

Our New Newsletter

The committee of U3A Coffs Harbour has decided to reinstate a newsletter for our members.

The newsletter will be monthly, from March to November and will be emailed to each member. The content will consist of stories and information of interest to our members.

All members are invited to send short stories (300 words maximum), information of interest (no political posts), jokes, cartoons, photos of class activities etc.

Perhaps the film club could review a film currently screening locally.

There will be a quiz and a column of Good News. For our Good News column, please provide information (with the subject's permission) on the following: occasions of marriage of a member, special wedding anniversaries, recent overseas travel, other special achievements ie achieving a place in a sporting competition, completing study, winning an award.

Personally, I consider myself well informed but every few weeks I find out something that I was unaware of. This segment will be called "Did you know" this column will be about something you were surprised to find you did not know of.

This newsletter will be for all our members and I seek your input and support in making it successful and be what our members would like to read.

Forward your contributions for the newsletter to: info@coffs.u3anet.org.au

I look forward to your support Karen Baff Editor

Successful U3A Debate

To celebrate 'Senior's Week' U3A hosted a debate for members and the general public.

The topics debated were:

- Plastics: Friend or Foe
- AI, Is it Good for Seniors?

Representing the affirmative were Andrea Clark and Michael Pitt.

Representing the negative were Coralie Thompson and Lionel Goodacre

The debate was presented at Cavanbah Hall to an audience of approximately ninety members and members of the public. The arguments by both sides, were thought provoking and on occasions brought a smile to faces of the audience.

Particularly, in the interpretation of what was meant by AI...artificial intelligence or artificial insemination .

U3A had applied to CHCC for funding to hold the event, when it was not forthcoming, the local member Andrew Fraser was approached by Lesley Meredith and he was able to secure same from the Minister for Aging. This event was instigated and superbly organised by Lesley Meredith.

For those members who were unable to attend the debate, the speakers have provided a precis of their argument on the following pages.

Affirmative

Andrea Clark

We are all ageing and without embalming fluid our next best friend has to be the invention of plastics. 3D printed plastic spare body parts allow surgeons to keep us mobile & put body snatchers out of business. It's also much easier to carry a goldfish home in a plastic bag than a paper bag.



A.I. provides an excellent opportunity for Seniors to remain independent. We would be able to “drive” our driverless car when grossly incompetent and never lose our licence. If Prince Phillip had used this option, he would have driven safely to Ikea, instead of into a Kia.

Did You Know

Many of us were young children at the time of the Korean war . When the US president and North Korean leader met to discuss **denuclearization** recently, I realized I wasn't sure of the exact dates or what the war was about.

The Korean War (1950-1953) began when the North Korean Communist army crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded non-Communist South Korea. As Kim Il-Sung's North Korean army, armed with Soviet tanks, quickly over ran South Korea. The North Koreans were supported by China and Russian troops said to be 3 million. Opposing them were almost 3 million from South Korea and from 21 United Nations (UN) countries including Australia.

Over 17,000 Australians served during the Korean War, of which 340 were killed and over 1,216 wounded. A further 29 had become prisoners of war.

Negative

Coralie Thompson

If there is one statistic to remember it is that; “If plastic production isn't curbed then plastic pollution will outweigh fish **kilo** for kilo by 2050.”



This is a frightening thought for the future and we need to stop using plastic where we can and while **Reducing , Reusing and Recycling** we also need to **Repair, Remake, Refuse**(plastic and wrapping), **Remember** to take our sturdy containers and bags and **Respect and Restore** the environment.

While AI may mean Artificial Insemination or Artificial Intelligence, we need to be aware of relevant technologies and understand that while Artificial Intelligence can be used for individual and community good it could have destructive and catastrophic consequences in war zones. Be active in keeping up with the knowledge and speak out for the future of the world!

Quiz

1. What was the name given by the Romans to the land that is now Scotland?
2. Which year was Australia's first paddle steamer “Lady Augusta” launched?
3. Which musician wrote the 1966 novel “Beautiful Losers”?
4. What song by the Beatles was written about Mia Farrow's sister?
5. In which decade did Superman first appear in comic books?

Affirmative

Michael Pitt

There are seven different plastics. The original is rubber and the rest are just synthetics of the same polymers. We seniors are, sadly, old enough to remember life before the six new ones. Plastic is like the steel revolution, it has made life so much easier and is equivalent to coming out of the stone age.



It is the best thing that has happened in a century and whether your tooth brush, your medical parts, or transport mechanisms, they are our real friend.

The foe is human apathy, political complacency and big business greed in the wasteful use of our friend. Because plastic makes our life so easy we don't bother to think of all the wasteful ways we are using this fantastic invention and not caring of the ongoing effects of our misuse. We must use less wastefully, and reused more waste in innovative ways.

Seniors will remember times when our only help was a dictionary, or encyclopedia and a telephone book. Now we have simply developed this into a mega system of information and communication, and that AI can analyse options. The challenge for seniors is to dip into this new source without being overwhelmed by stuff that is irrelevant.

A classic good example of AI being useful for seniors, I type an email to my blind cousin overseas, AI converts it to speech, she talks back and I get an email. Impossible without AI.

Negative

Lional Goodacre

It is estimated that since 1950 some **8 BILLION** tons of petro-chemical plastic has been produced and **6 BILLION** tons discarded as waste – mainly **SINGLE USE** plastic.

Frans Timmerman

(VP European

Commission) describes this practice well – “Single use plastics are made in **5 seconds**, used for **5 minutes** and then takes **500 years to break down.**”

Artificial Intelligence experts have a very clear message to us all – “every advance in AI by the good guys is also an advance for the bad guys” meaning technology's ability to make thousands of complex decisions every second could be used to both help or to harm.

Quiz Answers

1. Caledonia is the Latin name given to what is now Scotland.
2. 1853. Scottish shipbuilder Frances Cadell had the steamer built in Sydney and he skippered it 2,200 kms upstream to Swan Hill.
3. Leonard Cohen
4. 'Dear Prudence' It appeared on the Beatles' 1968 double disc "White Album".
5. 1930s. Superman is a fictional superhero appearing in American **comic books** published by DC **Comics**. Created by writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster, the character first appeared in Action **Comics** #1 on April 18, 1938.

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