Newsletter No 51 May 2016
Editor Valerie Bourke

Patron The Honourable Linda Dessau AM, Governor of Victoria

Presidents Message

A reminder the President’s Briefing is to be held on 18 May at the Multicultural Hub. Each U3A President should have received an invitation, if you have not received one please contact the Network Office. At this briefing we are fortunate to have Sue Noble, CEO Volunteering Victoria, to speak about the value of Volunteers. Many of you have held your AGM and where possible a member of the Network committee has attended and been so impressed with the professional manner in which our Member U3As are managed. Good governance is at the heart of a successful U3A.

U3A Network AGM was held in March and I thank retiring members David Jensz and Ian King for sharing their expertise whilst working for U3A Network over many years. Welcome to Tom Wong and Hans Eisen who have joined the committee, Tom as Treasurer and Hans as a general committee member.

Hon. President
Live Learn Enjoy
Elsie Mutton
President
U3A Network Victoria

A message from Gerard Mansour
Commissioner for Senior Victorians

Ageing is everyone’s business

As Commissioner for Senior Victorians, I am privileged to hear first-hand from seniors across Victoria about their experiences of growing older. In 2015, the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Martin Foley MP asked me to provide advice about the important issue of isolation and loneliness of Victorian seniors. My investigations included a literature review, a listening tour of Victoria where seniors told me about their experiences and input from an advisory group, community organisations and services. Many U3A members participated, providing valuable advice.

The most common message I received is that as we age we all still have a role, purpose and contribution to make. We only have to look within local community organisations, including U3As, to recognise the contribution seniors make through volunteering, membership of local committees and boards, and supporting charitable, sporting and arts endeavours. I congratulate the thousands of Victorians who ensure that U3As provide exciting opportunities for social participation and learning. Yet for many seniors the journey of ageing is marked by fundamental changes in roles and responsibilities, friendships and relationships. U3As are well placed to promote feelings of self-worth and belonging, address negative perceptions towards ageing and act as a safety net for people at risk of loneliness.

One of our great opportunities is to continue to ask ourselves if we can do more:

· as individuals to plan our journey through the seniors years, and
· as organisations to respond to the needs of seniors who are isolated, lonely, vulnerable or disadvantaged.

For ageing is everyone’s business.

Senior Award

The application for the Senior Awards are now available at www.seniornoonline.vic.gov.au

Victorian Senior of the Year

Congratulations to U3A member and former U3A Hepburn Shire President, David Hall on his being granted a Victorian Senior of the Year Achievement Award last year. On Thursday 13 April David spoke to ABC Regional radio about the value of U3A membership as a way to ward off loneliness and social isolation. The interview drew attention to Commissioner for Senior Victorians, Gerard Mansour’s recently released report which identified loneliness as a health risk for the elderly.

Congratulations to Pat Coffey of U3A Seymour who has received an Order of Australia, OAM, in the 2016 Australia Day Awards for a lifetime of Community Work. Many local organisations including Meals on Wheels, the Caroline Chisholm Society, Pregnancy Support Services as well as U3A Seymour have benefited from Pat’s tireless work.
U3A Horsham & District member, Alison Driscoll, bravely had her long locks cut off to raise funds to support cancer research; later her hair will be used to make a wig for a recovering patient.

U3A Nunawading Course Administration team are enjoying the freedom of extra leisure hours, thanks to U-MAS the network recommended online membership system. U-MAS has been in use for 12 months and members are now confident to use it to manage their own enrolments.

U3A Colac has a great selection of activities to keep seniors’ minds alert and bodies active, courses include Galloping Gourmets for those interested in making friends whilst eating good food, learning how to speak Mandarin, cycling, a gardeners’ group and, of course, the never ending learning of how to use your iPad and/or Smart Phone.

U3A Highvale celebrated its 20th birthday in February. Highvale is one of two surviving AV Jennings Retirement Village U3As. With the original concept a shuttle bus was to carry members between U3A campuses providing U3As across the metropolitan area. David Hatcher on the Jennings management team had a belief in life-long learning and retirement being a time to widen ones horizons. Since 1996 Highvale has expanded to take in members from the wider non-Village community.

U3A Ringwood, one of our original U3As, celebrated its 30 year birthday in November 2015. Relocation to new facilities in the Parkwood Community Hub was a terrific birthday present from the Maroondah Council, these facilities, together with four new class rooms at the former Parkwood Secondary College, have enabled Ringwood to expand both classes on offer and their membership. More than 100 guests attended the 30th celebration, generously supported by Cr. Lowe and the Bram Leigh reception centre, including Mayor Natalie Thomas and other Councillors. Seen here founding members Bep Wolfers and Valmai Budds cut the cake.

U3A Highvale

Melbourne Chinese U3A celebrated its ninth annual Art Exhibition on April 1. Members of the creative singing class entertained dignitaries and members. Examples of calligraphy, art works and gardening adorned the Box Hill Lower Town Hall. The Hon. President, Rev. Dr Joseph Teoh, emphasised the U3A’s part in keeping the mind, body and the soul healthy. He exhorted MCU3A members to be fruitful, useful and joyful in their third age. The floral display here represents “evergreen” in Chinese characters.

U3A Mallacoota & District hosted the “Whole of Gippsland U3A Regional U3A Meeting” on February 19 to 21. Very well received by participants the experience of MASpace was the highlight for many. Susan Webster, U3A Network was guest speaker. She is seen here with Mallacoota President June Kinsella. A Number of Gippsland U3As have written glowing reports of this event in their newsletters.

U3A Ringwood

U3A Croydon’s mosaic class beach houses. The Quilters visited Bright to enjoy the autumn colours and drink wine. This well-travelled group is planning a trip to Castlemaine and Malden sussing out patchwork shops. These busy members have raised money to purchase two wheelchairs for the Leprosy Mission. Some members have taken on learning to swim whilst the Bushwalkers continue to explore the Dandenong Ranges whilst the Cyclists go much further afield. In September these active U3Aers will be off on a study tour to Germany. Congratulations to Dorothea Van Sprang who won a Mayoral Art Award for her landscape painting which now is on display in the Ringwood East branch of the Bendigo Bank. The Crodonaires, U3A Croydon’s Guitar and Ukulele Group, have been chosen as the Support Group for Danny Spooner at the next Victorian Folk Music Clubs’ concert. The Re-Discovering Melbourne Group recommend a visit to the studios of Golden Days Radio for senior citizens. Radio 95.7FM is a volunteer run service which has listeners all around the English speaking world. Tune in.
U3A Goulburn Valley has had members visiting Broken Hill as well as enjoying the interstate rivalry of playing Mah-Jong against Deniliquin U3A. The Socrates group has been wrestling with "reconciling our materialist ambitions with the constraints imposed by the natural environment" whilst some have talked of "Big Issues in Science". Others have been reading "The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll", or singing for pleasure. All have been pleased to take part in the local IGA scheme to raise money to fund activities and are happy to celebrate the coming of the NBN.

U3A Glen Eira have been expressing their creativity via flower arranging, playing in the alto recorder ensemble or joining the piano group.

U3A Darebin have been learning how to explore family history, visiting the Dandenong Food Market and the Train Museum, investigating walking the Camino as well as listening to Dr Harry Blutstein talk about the Ascent of Globalisation.

U3A Bairnsdale & District have enjoyed a trip to Maffra, to attend an environmental sustainability class. Other members are involved in the "theatre going group" whilst others have chosen to learn about Chinese Culture which involves "joking and laughing a lot". Mindfulness through colouring is a popular choice for other members. In Term II, Malay has been added to the wide selection of language courses already on offer, together with environmental sustainability, neuro psychology, and computer photo workshop.

U3A Latrobe Valley prepared 300 knitted poppies in November 2015 as part of the "5000 poppies campaign". These are to be incorporated into Australia’s exhibit at the Chelsea Flower Show in May. Valley members have also been enjoying Effective use of Software forums. These have included such topics as, eliminating unwanted emails, recovering "lost" emails, recovering from a "frozen screen" and in the series on security, creating an invincible password (but what about remembering it!!). The U3A also runs a Science Behind the Industry series with emphasis on local Valley industries and agriculture.

From U3A Corangamite comes these words of wisdom, "learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere". Friday forum audiences have been listening to former lighthouse keepers and their readers take a themed approach to choosing books to discuss. An interesting approach by the book group sees each member choosing a book on a prescribed theme, such as "India" or the next month, "biographies". Such an approach overcomes the need to be restricted to books of which there are multiple copies.

U3A Echuca have celebrated the dedication and long service of Pat Barnett (R) and Alma Reynolds (L) seen here receiving life memberships.

U3A Seymour & District members have been learning all about Climate Change: the problems and solutions, they have already booked to see Matilda in September and are currently enjoying bird appreciation, woodworking and the history of the Goulburn area.

U3A Kilmore & District had Megan Philpot, Deputy Ombudsman to speak at their AGM in March. She explained the purpose of the ombudsman is to ensure all Victorians are treated fairly when dealing with the Victorian Public Service.

U3A Warrnambool’s new committee is actively promoting U3A. They have been interviewed on ABC Regional Radio, had articles in the local Newspaper, and can be seen here at the “Active April” expo, with their newly minted banner.
Merchandising: would members of your U3A be interested in purchasing either of these items? Buy and sell at cost or use as a fund raiser

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calico bags</td>
<td>$3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanyards</td>
<td>$2.80</td>
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</tbody>
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Advertise these wares to your members if you think they will sell, when you have firm order contact Julie at the office. This will be a pay up front operation, once we have sufficient orders we’ll order in the products and your Council representative can pick up.

Notices
A4 Study at the Florey Institute is looking for 65-85 year olds to be involved in a research project about Dementia and its amelioration. [www.florey.edu.au/research](http://www.florey.edu.au/research)

Census 2016
Census night will be August 9 and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, ABS, intends as many people as possible to complete the survey on-line. They are recruiting temporary field officers to assist on [www.abs.com.au/careers](http://www.abs.com.au/careers) or email Lana Condie at lana.condie@abs.cq.au.

The U3A Asia Pacific Alliance 2016 conference will be held in Osaka Japan on the 11 and 12 of October. Google U3A Asia Pacific alliance for more information.

COTA are looking for an older persons panel: Get involved and make your voice heard! The federal election looks like it will be in July and we want to make sure the issues affecting older people are front and centre for all political parties. You can help. The more people who join in the surer we are that we will get the messages to politicians, candidates and media right. Register to be part of the panel - simply go to: [http://olderaustraliansvote.org.au](http://olderaustraliansvote.org.au).

Finally, a challenge. Code Club Australia is introducing coding (programming) to 9 to 11 year olds across the country. The program they use is called Scratch and it and direction for its use are available at [https://scratch.mit.edu/scratch_1.4/](https://scratch.mit.edu/scratch_1.4/)

Download and install the version of Scratch to suit your PC operating system, [Download the Scratch 1.4 Getting Started Guide, Scratch 1.4 Reference Guide and the Scratch Cards](https://scratch.mit.edu/scratch_1.4/) which provide brief explanations that show how to make animations and interactive projects with Scratch. Have a go!

Win an iPad from Tech Savvy for Seniors, go to [seniorsonline.vic.gov.au](http://seniorsonline.vic.gov.au)

See the TED talks at [https://www.ted.com](https://www.ted.com). Check out the on-line family history course offered by University of Tasmania at [www.utas.edu.au/arts/writing-family-history](http://www.utas.edu.au/arts/writing-family-history)

Melbourne University’S Institute of Sport & Exercise is looking for volunteers to take part in a research trial assessing the effect of exercise programs on people aged 60 and over who have knee osteoarthritis. Associate Professor Pazit Levinger has given an outline below. Members who fall into this category and who are interested to know more about the program can contact Professor Levinger at Pazit.levinger@vu.edu.au for further details.

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