were Pauline Clark (U3A Moorleigh) after four years as Assistant Treasurer, and Heather de Vries (U3A Sale), after two years on committee.



*New President Elsie Mutton*



*New Vice President David Jensz*



*New Executive Committee member Stan Lowe*

## Poorly attended AGM passes capitation fee increase

Only about two-thirds of Member U3As attended Network Victoria's 23 Annual General Meeting on 16 March, but there was strong support for passing the capitation fee increase recommended by Network Executive.

Treasurer Ian King outlined the case for the fee rise, noting a decrease in grant monies to run the Network Office, and in sub-tenancy fees, with additions in running costs, diversification of activities, and wage and expense increases.

As a result, capitation fees for each U3A will increase to \$1.50 per primary member registered with that U3A. Capitation fee notices are expected to be mailed from the Network Office in April for payment in May.

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## Madam President Reflects

Having arrived at the end of my two-year term as President I reflect on the events of those years.

Firstly, I received great satisfaction in visiting U3As in various locations throughout Victoria and experiencing what vibrant organisations they are. This is where the real value of U3A Network Victoria is realised. I'm sure our member groups recognise this and we, of the U3A Executive, continually strive to assist them.

Our membership continues to grow, and has now reached almost 25,000. This means that close to one thousand members have joined per year for two years. Because U3A is such a great organisation to belong to, giving opportunities for learning and exercise in a social environment, we realise that each one of those two thousand new members has the opportunity to participate in our activities in their senior years. Often being a member of U3A is a life enhancing experience. What a privilege it has been for me to be President of that organisation!

As well as an increase of member numbers there have been 14 new U3As joining Network in 2009 and 2010. Many of these are in country Victoria. I hope that all these will continue to grow and give the satisfaction that other U3As have experienced.

U3As in Victoria are fortunate to receive some funding from the Victorian Government and always we have worked well with Government representatives. We always strive to meet the conditions imposed for receiving this funding.

One condition has been to increase the number of U3As in Victoria. We



have now arrived at a total of 97. This increased number necessitated changes in Network's structure. We are now asking U3As to join with other U3As in their region to form Regional Groups. Meeting in regions will iron out difficulties experienced by some, as they share experiences. This organisational shift has been most successful in the regions I have visited and gives a great opportunity to socialise with members outside the "home" group.

I started on the U3A Executive as Vice President, after presiding at U3A Ballarat for three years. I followed John Mitchell into the role of President. Milan Trnacek was Treasurer and Tom Potter Secretary. I was privileged to work with these people in a most satisfactory working relationship. Since Tom's and Milan's resignations Susan Webster became Secretary and Ian King Treasurer. We are fortunate to have such capable people in these positions. Elsie Mutton has moved from her position of Vice President into the President's chair and there is a capable Executive Committee continuing.

Many U3As are still experiencing accommodation problems and for this reason a workshop is arranged to offer advice on accommodation. I believe that accommodation is a major problem experienced by many and I hope that the workshop may help.

For the past two years U3As have participated in Seniors' Week activities in their own towns and suburbs as well as being part of the Festival of Learning at Federation Square. We expect to participate again this year. We are pleased that these efforts have helped to make the public aware of the valuable part we play in the Victorian community.

Some work is still to be done on regionalisation, but progress is good. Government is pressing us again to move forward in attracting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) members into our groups. Also, we are being advised to form partnerships with Adult Community Education (ACE) groups for mutual benefit. These two goals will form part of future strategies.

Thank you for your kindness and hospitality to me as your Network President. I have felt most privileged to be in that position and look forward to meeting up with the friends I have made when we attend Council meetings. I will be serving on the Executive as Immediate Past President for the next two years. Further to that I expect to spend more time with family, friends and U3A classes. I wish all our groups "Good learning and a happy, healthy retirement".

*Ruth Hawley*

## Thanks

Thank you to the members who took part in the recent photo shoot for Stockland. This enabled U3A Network Victoria to receive funding towards engaging exciting key speakers for our upcoming conference.

U3As that took part were Nunawading, Hume, Ballarat and Croydon. All enjoyed the experience and look forward to seeing the final photos.

## Dr. Laurence Simpson, OAM

Dr. Laurence (Laurie) Simpson who, for many years, has presented his fascinating *History of Medicine* course to members of Manningham U3A, received an Order of Australia Medal in the recent Australia Day Awards. The award was for his work as a clinician and medical educator.

Manningham U3A is now in its 20th year and for most of those years Laurie's course – a mixture of medical history, discoveries and development, politics, travel and art (particularly during the European Renaissance) – has been part of its annual curriculum.

It is a course valued and enjoyed by many of Manningham's 1500 plus members. The doctor-tutor is greatly appreciated by his students,

many of them describing him as "a lovely man".

Graduating from Melbourne University in 1954 Laurie did his residency at the Austin hospital later serving there as senior thoracic surgeon, a position which he also held at PANCH, Epworth and Heidelberg Repatriation hospitals.

Laurie gravitated into the medical missionary field and in 1958, with his wife Margaret, went to Korea where he worked in the chest surgery unit of the Presbyterian Missionary hospital till 1967. He and Margaret have since revisited Korea several times and seen that hospital develop into one of the great teaching hospitals of that country.

Laurie met Sir Edward ("Weary") Dunlop in the latter part of Weary's

life. The two doctors became friends and Weary requested Laurie to assist him as a surgeon, if needed, at any time.

A serving Baptist Laurie has taken great practical interest in the church's missionary work. He considers his most senior appointment was his term as President of the Baptist Union in 1995-1996.

For the Templestowe Baptist church, of which he is a serving member, Laurie convenes and co-ordinates the "Beasley Boys", a group of men who meet weekly at Beasley's Nursery and Tea House, Doncaster East, for an hour's chat and coffee – and a second hour of Bible study.

*Margaret Scott-Pross,  
Manningham U3A*

## Migrant English

In response to recognition of the fact that the Manningham migrant population was under-represented at Manningham U3A, a program was initiated in 2001 to teach English to migrants.

A small grant was obtained from Manningham City Council as seeding funding. Pat Smith was appointed Migrant English Coordinator and a program to train volunteers was introduced and taught by trainers from Australian Multicultural Education Services (AMES). The training involved six two-hour sessions. The first training course had 14 participants and each volunteer tutor was partnered with a migrant. Volunteers meet with their students each week, either at the student's home or at a convenient place such as the library or a coffee shop.

When tutors first meet their students they find out their particular needs and interests and prepare a program to assist the student to meet these needs. The level of ability to use English varies: some students will require basic introduction

to the language, others wish to improve their pronunciation or conversation. Some students need an introduction to our transport or health care systems. Some who are of retirement age could value contact with their contemporaries and possibly be interested in joining U3A activities, so making stronger connections with the community. In many cases firm friendships develop between student and tutor.

Interest in the program is such that there are now three English (ESL) Conversation classes and one English (ESL) Basic Writing class each week at Manningham, U3A.

Training for tutors has been offered twice a year since the program commenced and around ninety tutors have been trained. Several of the original group of tutors are still actively engaged in the program. Members involved in the program report that they thoroughly enjoy being part of it.

*Joan Creber, Migrant English  
Coordinator, Manningham U3A*

## Outreach by U3A

Many discussions are held at U3A Network Victoria about the desire to be more inclusive in respect of newcomers to Australia.

From my experience in the Enrolment Process at Manningham U3A I was very much aware that we had members from a great number of countries. So, I requested an analysis of the Manningham U3A membership, one of the biggest in Victoria. People **from more than 60 countries, from all continents**, are members. Some 62% are Australian born and there are 38% from overseas.

In descending ranking order the greatest numbers, after Australia, come from: United Kingdom, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Italy, Greece, Germany, China, New Zealand, Poland, India, Singapore, South Africa and Iran.

I have been assured by colleagues at Network Victoria that many other Victorian U3As have very diverse membership. Analysis of your own U3A membership will be an interesting exercise.

*Paul O'Connor, Manningham U3A*

## Development Support Officer's Report for January, February and March 2011

Whilst there have been no new U3A formations during the last three months, I have been involved in supporting the following activities:

### Existing U3As offering to support neighbouring groups or areas

The following U3As are busy extending their reach:

- Cardinia U3A** and **Bass Valley U3A** have each started to offer one course for the Killara Hostel residents at the Koo Wee Rup Regional Health Service
- Geelong U3A** is organising for some sample courses in the Norlane area of North Geelong
- Darebin U3A** is promoting courses in the Preston and Reservoir area.

### Emerging U3As

The following groups are still exploring options for development later this year:

- Mirboo North Community Group** has established a U3A promotion and development committee which intends to have a second meeting in May
- St. Arnaud U3A** is advancing slowly. The St. Arnaud Learning

## In the Pipeline

and Resource Centre is keen to sponsor an exploratory meeting later this year

- Surf Coast U3A** planning group continues to gather Council and Neighbourhood House support, and it too will be planning a meeting soon.

## Regional Activities and Developments

Thank you to the following people/groups:

- Barbara Ritchie, President of **Bendigo U3A** for offering to co-ordinate the **Central and Northern Victoria Regional Group**
- Anne Boag, President of **Ballarat U3A**, and Frank Kitchen, President of **Ararat U3A**, for sharing the coordination of the **Central and Western Victoria Regional Group**
- Pat Townsend and **Hume U3A** for offering to host an exploratory meeting, on 17 May, of the Presidents and Nominees from the 14 Northern and Western Metro U3As to determine whether to create one big regional group or two small groups, **Western Metro and Northern Metro**
- Lindsay Doig, President of **Port Phillip U3A**, and Jill Thompson, President of **U3A Melbourne City**, for offering to help facilitate a similar meeting of **Central**

**City and Southern Metro U3A** Presidents and Nominees in early June to decide on the best grouping arrangement.

## Accommodation Survey and Workshop

In order to assist U3As negotiate improved accommodation arrangements with their local councils and other community organisations, a working group, headed by Bridget Halge and Heather Ambrose of **Manningham U3A**, has distributed a questionnaire and is planning a workshop at the Elizabeth Street Hub on Monday 9 May.

### Other Events / Involvements

- Assisting Geoff Springett and the **Latrobe Valley U3A** prepare materials to promote U3A in Traralgon on 21-23 March
- Assisting the **YMCA's Active Ageing Network** link up with **Horsham U3A** in a pilot project to assess the physical activity and strength training needs of its 300+ U3A members
- Assisting **Phillip Island U3A**, **Bass Valley U3A** and **Wonthaggi U3A** in discussions with Bass Coast Shire Managers about improving U3A accommodation requirements.

*Harry Dobson, U3A Development and Support Officer, March 2011*

## Classes of Note

Perusing all the Newsletters from Victorian U3As I come across details of classes that attract my attention and appeal to me. One such is featured in The BUZZ, the Newsletter of U3A Bendigo, February 2011. Other U3As may wish to consider offering something similar?

### History of Conversation

*When I complained of having dined at a splendid table without hearing one sentence of conversation worthy of being remembered, he said, "Sir, there seldom is any such conversation." Dr Johnson*

This seminar is a light hearted jaunt through the history of conversation. Language was a necessary step in the development of man and conversation one of its greatest pleasures. From the Book of Job to this very day, men and women have observed communication and written about it. What is conversation? What are the qualities of good conversation? What are its problems? Which gender is the better conversationalist? What is raillery and repartee? Does conversation have a future? Hear what Dr Johnson, Jonathan Swift, David Hume, Virginia Woolf

and Kate Holden, contemporary commentator, say about the subject.

Expect some lively conversation, witty repartee and great fun as we journey through the morning seminar.

April 5 in Room 2; Come at 9.30 am for a cuppa, then 10 am to 12 for the seminar.

10 participants is what we need.

**Call Brenda Stevens-Chambers on 5443 4886 to book your place**

*[Oh! To be in Bendigo – Ed.]*

## Brainstorming Session Results

U3A Port Phillip (U3APP) had a good bunch of members in attendance, gave them a cuppa and biscuit and just asked them a series of questions that they discussed in small table groups. The session held on 15 September 2011 produced an array of viewpoints from which we can build an even better U3A.

Here are the top-scoring themes. There are many more ideas with lower scores but very important.

### What do you most like about U3APP?

Companionship (5)  
Stimulating programs (6)

### What ideas do you have for future programs?

Trips (6)  
Mini courses e.g. health related (5)  
More history (4)  
Languages (3)

### What ideas do you have for future seminars?

Current issues/politics (6)  
Medical/health (3)

### What improvements can be suggested?

Improvements to the premises (10)  
Expansion of session times to fit more in (2)  
Parking (2)  
Publicity (3)  
Improved equipment (4)

### How could we raise the profile of U3APP?

More publicity in local press (3)  
Letter box drops (3)  
Target radio, TV, Big Issue advert space (5)  
Use of supermarket noticeboards, shop windows, doctors, dentists, seniors' meeting places and Council (6)

*[Similar sessions in other Victorian U3As are encouraged – Ed.]*

## Did You Know?

You can assist police or emergency workers with your mobile phone, if you happen to be in an accident and are unable to speak.

Police officers and emergency workers are trained to search the mobile phones of such victims for the name "ICE".

"ICE" stands for **In Case of Emergency** and is a simple tool to help yourself in an emergency situation.

**Add the contact "ICE" to your mobile phone address book and list the details of the person you wish to be contacted for when you are in an emergency situation** (e.g. family member or close friend). This will allow police and emergency workers to easily contact your emergency contact person.

*(From U3A Dandenong "Informer" magazine)*

## Writing Competition 2011

U3A Sunshine Coast is holding their fourth Writing Competition. This is open to anyone who is retired or semi-retired and thus eligible to join a U3A.

The Guidelines and Entry forms for this competition are now available for download from our website: [www.u3asunshine.org.au](http://www.u3asunshine.org.au) or can be obtained by contacting the office on 5430 1123 9am-noon on weekdays. The competition closes on June 10th 2011.

There is a new category this year: Short Story – Autobiography as well as the ones from previous years. These are: Short Story - Fiction, Rhyming Poetry, Free verse and the Challenge.

The Challenge this year is to write a story with the theme:

Oh, no! Not again? This can be the title, theme or just included in the text (or all three!).

If you have any queries please email me: [bjriley63@westnet.com.au](mailto:bjriley63@westnet.com.au)

We look forward to your entries!

*Jenny Riley  
Competition Convenor.*

*[Guidelines and Entry Forms are also available on our website [www.u3anetvic.org.au](http://www.u3anetvic.org.au) – go to "Events" page and click on "Writing Competition 2011" – Ed.]*

## What U3A has meant to me

In 1985 I had my first life-threatening cancer operation - a chordoma, a malignant tumour on the base of my spine. During a long recuperation period I heard of a new organisation which had commenced in Victoria - The University of the Third Age. I joined U3A in late 1985 and 26 years later I am still a U3A member. My next cancer incident in 1995 was another life-threatening one - colon cancer which ruptured. I was very ill and thought I would have to curtail all my U3A activities. While still in hospital, I received copies of minutes from a U3A committee in which I was involved and once again U3A aroused my interest and spurred me on to continue committee membership when I was well enough to do so. In 1997 another colon cancer and in 2006, a melanoma.

During the last 26 years I have held various positions in U3A and now tutor in my own local U3A. I have been a co-convenor of Social Studies for the past four years, providing a different speaker each week and also offer short courses in areas of my interest. I attend classes in Middle East Studies, Yoga, Armchair Aerobics and Line Dancing. U3A has kept me mentally and physically well in times when it was tempting to give in. I am currently involved in preparing for the 20th anniversary of my U3A in 2014 - I am 86 years old, so fingers crossed.

*Alison Carlson,  
Kingston U3A*

# Dr Val Sloss - Distinguished Membership of U3A

by Walter Eacott, OAM Former President

Among our founding members was Dr Val Sloss, a retired veterinarian from the Werribee Veterinary Clinic, part of the University of Melbourne School of Veterinary Science.

Val Sloss was born and raised in Latvia between "The Great War" of 1914-1918, and World War 2. At the start of WW2 Val was still at school, and maybe even at that time intending to become a veterinarian. He had a hard time completing his education and carrying out his studies, being mobilised into the Latvian Legion (for the defence of Latvia, that small country in northern Europe) in 1943, first under the Russians, then the Germans, then back to the Russian invaders when Germany's defeat was imminent.

His biography "Through the Snows of Time" is a gripping history of those days, and of Val's adventures in northern Europe as an Army vet. At the end of the war he became a displaced person, and made himself very useful in several different camps in Germany to which he was sent. Apart from his own studies, he took a great interest in helping his companions who were also seeking education and settlement in whatever country would have them as refugees.

Val came to Australia at the start of 1950, working as an unskilled labourer in Queensland, and in Melbourne. At Christmas time

that year he met his old physical education teacher from Riga, the Latvian capital. Romance was about to bloom, for Val discovered Astra, a daughter of the teacher, fell hopelessly in love, and in 1951 the couple were married. Val went to work as a vet in the Western District of Victoria, where for many years he and Astra enjoyed the association of other vets in a wide country setting. In 1967 Val was offered the position of running the large animal clinic being opened at Werribee as the surgery sub-department of the Melbourne University School of Veterinary Science. In addition he was asked to give lectures on animal obstetrics, which floored him initially, but he soon mastered this new challenge and became well-known and popular for his enthusiasm in this field. For the next 20 years he ran the Farm or Ambulatory Veterinary Clinic. Many former graduates from the school remember "Old Slossie's" lectures, including Professor Ken Hinchcliff the current Dean, who graduated in 1980.

On retirement, Val became a foundation member of Werribee U3A in 1992, and Astra quickly followed suit. Val as a Group Leader presented talks and illustrations on European architecture. As well as being a Committee member, he took part in lessons on Australian history, current affairs, and was a great participant in "Music You Like to Hear", usually accompanied by

Astra, a very competent artist and calligrapher. For three years Val was our Programme Coordinator. Sadly his sight failed during this time, eventually leaving him blind. His enthusiasm did not diminish and he still takes part in sessions, especially in the music section.

Monday 2 March 2009 marked the 100th anniversary since the opening of the Veterinary School at the University of Melbourne. As I stated earlier, the Werribee campus of the school opened in 1967, but the school itself opened its doors in Parkville 100 years ago. It commemorated the anniversary with the unveiling of a statue in honour of former lecturer Dr Val Sloss, who still lives across the road, and he is depicted carrying a newborn calf.

Val, it's my honour and pleasure to present you with a small gift to mark your distinguished membership of our U3A, and to farewell you and Astra on your imminent departure from Werribee to live in a Latvian Retirement Village in Wantirna. We hope that this perfumed plant, a potted standard gardenia, will remind you from time to time of your many friends in Werribee. We wish you both a happy Christmas and a comfortable, relaxing time in the company of your compatriots.

*[Extract from Werribee Region  
U3A Newsletter "Try Cycle"  
January 2011 – Ed]*

## Reaching out to Seniors

There are still many Seniors in Victoria who have either never heard of U3A or do not know how to contact us.

There are many local Members of the Victorian Parliament who send out "Welcome" letters to their constituents when they become eligible for their Seniors' Card. Some of our U3As have found that their Local Member has been willing and happy to include a brochure for their local U3A in this mail-out. This is one method of increasing membership.

U3As who are not aware of this simple way of spreading the message may find it a good idea to approach their State Member of Parliament in a friendly way for this benefit.

*Ruth Hawley*

## Network Victoria 2011 Conference

### Ageing with Interest: Vitality, Knowledge, Growth

#### Monday 9th – Wednesday 11th May 2011

The Pre Conference Dinner will be held at **The Angliss Restaurant** 550 Lt. Lonsdale Street, Melbourne at 7.00 pm. The After Dinner Speaker will be **Wendy Stapleton** pop/rock singer-songwriter, musical theatre and television actress and all-round entertainer.

The Conference venue is **Melbourne Town Hall** 90-120 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

**Speakers** on Day 1 will be **Glenn Capelli** one of the world's leading experts in Dynamic Thinking, Creativity and Leadership and **Jane Wenlock**, who will speak on *How to attract the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) to U3A*. There will also be a **Panel Discussion on Writing the History of Your U3A** – led by a member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and panelists from three U3As.

**Speakers** on Day 2 will be **Brett Lee** on *Impact of Emerging Technologies* and the effect they could have on U3A members and **Fergus Watts** on *Marketing to the Next Generation*. There will also be an **Information Panel** discussing *Where to from Here? Future Conferences? National Alliance and Development Support Office and how he can support your U3A in the future*.

Conference Costs are: Dinner \$55 pp; Two Days \$80 pp; One Day \$40 pp.

#### Enquiries

Conference Convenor: Elsie Mutton

P: BH (03) 9878 3898, M: 0408 584 072, Email: u3anuna@bigpond.com

## Singapore International Conference

### August 8 and 9, Singapore

The U3A Asia Pacific Alliance invites all U3A members to this International U3A conference. Because Australia is a major country in the Asia Pacific region I would very much hope that it is well represented with attendances at the conference.

I am happy to be contacted for additional information and also refer you to the Conference Web site <http://u3a-singaporeinternationalconference2011.org/> for details and registration forms.

Di Delchau

President U3A Online/ Member of U3A Asia Pacific Alliance Core Group

Email: dianned47@gmail.com

Phone: 07 5439 9204

*[U3A Network Victoria President, Elsie Mutton will be a speaker at the Conference – Ed]*

## Hi there from sunny Spain

My name is Geoffrey Shean. I live in a small town on the east coast of Spain called Moraira. We have a good U3A group here with around 1200 members, all expats. My twin brother visited me last year and he is a member of a U3A group in Kyneton. I took him to a monthly meeting of our group and introduced him to our President. She thought it would be a good idea to twin with my brother's U3A group. Anyway he has now sent me a copy of your U3A Network Newsletter. I am sure he feels it will help us in finding a connection to his U3A group or of any Victorian U3A for our group to maybe twin with. Do you think you could help me? If I give you the email address of our president, then maybe you could circulate to see if any U3A group would be interested in twinning with us.

president@u3amoraira-teulada.org her name is Anne Colcough.

From: Geoffrey Shean [mailto:geoffrey.w.shean@gmail.com]

The U3A website <http://www.u3amoraira-teulada.org/contactus.html>

*[I have provided contact information about U3A Kyneton to Geoffrey – Ed.]*

## Accommodation Workshop

Many times over the last several years member U3As have indicated to Network Victoria their difficulties in securing appropriate accommodation for reasonable cost. Accommodation is continually identified as the greatest challenge facing U3As, even greater than securing tutors or obtaining volunteer workers.

To address these concerns, Network is organising a workshop to look at issues relating to accommodation, to share constructive ideas and to register needs where assistance is sought. The workshop is being scheduled as a pre-event to our May conference and will be held on Monday, 9 May from 2.30 pm to 6pm at the **Multicultural Hub, 506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne** (opposite Victoria Market).

In preparation for this workshop, a survey questionnaire has been sent to all member U3As. The responses to this survey will help identify information of value for workshop delegates and of interest to all U3As.

Applications to register attendance at this workshop have been sent to all member U3As. It is hoped that each U3A will send two members to take advantage of this opportunity for sharing creative ideas and seeking assistance where needed.

*Bridget Halge, Heather Ambrose  
(Manningham U3A)  
Workshop Organisers*

## UWA Conference

### 19 & 20 September 2011, Perth

The conference will be held Monday 19, Tuesday 20 September at the Duxton Hotel, in Perth CBD. There'll be an informal reception on the afternoon of Sunday 18 especially for those connected with U3AAA or interested in hearing about the progress of the Alliance.

Please note the dates in your diary. Further information will be available in the July Newsletter, and on our website [www.u3anetvic.org.au](http://www.u3anetvic.org.au)

## Walter's Presentation

Today we farewell Walter and Jean Eacott as they leave Werribee to go and live over on the Mornington Peninsula at their daughter's property.

Walter has been very involved in the local community since his arrival from the UK 44 years ago. He transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force from the Royal Air Force following a distinguished career in which as a pilot in WW2 he had to bale out in enemy territory, was captured, spent time in a POW camp from which he attempted escapes many times, finally making it in borrowed clothes to return to Britain in time for VE Day. I remember hearing the story of a young Jean, about 16 I think she was, being encouraged by an aunt of Walter's, who lived in Jean's street, to bake him a Welcome Home Cake. Love blossomed from there. Once in Melbourne he joined The Odd Bods

organisation for former Australian and Allied aircrew who fought in the European theatre and the Middle East. He has been President since 2000 and still marches regularly in the ANZAC day parade. Here in Werribee he was a foundation member of Werribee Men's Probus and the Senior Citizen's association, also he was an Area Commissioner of Scouts for the Hoadley Area. Together with Dr Sid Dunn he was instrumental in setting up U3A Werribee. A meeting was held in January 1992 to gauge whether there was sufficient interest in the area to warrant a U3A and after deciding that there was a public meeting was held in February and a committee formed. In 1993 he was awarded the OAM in recognition of service to the community and to retirees. He has been very generous with his time over the years and has held the position of President (5 years) and Vice-president (3 years).

Behind the scenes he spent a lot of time negotiating and setting up our website for which he was webmaster for a number of years. His enthusiasm lead him to be a tutor for calligraphy and French. When I joined he was the French class tutor and we had many happy times at his home attempting to improve our French. Over the years he has been ably supported by Jean who in the early days was co-opted on to the committee to be the social planner. Behind every successful man is a good woman. We thank you both for your very valuable contribution to our U3A and wish you well on the other side where no doubt you will become involved with another U3A. Walter is a life member of our organisation in recognition of his past services so we will always be in touch. Thank you once again.

*Sereta Mudford, President, U3A  
Werribee*

## Patchwork Quilting Donors



*From left to right*

*Lyn Buley  
Joyce Rose  
Barbara Worcester  
Barbara Franklin  
Leonie Clyne  
Pauline Thomas  
Annette Mason  
(seated)*

The women of U3A Nunawading's four patchwork classes are busily making quilts for donation to those in Victoria and/or Queensland affected by the recent floods and/or Cyclone Yasi.

Our members have been creatively and ingeniously matching together fabrics from many

different sources and are creating a colourful range of snug quilts, suitable for boys, girls, men and women.

U3A has become a hive of activity, with special days set aside from regular classes. Ironing fabrics, cutting, sewing, sewing, pressing, - creating wonderful

quilts. Some quilts are also being made at home.

These are a small token of our support and assistance to those who have experienced hardship and lost so much. The making of these quilts gives us a great deal of pleasure and we hope they will bring some comfort.

## FIRE and FLOOD at KERANG

### The fire!

New Year's Eve 2010 and the news spread around the township of Kerang that the Senior Citizens building had been badly damaged by fire (arson) overnight. Later in the day Gannawarra Shire staff called U3A & Senior Citz. members (we shared the facility) to an inspection of the damage. What a sight met our eyes! The kitchen was completely gutted and the main meeting hall also badly damaged by heat, smoke and water. All of the electrical appliances, fridge, air conditioners, TV and DVD player had exploded and shattered in the heat. Tragically, the Seniors lost more than U3A as their honour boards, photos, kitchen equipment had all been fire and smoke affected. By a stroke of luck, nearly all of our equipment was stored in the billiard room and small meeting room and were unscathed except for some smoke damage which was easily cleaned off. U3A had bought a 40cm plasma TV to be mounted on the billiard room wall for our film nights; it was still in

its box waiting to be installed and was untouched by the fire, water or smoke. The Insurance assessors have only recently been through and we wait to find out whether the verdict will be to repair or rebuild.

### The flood!

There had been torrential rain early in the New Year, both throughout the local district and in the headwaters of the Loddon, Campaspe, Avoca rivers and their tributaries. The big flood was on its way, following on from a minor flood in September and moderate flood during December. Residents of Kerang were woken early on Wednesday 19 January with phone messages alerting us to evacuate to nearby evacuation centres at either Cohuna or Barham. There were grave doubts in the minds of many in charge of the situation that the town levee would hold. However, those who stayed to fight for the town and the power sub-station did a magnificent job in erecting new levees and strengthening existing ones and Kerang was saved from

being swamped by the 'inland tsunami' that inexorably made its way across the Loddon, Campaspe and Avoca river plains. However, the folk and farming communities to the west, north-west & south-west of the town were swamped as the water rolled through on its way to the Murray River at Swan Hill.

### The aftermath!

Following the fire, the Shire arranged for both the Senior Citz. and U3A to share a supper room at the Kerang Memorial Hall. However, our program was soon revised with the flood crisis and recovery as the Memorial Hall was needed as a place of work for the recovery agencies. The program went into abeyance during the time that the evacuees were away and we were able to move some programs to the Library. It is pleasing to report that U3A Kerang & District maintained some activities throughout late January through February and are now, during March, again operating at full strength.

*Margaret Bradley, March 2011*

## Green Sages

Are you concerned about climate change and the environment?

COTA Vic has been the voice of older Victorians for more than 60 years. Over this time it has addressed many issues affecting older people. Today climate change and the ageing population are two of the most important challenges facing governments around the world. But in Australia little work has been done to look at climate change issues from an older person's position.

Through the COTA Vic's **Green Sages** project, seniors all over Victoria are being given the opportunity to have their voices heard on what they believe the impacts of climate change will have on their lives.

We are also interested in hearing what older people believe are the most useful actions we can take to cope with these effects.

This information will be passed onto the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability.

Traditionally older people were looked up to as 'Sages' or wise ones. Today COTA Vic's Green Sages are taking back that role and taking the lead in their communities on environmental and climate change issues. ***So you too could be a Green Sage.***

If you are prepared to be involved in a community group or action and willing to play a leadership role then ***Green Sages is for you!***

For further information on hosting a group conversation or to express your interest in becoming a **Green Sage** contact Di Ford on 9655 2139 or email:

consumers@cotavic.org.au or go to the website at [www.cotavic.org.au](http://www.cotavic.org.au) and follow the links to Green Sages.

## Well Under Way

Hi there, Kerry Arnott from Portland District U3A here.

We wanted to let you and the Network know how we are going. We had a small but very successful program to commence our activities as a new U3A branch last term. We have now produced a brochure with a few more things added for this Semester, and will progressively offer more activities as our numbers and volunteers allow us. We would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the start-up money given to us by the U3A Network Victoria. It will certainly assist us in developing our administration set-up, and in providing interesting options to our members. Thank you.

Please pass on our regards to Harry Dobson for his assistance to us in the establishment phase.

*February 2011*

## Membership drive at Yarra City U3A

As its first function in 2011 Yarra City U3A held a Welcome Morning Tea on 22 February at 10.00 am in the annexe of Collingwood Library in Stanton Street, Collingwood. Our theme was 'Bring a Friend, Bring a Plate and Make a Friend.' We were on a membership drive and it was also the official launch of our new website.

Over 65 people attended, among whom we were pleased to welcome the Mayor of Yarra, Councillor Alison Clarke and Ms. Fran Moloney, Coordinator Community Development Aged & Disability Services City of Yarra.

President Jenny John welcomed all visitors and introduced the New Committee for 2011.

She gave a brief outline of current courses and introduced all tutors in attendance. So far this year we are able to offer 35 courses and we have 28 volunteer tutors.

Next Jenny gave a demonstration of our new web page: [www.YarracityU3A.org.au](http://www.YarracityU3A.org.au) This has been set up and is being monitored and kept up-to-date

by our Webmaster Sue McKernan. Jenny thanked her for her time and expertise. Computer time had been booked in the library next door – we thank Library Officer, Gary Aspinall for facilitating this - so that anyone inclined could go online and realise how easy it is to keep up-to-date with our news and events.

We are certainly on a drive to maximise this approach to our membership as it saves time and paper and the expense of postage. We are aware it is not a means comfortable to all, so we will maintain postal contact and at the same time also encourage the growth of a 'buddy system' so that members can be informed of immediate changes by word of mouth.

Former President Margaret Donald next announced the good news that we have secured new premises for Yarra City U3A. Since inception 6 years ago we have had to move premises three times and our present office in the Senior Citizens Centre in Hosie Street Richmond is a tiny cubby hole. We thank the Senior Citizens for allowing us

this space but will be pleased to move on. Because Yarra City U3A covers the whole of Yarra we feel that the office should be more centrally situated and hope that our move to Stanton Street Hall in Collingwood will encourage more office volunteers. It is certainly easily accessible by public transport. Yarra Council is currently undertaking capital improvements on the site and it is envisaged these will be completed by the end of July, when we hope to move in. We will be sharing the common areas of the Hall with the Collingwood Boxing Club.

After speeches we resumed consumption of the wide range of tempting edibles and excellent these were indeed. Alice Nugent and Lyn Maru kept supplying tea and coffee. New members were enrolled and supplied with details of available courses and of course we were able to catch up with news of old friends and meet new friends. It was a most agreeable and successful start to the New Year.

*Margaret Durrance  
Secretary, Yarra City U3A*

## Sharing the Learning in New South Wales

Wouldn't you like to be able to expand your courses and classes? It's not easy unless you have the people willing to prepare and conduct classes. At the same time, within the Network membership, there are lots of people who conduct classes in their own U3As who would like to be able to share them with others. Here are some suggestions as to how this might be done.

Alister McDonald, of Central Coast U3A, has been delivering a very successful class on Jewish/Arab – Israeli/Palestine historical problems for some years. He offers an 8 x 2hour course, and is willing to travel from Woy Woy to other U3As within a 2 hour travel radius to deliver the course.

If your U3A would like to take up Alister's offer, please call him on 02 4341 7085,

Alister's offer is just one example of how U3As within reasonable distance of each other can work together to expand the offerings available, whether the class is an ongoing one with a single tutor, or is delivered with guest tutors on a range of topics within the course.

Check out the Newsletters (most are available on-line) of U3As near you – regional boundaries are not a barrier – and see what exchanges you can make with your neighbouring U3As.

*[from U3A Newslink – February 2011, the newsletter of U3A Network NSW Inc – Ed.]*

The Commonwealth Bank has established a \$5million Community Flood Assistance Grant Program, which is open to NFP community organisations or groups.

Each NFP community organisation which has suffered damage or loss of uninsured equipment as a result of the recent floods in Queensland, NSW, Victoria or WA, or from Cyclone Yasi, can apply for a grant up to \$20,000 per group.

For more information about the grant program and the guidelines, visit:  
<http://www.commbank.com.au/news/customer-support/default.aspx>

## Veteran Community - Story Writing & Art Competition

Story Writing & Art Competition (SWAC) is an annual competition for members of Victoria's ex-service community. Entering its 49th year, it was originally a writing therapy exercise for returned soldiers at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and has since been expanded to include poetry, art, craft and photography. In 2010, the competition attracted 628 entries from a total of 310 entrants across Victoria.

This year's competition began on Friday 1 April and entries close on Friday 29 July.

### SWAC 2011

Entries in the 2011 Story Writing & Art Competition opened on 1 April 2011 and we would like to encourage you all to pick up your paintbrushes, pens, cameras, needles and thread and join in the fun.

The Special Writing Category for 2011 acknowledges the 60th Anniversary of National Service and is entitled "Life For A Nasho". The story is required to be a true life experience (i.e. non fiction) but not necessarily a first hand account. The maximum number of words in this category is 1,500.

Entries in the art, craft and photography categories will be displayed at a public exhibition at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. All winning entries will be included in the special annual publication, BRAVO! Awards for the best entries in each category will be presented at a ceremony in November.

For entry forms please call the SWAC Coordinator, Siobhan Hodgins on 9496 2290 or for country residents 1800 134 864.

You may also write to: SWAC  
PO Box 5444  
Heidelberg West 3081 or  
swac@austin.org.au

## Principles of U3A – a guide for newer Committee members

Based on the philosophy of the UK founder of the U3A movement, Dr. Peter Laslett:

- To provide affordable learning opportunities for older people, using the skills and abilities of the members themselves.
- Those who learn shall teach and those who teach shall learn, and there shall be no distinction between the two.
- There shall be no qualifications for membership, and no awards, degrees or diplomas shall be given.
- The emphasis shall be on learning for the love of it, and shall include an emphasis on the values of making things and improving skills of all kinds.
- Learning shall take place in

a friendly, supportive, social environment.

- Those joining a U3A shall pay for its upkeep.
- There shall be no payment to any person (member or non-member) for teaching or providing a service to members except in the case of reimbursement for such expenses as travel, photocopying, etc.
- The curriculum of a U3A shall be determined by the needs/preferences of members and according to the resources available to it.
- To be at all times, non-political and non-sectarian in our approach.

*[Featured in U3A Newslink – February 2011, the newsletter of U3A Network NSW Inc – Ed.]*

## Vale Joseph Plinio Marangio

A long-time member and class leader of U3As Nunawading and, later, Wonthaggi, and a stalwart helper on the catering side for some years for U3A Network-Victoria Inc. (many of us have enjoyed Joseph's sandwiches and other fodder he brought in to each Network Council meeting).

Joseph and I go back a long way - to the early days of U3A Nunawading when we both began to explore the 'new' field of computer technology on early Amstrad computers in the garage (before we even had a classroom!) Joseph had a great interest in Food and Nutrition, and one of the early classes he taught was just that, encouraging his students/fellow members to learn what good food and nutrition really meant. Born and raised in Italy, Joseph had a real love for his native language and happily taught Italian for would-be travellers.

When he and his wife Olga moved to South Gippsland to live, U3A Wonthaggi were lucky to have Joseph teach Italian there, and he was also a staunch member of the U3A Wonthaggi Choir, almost until the time of his death on 23rd March 2011 in the Dandenong Hospital, where he only had a short stay of a few days.

Joseph will be well remembered by his many friends, and we send our sincere sympathy to his wife, Olga, son Simon, stepson Bradley, and the lovely grandchildren of whom he was so fond.

*Sheila Moore,  
Bass Valley U3A*

# Hume U3A Relay for Life

Friday 18th – Saturday 19th March 2011

To think it all started with our President, Pat, challenging our “resident fundraiser” Helen, which resulted in Pat having her head shaved during The Carnival of Learning at Federation Square.

We have, once again, risen to the challenge and our hard work fund raising was recognised by the presentation of the trophy for being the top fund raiser. This is our second year in a row as the top fund raiser in Hume.

We had a good representation at the Meadows Greyhound Club. Members walked continuously in relay format during the long cold night, with some members heading home for a few hours sleep, sleeping in our tent, or staying awake all night.

Our theme this year was “Carnival”. The tent and our members dressed for the occasion.

Our Newsletter Editor Liz Munro was honoured to be selected to light the remembrance candle on behalf of cancer survivors.

As we had raised over \$5,500 we were advised that a project for Cancer Research will be named after Hume U3A.

Win, our Social Secretary, proudly received the trophy on behalf of Hume U3A at the closing ceremony.

*Ann Druery, Vice President, U3A Hume*

# Honouring Bernard West

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

At our Christmas Lunch in December, I had the honour of bestowing an Honorary Life Membership on Bernard West. For those who were not present on this occasion, here is my tribute to him.

*“As you know Bernard has been a pillar of U3A for many years, six of the last seven years as Treasurer, working very closely with Graeme Mascas. He is also a great ideas man instigating many new and interesting programs for all of us to enjoy.*

*Programs including Philosophy, Italian and Community Visits (how many of us remember the visit to the Bairnsdale court and lunch at Parliament House with Craig Ingram). He has also organised some very special events. I would like to mention the visit by Proff. Mendleson of the Florey Institute entitled “Maintain your Brain”, this event was open to the public and was a huge success. Another of his major events was the talk by Doreen Akkerman “Everything you need to know about cancer, but were afraid to ask.” An idea that didn’t quite come to fruition was his suggestion of belly dancing, (even though there are plenty of large bellies around). I also recall Bernard wanting to arrange for an elephant at an enrolment day. Sorry you couldn’t pull that one off, it would have been such fun. Although there was that visit to the circus.*

*Bernard was also responsible for the production of our 20 year history book. And what a great job he did as publicity officer.*

*Bernard has also been involved with other programs such as Stocks and Shares, Ambling and many more.*

*Our sincere wish is for you to enjoy better health.”*

*Joan Race  
Extract from Bairnsdale and District  
U3A Newsletter  
January/February 2011*

## Dates to Note in 2011

28-29 April	NSW Network Conference “The Future in Mind”. Programme available at <a href="http://www.nsw.u3anet.org.au">www.nsw.u3anet.org.au</a>
9 May	Accommodation Workshop Multicultural Hub, 2.30 pm – 6.00 pm. 506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne (opp Vic Market) Parking at Vic Market
9-11 May	Network Victoria Conference “Ageing with Interest: Vitality, Knowledge, Growth” Dinner at William Angliss Restaurant Conference at Melbourne Town Hall
3 June	Material due for July Newsletter
15 June	Network Victoria Council Meeting 10.30 am, Multicultural Hub Blue Room 506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne (opp Vic Market) Parking at Vic Market
8-9 August	The Singapore International Conference

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 Network Office: [info@u3anetvic.org.au](mailto:info@u3anetvic.org.au)

## U3A NEWSLETTER



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