



U3A
Brisbane

eNews
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Connecting Seniors to Lifelong Learning

Editor's Notes

Jane Elliott



As a result of the weather – either very hot and sticky, or very hot and wet – I have been spending some time in shady, cool places either reading or doing cryptic crosswords. The link between the two can be striking at times. For example, while reading Trent Dalton's *Lola in the Mirror*, I came across the word "xanthous" for the first time. A character in the novel makes the word in a Scrabble game and, when challenged, explains its meaning as "the bastard child of green and yellow". One day later, "xanthous" was the answer to a crossword clue. It's no surprise that mastering cryptic crosswords and discussing literature are popular pastimes with U3A members. They are both challenging and rewarding activities that help keep us learning and entertained, typical of U3A classes. I hope all members are enjoying their classes in 2024.

President's Report

Gabrielle Power West

Welcome back to all Members and Supporters to the New Year of 2024.

When attending my first classes for 2024 last Tuesday, it was most obvious from the chatter and comradery in the foyer, before and between classes, that members were very happy to return, to connect with friends and colleagues and to join their first classes for 2024. U3A provides great opportunities for members to be involved in worthwhile learning opportunities as well as the important social aspect of being a member of the organisation. I am sure that the nearby coffee shop of Marco Polo was also very pleased that classes had resumed, given many class groups extend the social aspect of U3A through the social gatherings at the coffee shop after classes. I enquired of one of the Marco Polo personnel whether there was much difference in the number of clients from the week beginning 22 January. As anticipated, she informed me that it had been much busier the previous two days. I shared with her that U3A had resumed classes.



Volunteers

The success of U3A depends very much on the expertise and generosity of our volunteer tutors, who contribute a great deal of time and effort to develop and present the incredible variety of learning opportunities for members. Based on recent statistics, there are 175 face-to-face classes and 36 Zoom classes for a total of 211 classes for Term 1, 2024. This number includes 23 **new classes**. A special "thank you" to the tutors for making U3A programs possible.

The efficient organisation of the classes depends very much on the volunteer members responsible for timetabling, and for volunteers being at the city venues coordinating the signing-in before classes and other organisational activities. U3A is very fortunate in having the IT expertise of Greg Taylor together with the valued contribution of Yvonne McGann coordinating the U3A Office, Jane Elliott editor of eNews, and the members of the Management Committee.

Membership

Following the very successful Open Day that U3A held in September 2023, there have been 420 new members between September 2023 and up to and including January 2024. That is a very positive outcome for U3A. A very special welcome to each of our new members and I am sure you will find your membership offers important opportunities during your retirement phase.

Thank you to existing members who have already renewed their membership of U3A for 2024. U3A relies totally on membership money to operate this great organisation. If you have not, as yet, renewed your membership for 2024, I encourage you to do so as U3A offers great opportunities to our members for learning as well as for social interaction.

Recently Janet McKeon, a valued member of the U3A Management Committee, found it necessary, for reasons not connected with U3A, to resign from the Management Committee. I recognise and thank Janet for the very important contribution she has made to U3A during the 12 months she has been a valued member of the Management Committee. Janet proposed and coordinated the very successful Open Day held in September 2023. There were 96 new members who joined in September, largely because of the Open Day. Thank you to Janet for the time, effort and expertise contributed during the time she has been a member of the Management Committee. Go well.

Tutors Wanted

U3A depends on its volunteer tutors to fulfil its primary objective of connecting seniors to lifelong learning. If you have experience in, or a passion for, a particular area of knowledge and can volunteer for tutoring for 2024, we would love to hear from you. If there is any area in which you have interest and expertise, please contact Gail Hawkins:

tutors@u3abrisbane.org.au

Social Activity

In this February eNews you will find information about the structure for social events during 2024. There is an outline of a very interesting social event to be held in March. This event is a full day excursion and involves a coach trip to Pohlman's Nursery at Gatton with a stop at Rosewood for morning tea. I attended a number of the social events in 2023 and they were very interesting experiences where we were able to meet and mix with other members.

If you are interested in volunteering to assist Heather Dowling in organising the social events, your support would be most appreciated. Please contact Heather at social@u3abrisbane.org.au

Best wishes for an interesting and beneficial year as a member of U3A.

Best regards

Gabrielle

Logan District News

Bernadette Ketter

One Hundred Glorious Years

(written by Bernadette with Heather Wentworth and members of the *Exploring Brisbane through Photography* class)

On 1 March, the *Exploring Brisbane Through Photography* class will celebrate the 100th birthday of one of its earliest members, Anne Collins, at Barko & Co, Tenerife. The tutor of the class, Chris Deeming, has organised the event along with

Anne's upcoming art exhibition in May. All class members are very appreciative of the leadership and tremendous work Chis does for our class.



Anne joined Brisbane U3A soon after it was established. As a foundation member of the photography class in 1986, Anne has been an active and vital member for almost 40 years. Originally, classes were often held in her home. Her garage became a photographic studio where black and white photos were developed. There, they experimented with double exposure development of negatives and other interesting photographic techniques. Moving with the times, Anne now adds iPhone photography to her many skills. In her early years at U3A, Anne was also a member of a Tai Chi class held in Edward Street. Always supporting the class tutors and members, Anne enthusiastically greets new members and is ready with suggestions for suitable places to visit, keeping abreast of upcoming art exhibits and cultural photographic opportunities. With Anne's membership, it is no surprise that this is the longest running U3A class.

Anne is known as a well-qualified, prolific artist. She will happily tell you she has always been interested in art. Within the U3A photography group, it is not unusual for her to use the photos she takes as inspiration to create her own paintings. These artistic skills have been honed since her school days. She willingly shares her knowledge and creative ideas with everyone. For the duration of her membership in U3A Anne has been a member of the Brisbane Institute of Art.

Always with a ready smile, Anne recounts fascinating stories of her life. Prior to the outbreak of WWII, she left her home in Guernsey and sailed in a small boat with her family to eventually reach Sydney on 16 December 1939, an event which featured in newspaper articles in Sydney. A few years later she met the man who would become her husband. Based at Duntroon, she recalls her surprise when, the day after meeting him, he arrived outside her house in a tank asking for her. They married a month later in 1942 when she was 17.

Following the war, her husband's work took them to live in various places around Australia, including Cooma in the Snowy Mountains where they bought their first house. The house was a demountable shipped from overseas. Anne cheerfully remembers they had an outside toilet which blew over in a storm during the biting cold one winter. Whilst living in Mt Isa, following her artistic passion, Anne built a kiln and collected clay from the ground to teach children from the local "Opportunity School" to make pottery. She still has pieces proudly displayed in her home along with a vast collection of her own paintings.

Anne exhibits her art at galleries around Brisbane. From 19 May to 9 June this year, she will exhibit her paintings at Land Street Gallery, Toowong. It promises to be interesting and varied and not to be missed.

We are all proud to know Anne. She enthusiastically leads by example and inspires us all to be creative. Happy 100th Anne!

Special e-Presentations Coordinator – this could be you!



eNews interviewed Mary Denver (pictured with her miniature schnauzer, Henry), Secretary U3A Brisbane and departing Zoom e-presentations coordinator. After two years, Mary will hand over her role to a new member volunteer for 2024. So we are looking for someone who is keen to use their existing skills and acquire new ones as coordinator.

Q: Tell us about this role, Mary. What does it involve?

A: Well, there are two parts to it – the first is locating and recruiting the presenters, liaising with them about their talk, fixing a date in the presentations schedule, following up with them to

produce a "blurb" about themselves and their presentation and getting that to the eNews editor and our website in time for members to book online.

Part 2 is facilitating the Zoom meeting on the day, in partnership with Greg Taylor, our ICT Coordinator, who co-hosts the presentation.

Q: Is there a lot of time needed? And how do you recruit the right presenters?

A: We generally do two presentations a month, so you have to be well-organised – it can take time to get things right. People have to be reminded they are presenting, and they may have questions. Most of our presenters have been very professional, they are busy people too.

I was able to recruit presenters from other activities I'm involved in or through people I know. Most people are very happy to present pro bono to U3A Brisbane, which has a growing reputation as a community of interested and savvy members. U3A tutors and members can also present; there is a lot of hidden talent out there.

Q. The presentations are all on Zoom, so would the person have to be a video-conferencing expert?

A: Not at all. Each session is ably supported by Greg Taylor, our ICT Coordinator – you will just need to have the confidence to introduce and thank presenters in the Zoom, much as you would face to face.

Q. Do you have any favourite e-presentations from the almost 30 that have taken place over the past two years? Have there been any special moments?

A: If you are a lifelong learner, like me, every presentation brings new knowledge and insights. We have had talks on everything from the rescue of British round-the-world yachtsman Tony Bullimore on the high seas, to the benefits of selenium as a substitute for exercise.

I do remember the brave presenter last year, who could barely talk as he struggled with full-blown COVID on the day (luckily not transmissible). Henry Reynolds was magnificent this year on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

And the video in our final presentation from *Communify*, the wonderful Brisbane community organisation, showing what a difference volunteering can make to people's lives.

Q. Volunteering is hard work and this is a public-facing role. Do you have any tips for an incoming Coordinator?

A: You need to have a level of commitment and an interest in people and what they have to say. Also useful is an awareness that each time we interact with a new presenter, we are raising the profile of U3A Brisbane.

So it's a very rewarding role where you build your own skills, and assist other U3A members to do the same in a Zoom environment where they gain knowledge and are empowered to get on with life!

For further information and detailed role description, please contact Mary Denver in the first instance at:

secretary@u3abrisbane.org.au

Meet our Volunteers

David Truman (Tutor)



I heard about U3A by word-of-mouth and joined U3A in 2003. I loved the idea of lifelong learning, as I am an eternal student myself, and also the opportunity to make friends and have social contact with other people. Apart from the classes I teach, I have participated in classes on Beliefs that Make History (Dr Douglas Golding), Spanish Language (Nobby Hobbs), Mind Stirrers, A Panorama of World Views (Wayne Weiler), a class by Laurence Salmon on his experiences from the oil industry in the Middle East and Africa, and Carl Gustav Jung - dreams, symbols, archetypes (Krystyna Soler). I also helped organize three Winter Schools for U3A, and gave presentations at each.

I introduced Russian Language in 2003, which continued until about 2018, and Russian History in 2004, which is still continuing. I also taught a stand-alone class in Russian literature for several years and, about three years ago, I took over mentoring an Indonesian language class. Several years earlier, I also presented a class called A Critical Examination of the New Age Phenomenon.

I have an honours degree in Russian Language and Literature and Political Science. I spent a year on postgraduate exchange at Moscow State University during the Cold War in the late 1960s, and 30 years in Canberra as a policy adviser and ministerial speechwriter in several Commonwealth Departments, with special emphasis on minerals policy and investment competitiveness. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, I have visited Russia four more times totalling over three months, and have also made a deep study of Islamic history, scriptures and doctrines. From my job as a public servant, I gained facility in writing, research, public speaking, and representation. I've travelled extensively and speak several languages, including very fluent Russian.

At U3A, I enjoy having students that are there because they want to be there, and are really enthusiastic. I also enjoy the social contact, and the responsibility to deliver high quality classes of university standard, which in turn makes me constantly research more deeply to improve and update my material. And with classes delivered by others, I appreciate the opportunity to learn and discuss.

U3A Social Events

Heather Dowling



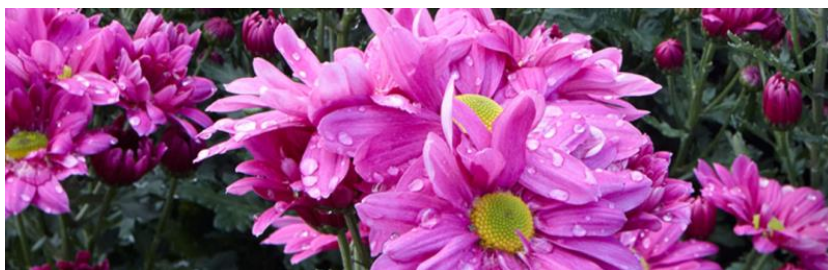
Well, here we are again for another year of learning, fun and frivolity! There are a few adjustments to the way the outings will be organised this year:

- there will be only one major outing per term.
- the meeting place for these outings will be at Roma Street, Platform 10.
- a coach accommodating 45-48 people will always be chartered, so there is plenty of space if you reserve early. This will give U3A members the best possible price for the trips.
- as always, unfortunately, if you cannot attend an outing due to illness etc., you will be required to find a replacement. Only in exceptional circumstances will the cost be refunded by U3A. This will be decided by the Treasurer and the Office Manager.
- if you ever feel at a loose end, there is always plenty to do on the social side; you can contact me on the social@u3abrisbane.org.au if you want to lend a hand.

For all social event bookings, please contact the U3A office on 3236 3055, or visit the 97 Creek St office. You can keep up to date with the latest Social Events on the U3A Website: <https://www.u3abrisbane.org.au/groups/social-group>

Tour of Pohlman's Nursery, Adare

Date: Tuesday 19 March
Pick up: 8.00am, Roma Street Coach Terminal, opposite Platform 10.
Return: 4.00pm, to Roma Street
Cost: \$72.00
Closing date: book by Monday 11 March



Pohlman's Nursery is nestled amongst the gum trees, just outside of Gatton in the heart of the Lockyer Valley. After arriving at the nursery, we will split into two groups for an informative trip around the 60-acre nursery on the *Gum Tree Valley Express* to learn how they use cutting-edge technology and industry best practice to produce high quality plants. While the first group is on the guided tractor train, the second group can look around the shop and stock up their plants. The train tour takes 30-40 minutes. The cost includes a stop at Rosewood for morning tea, and a two-course lunch

at the Royal Gatton Hotel.

This trip was cancelled due to Covid in 2019 and was suggested by a member. I hope that members will make themselves known to me either before the trip or on it.



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