



Coffs Harbour U3A Inc.
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NEWSLETTER

February 2015

President's Report

To my fellow members,

Welcome to new members receiving a newsletter for the first time and warm greetings to all those who have repeated membership for 2015. Our current membership is nearing 500 and, of course, applications may be lodged throughout the year.

Recently your committee reviewed events held since our last newsletter. A very big thank you to all who have assisted in conducting the following occasions. From comments received I believe I can write, on behalf of the audience, a “thank you so much” to everyone who provided entertainment and visual pleasure at our end of year party. Our stage performers were enthusiastically applauded on the day, and congratulations to artists who displayed their work. Success of the party owed much to member participation and co-operation.

In January committee members hosted a morning orientation meeting to greet the eleven 2015 group leaders who have offered their services as class facilitators for the first time.

Anyone else who is considering volunteering as a facilitator may like to note that the committee has recommended that a similar meeting be an annual occurrence.

Thank you to all who provided feedback after fee paying day and enrolment day. Each year the committee takes considerable interest in trying to better procedures and an evaluation of enrolment practice has been recorded in readiness for 2016. The facility to pay membership fees directly into our bank account has been popular and will be maintained.

With reference to enrolment day there was again some confusion among a minority of members re starting time. Please note that the times advertised in our newsletter, on our website, and on the U3A notice board in the Coffs Harbour Community Centre are the times to follow for any event. Notices and advice re booking times given out by the Community Centre are accurate as to the actual time we are paying for accommodation and include set up time – on enrolment day that includes approx. 1.5 hours of set up time.

Alas, we do not have a central headquarters and, as there appears to be some confusion about

this, please note the following. The committee all work from their respective homes which currently stretch from Sawtell to Emerald Beach and the contact phone numbers listed are personal numbers generously shared by committee members. Our relationship with the Coffs Harbour Community and Neighbourhood Centres is that of a tenant renting premises for class and other activities. We have occupancy arrangements and agreements with those establishments but no direct jurisdiction. The staff and volunteers are very helpful but they have no obligation to answer U3A membership queries and should not be expected to have the information to do so. The U3A notice board in the Centre advertises a list of committee members as does the website.

The first page of this newsletter displays our logo and also the logo of the U3A Network New South Wales. We belong to a worldwide organisation and our immediate “umbrella” is the NSW Network and for that, as President, I am very grateful. The network not only allows us to share ideas with others but is a source of continuity providing researched advice relating to legal, insurance, and other guideline matters. If you would like to know more about the Network their website reference is www.nsw.u3anet.org.au.

Please remember to share you newsletter with members who may not have internet access. Perhaps class facilitators, who are aware of people who lack internet access, could encourage other class members to share newsletter copies with them. Some hard copies for those without computer skills will be available at Community Centres in Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga.

We currently have a variety of classes – 50 in all. Thank you to the 42 facilitators who have volunteered to lead groups this year, each according to their own style of presentation. We would have a very difficult time without class facilitators!!! Perhaps the best way of saying “I appreciate you” is to give respect to your class leaders by letting them know if you will be absent or are discontinuing a class for whatever reason. Such courtesy does assist their preparation plans.

I hope you are all interested in the new challenge the committee have undertaken in reaching out into the community during Seniors Week. Each year we are asked “are you celebrating Seniors Week” and for a number of years the answer has been “No” but in 2015 we say “Yes”. This newsletter includes two articles specifically about this event, please read them and plan to enjoy the week. For some is may be a quiet visit to the Bunker Cartoon Gallery some time during the exhibition period and/or the pleasure of witnessing another class in action in the gallery. For others it may be attending the opening or the social gathering at the end of Seniors Week. I appreciate that distance may make attendance difficult for some – as always that is a challenge in a rural area as large as ours. Can you help a mate to meet this challenge?

With good wishes to all I close with this provoking quote:

Satchel Paige (1906-1982) once asked, “How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?”

We are so obsessed with age, Paige implies, that we allow it to define our identities.

Break out of the mental set that makes you think of your age first, and your identity second.

Sincerely, Helen Squires

COFFS HARBOUR U3A CELEBRATES SENIORS WEEK 2015

Our Coffs Harbour U3A is planning to celebrate Seniors Week 2015 with events held at the Coffs Harbour Bunker Cartoon Gallery. The purpose of the event is for it to be

1. A celebration for Seniors
2. A furthering of inter-generational relations
3. A promotion of greater awareness of U3A to the general public and local authorities, and
4. An enhancement of relationships with other groups

This is a new initiative for our U3A and apart from being a promotion and outreach to the general community it is an opportunity for us to socialise with other members; as a means to encourage and give confidence to those actively participating in events; and as a reminder to us all that we all have skills and talents to develop.

Events will commence with an opening night focusing on the Seniors Week Art Exhibition where University of the Third Age Artists join with Bishop Druitt College Primary Students to present an exhibition;

“Social issues through artistic expressions.....a meeting of the Minds.”

This exhibition is the first of a kind for us with senior and junior citizens putting their ideas into art form and presenting social issues through intergenerational eyes.

When: 6pm Friday 13th March 2015
Where: Bunker Cartoon Gallery Coffs Harbour.
Who is invited: Everyone

Please read the invitation in this newsletter for further details.

The exhibition will remain on display until 25th April and will be hosted by U3A members throughout Seniors Week 16th to 20th March

AND THERE IS MORE!!!

During Seniors Week a program of U3A class- based activities will be in action at the Gallery. The daily program culminates with a social event on Friday 20th March when participants will be acknowledged and the art award presented. The U3A Ukulele Group will provide entertainment and light refreshment will be served.

For further enquiries your contact is Lesley Meredith Publicity Officer at email: lesley1943@bigpond.com or phone 0410 083 502 or call 02 6653 2081.

Helen Squires, President
on behalf of the Committee, Coffs Harbour U3A Inc.

EVENTS FOR SENIORS WEEK AT THE BUNKER CARTOON GALLERY.

Monday 16th March to Friday 20th March

Monday	10.30-12noon 2.00-3.30pm	“Current Affairs Discussion Group” Facilitator John Clingan “Meet the Artists”. Artists from U3A discussing their work
Tuesday	11.00-12noon	“Bush Poet” Lawry Herron a U3A member
Wednesday	2.00-3.30pm	“Pot-pourri” Discussion group - Facilitator Fran Kerkhoff
Thursday	10.00am–12noon	U3A “Shakespeare Group - Facilitator Helga Jones
Thursday	2.00–03.45pm	U3A “Shakespeare Group - Facilitator Helga Jones
Friday	1.45 for 02.00-03.30pm	Awarding of Prizes to U3A Artists and a Social afternoon with the U3A Ukulele players. - Facilitator Hilary Gray

“Growing Old Disgracefully”

Live entertainment sponsored by Coffs Harbour City Council

On Thursday 12th March for a Matinee performance starting at 2pm, we have Warren Fahey and Max Cullen performing especially for Seniors “Growing Old Disgracefully” in a once only event here in the Coffs Harbour Bunker Gallery. Guaranteed to have something for everyone, Warren and Max will perform songs, poetry, yarns and tall tales from Australian historical culture. Sponsored by Coffs Harbour City Council as part of Seniors Week activities, the entry is by gold coin donation for all attendees over 60. Refreshments will be provided following the performance that is about 90 minutes duration.

Around the card table - from the canasta group

We sure have made an impressive start. Most of the group had played previously, albeit many years or decades ago. But as the story goes, it's like riding a bike - they have remembered more than they anticipated.

By the third session we had two teams reaching 5000 points and thus winning the game. We have 25 players, so there's room for 3 more. We meet on Fridays, at 2.45 pm in Cavanbah A.

It's lots of fun and plenty of laughs around the table.

Ann Schultz Facilitator

**To all members of the
Coffs Harbour University of the Third Age**
together with their partners and friends
are welcome to join in the first of our own Seniors Week celebrations at

Seniors Week Art Exhibition opening
at 6pm on Friday 13th March 2015

Artists from the University of the Third Age
and the Bishop Druitt College Primary School
share intergenerational views in presenting an exhibition of
“Social Issues through Artistic Expressions..... a meeting of the Minds.”

Venue: Bunker Cartoon Gallery
John Champion Way
Coffs Harbour.

Entry: no charge
Drinks: \$2
Complimentary Canapes

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Not able to be present on Friday 13th? Not a problem because the exhibition will the remain on display until 25th April and will be hosted by U3A members throughout Seniors Week 16th to 20th March

The Bunker Cartoon Gallery is a public venue open to all. During Seniors Week a program of U3A class based activities will be in action at the Gallery as published. These are part of our outreach program.

Please note that entry to the Bunker Cartoon Gallery will be free of charge for the 13th March opening event; during Seniors week entry will be a gold coin but on all other days an entry fee of will be \$2. We are guests of the Gallery and entry fees are charged by the Gallery in accordance with their regular policy.

Any inquiries please contact Lesley by phone 0140 083 502 or email lesley1943@bigpond.com
Web site: www.coffs.u3anet.org.au

Keeping Mentally Fit

An article in the October/November issue of *OneCota*, which was sourced from www.seniorcarecorner.com reports that various neuroscience research studies have proved that seniors can improve cognition and reduce risk for developing dementia if they have fit brains.

Some activities that help keep your brain sharp and stimulate your brain's frontal lobe (the thinking brain) are:

- * Puzzles, such as Jigsaw puzzles of 500 pieces or more; Sudoku, crosswords; wordsearch
- * Playing board games and chess
- * Reading newspapers, books, magazines
- * Having a conversation
- * Watching a movie or play such as Hamlet or Macbeth
- * Participating in physical exercise
- * Painting
- * Practising math problems
- * Eating healthy foods and staying hydrated
- * Staying positive and managing stress
- * Bird watching
- * Learning something new – a foreign language or musical instrument
- * Build something, such as a model plane or birdhouse
- * Getting a good night's sleep
- * Learning a new word every day and using it

Products that may help to improve brain fitness (and may even be fun!) are:

- * Action or video games, such as Wii or Xbox 360
- * Life-long learning, online learning
- * Brain training software
- * Numerous low or no-cost online games to stimulate brain fitness.

You don't need to do all of the above. Select whichever tools you think will work best for you and give them a try.

The secret to brain health is to ***repeat, repeat & repeat***, so keep at it every day to achieve improvement.

We might well add that we should encourage seniors to join their local U3A, where they will find many of the things listed in this article!

Note: seniorcarecorner is a USA site but it does contain some helpful information for seniors the world over.

Movies and the Arts

The movie group has had just the one outing at BCC to discuss the movie '*Unbroken*'. Over 40 people enrolled in this group and I am ever hopeful that we will continue to get good attendances over the coming year. I'm pretty sure we will if the first day back was any indication.

Prior to the publication of this newsletter we will have seen '*Birdman*' which I know will invoke some interesting discussion.

It was great to welcome back most of the attendees from previous years and also the bright new faces of newcomers.

Jill deClercq, Facilitator

Play Reading

Whodunits, theatre of the absurd, satire, melodrama, tragedy, comedy, modern and classic - the whole ambit of theatrical drama is tackled with gusto by the Play Reading enthusiasts. Shakespeare we leave to the dedicated groups to study and bring to life. Australian plays are well represented in the repertoire and David Williamson is a favourite. Inhibitions are left at the door as characters morph from the words on the page and the atmosphere is created. The only things missing are the stage, costumes and the audience. Members are encouraged to take a turn running a play - selecting, directing and casting, but this is voluntary and no pressure is applied.

Jennifer Hodgekiss, Facilitator

Annual Conference U3A Network NSW

The Committee has recently received notice of the Network Conference and Annual General Meeting for 2015. All U3A members are welcome to attend this conference. This year it will be held at the Mittagong RSL between Wednesday, 29th April and Friday, 1st May. All relevant information can be found on the Southern Highlands U3A website at www.sohiu3a.org.au or email me at info@coffs.u3anet.org.au or phone 66963340.

Following the AGM a Members Forum is to be held where questions may be submitted, and hopefully answered. If any Coffs Harbour member has an issue to be addressed or a question that is of a general nature to NSW U3As, please submit it in an email to the above address.

Ruth Baker, Secretary

U3A Asia Pacific International Conference Brisbane 28-29 May 2015

Cherish Today - Challenge Tomorrow

The **U3A Network Queensland and U3A Asia Pacific Alliance International Conference** will be held in Brisbane, Australia on 28-29 May 2015. Theme for the Conference is *Cherish Today- Challenge Tomorrow*.

Venue

The Conference Venue is the recently restored Brisbane City Hall in King George Square in the centre of the Brisbane business district, and close to transport, shopping, restaurants, accommodation and cultural venues.

Confirmed Guest Speakers to date include:

- Professor Jan Thomas, Vice-Chancellor University of Southern Queensland, **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**
- Mrs Barbara Lewis, Chair of the Third Age Trust, U.K.
- Prof Carlos Santos, Deputy Secretary General of IAUTA, Portugal
- Mr Tom Holloway, World U3A, India
- Mr Kim Seng Goh, President of U3A Singapore
- Garry Humphries, Regional Manager, Sport and Recreation, Department of Communities
- Adrian Caneris, Principal Wildlife Expert, BAAM Pty Ltd.
- Sophie Ryan, UQ student
- Sue Attar, Senior, Copyright Agency
- David Locke, Assistant Commissioner, ACNC
- Shane Stewart, Managing Partner, Bay Consulting Group
- Dr Glenda Powell AM
- Kelly Lindsay, ACCAN

The detailed Conference Program is expected to be available in April 2015.

More Information

See our Information page, and Join our Mailing List so that you can be kept informed about progress in planning the conference. Website is www.u3aqlldconference.org

What's UP

It amazes me that so many of us miss out on what surely is one of the best shows in town. And it's absolutely free! I'm referring to the night sky above our heads available to all of us wherever we are when the clouds disappear. There is always something of interest going on.

During March and April we can see the giant planet Jupiter high in the sky and if we use binoculars can easily spot its large moons. In the west just after sunset we can also see our closest planet, Venus, sometimes incorrectly called the Evening Star.

In the East the constellation Scorpius is just rising, its giant fish hook shape parallel to the horizon. This year it has an extra bright star at its left hand end – the ringed planet Saturn. In the West, Orion the Hunter (also known as the Saucepan) is about to disappear as the night wears on: entirely appropriate because in Greek mythology Orion died from a scorpion's sting.

High in the South is a constellation we can all recognise, the smallest and brightest of all – the Southern Cross. It lies right in the middle of the Milky Way and on its lower left is a huge cloud of dark material hiding the stars behind. Easily seen by the naked eye in a dark sky, this is called the Coalsack and was known as the Emu's Head to our Aboriginal population.

One event you should be sure not to miss is a beautiful total eclipse of the Moon which will take place on the evening of 4 April. While the partial stage of the eclipse will commence about 8:15pm., totality will not commence until 9:54pm. and will only last for 12 minutes. During this time the Moon will be coloured orange or red and will assume a three dimensional appearance.

Space exploration is also very busy at the moment. The Rosetta spacecraft is continuing to orbit a comet having landed a probe on to its surface and having analysed the water vapour from the comet and established it differs from Earth's water – so our water did not come from comets as previously thought. NASA's Dawn spacecraft is right now bringing us close-up images of the dwarf planet, Ceres, largest of the asteroids. NASA's other spacecraft, New Horizons, has almost reached its rendezvous with Pluto and we will soon receive our first good look at the former planet and its five moons.

If you would like to find out more, come to our Astronomy class held every Monday at the Community Village at 3:15pm. Absolute beginners are welcome and no prior knowledge or equipment is necessary.

Win Howard, Class Tutor.

Essential Computing Course – Semester 1 2015

This year had begun very successfully with a huge response – both the *Beginners* and *Intermediate/Advanced* Classes are full. Unfortunately, there were many more people wanting to enrol into these classes to start the year, but our vacancies are limited by the equipment and space available.

“Waiting Lists” have been held in case of any early withdrawals, and most others have taken the option of enrolling for Semester 2 (which begins around end August – date to be advised).

For anyone interested in either of these classes in the latter part of this year, please note that the enrolment lists are already almost full!! You will need to contact the tutor – Kerrie McCormick – on 0418 860 186 as soon as possible to discuss potential enrolment. Classes are held for 3 hours, either morning or afternoon, each Monday. We generally do not observe school holidays, since it seems most prefer to have a longer break mid-year between the two semesters (to facilitate all those “grey nomads” who love to caravan during the winter months).

Many of this year’s students have previously undertaken one or more of U3A’s computer classes and all seem to be enjoying themselves immensely. Everyone has certainly learned a great deal, and made some lovely new friends. The return rate is high! Many of this year’s “new recruits” have come as a result of “word of mouth” recommendations, so we are happy to take this as positive feedback on the U3A Essential Computing Course.

As the tutor of this course for the past couple of years, I would like to thank all my students – past and present – for allowing me the pleasure of holding these classes. I enjoy them as much as the participants, and also often learn something new from the vast wealth of life-knowledge you people hold.

Happy computing to all!

Kerrie McCormick, Facilitator



An Idea For A New U3A Course.

The following suggestion for a new Course has been received from one of our members:-

“ALL SORTS OF SPORTS”

We have lots of U3A members who enjoy physical activities. A course could be based on the Coffs "Adventure Girls" who have been running for many years. The format of this group is that their members meet at the beginning of each term and individual members volunteer to lead the group on a particular activity, game or sport.

For example: -

Tennis, table tennis, badminton, 10pin bowling, Kegel bowling, croquet, cycling, bushwalking, kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling, etc.

The Adventure Girls have a different activity every week, and each member might be expected to be the Leader of the group once or twice a year – and the other members partake in activities according to their capabilities.

Please contact Ruth Baker or John Clingan at info@coffs.u3anet.org.au if you would be interested in being the Facilitator for such a course.