

Coffs Harbour Newsletter



November, 2019

Thank You Jenny and Bruce Moon

The idea for U3A came about in France after the Second World War. Millions of people had missed out on their education while the 6 year conflict raged and U3A was set up to help them to "catch up". The movement then spread across the world. Today in Australia, most of us have had the benefit of completing our education and it seems to me that U3A is all about filling in the gaps caused by specialising in our particular fields, by making a living, and by the time taken to establish home and relationships.

Now, for more than two decades in Coffs Harbour a group of tutors dedicated to their subject have helped us to round out our lives. I'd especially like to thank Bruce and Jenny Moon, for their years of turning up to share their knowledge and experience.

I first met the Moons over 20 years ago, after a neighbour mentioned that there was a U3A Current Affairs Group meeting at the Neighbourhood Centre in Woolgoolga. I went along to look and listen and then found that U3A offered a lot more. Reading through the list of courses I noticed the names Bruce and Jenny Moon, as contacts for many of the courses.

. After serving in the teaching profession, they had retired to the North Coast, but continued educating. Jenny set up Art courses in the Art Gallery at Woolgoolga, and also established the Current Affairs Group. When the new library opened in Woolgoolga, she started up Mah-jong and Scrabble in the meeting room there.

Meanwhile, Bruce began teaching Creative Writing. Although there were several other tutors over the years, he was always there to advise.

Bruce taught Comparative Religion and a number of History courses WITH A DIFFERENCE. On the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month during school terms Bruce was there and Jenny provided morning tea

Bruce also served as President of the Coffs Harbour U3A and Jenny was on the committee. And as if this was not enough, they took part in Camp Creative almost every year. There was a break when they travelled to China to teach English.

Sadly ill-health has forced Jenny and Bruce to leave the coast to move closer to family.

Thanks, Bruce and Jenny for the time and the friendship you have given all of us at U3A.

Mary Lange



Jenny Moon

Christmas Trivia Party Wednesday, 27 November, 2019, 1.30 pm - 4 pm Cavanbah Centre, Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour

2020 Courses available on the website Monday 25 November 2019

2020 membership opens online Monday 2 December 2019 – please be sure to follow all the instructions when paying membership fees online

Enrolment Day Wednesday 15 January 2020 Online from Midnight and in person at the Cavanbah Centre 9am-11 am. At Woolgoolga Library 2-3pm

Ahlan Wa Sahlan! Welcome to Saudi Arabia!

This greeting, I found out later, was the insignia for Saudi Arabian Airlines and was written in Arabic on the side of my plane, which had just carried me to Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I looked around, I had disembarked into an alien world. Around me were men in long white gowns and wearing red and white checked head dresses, some were accompanied by women wearing long black gowns, scarves and face covers, the only thing showing were their shoes. Scattered among these obvious Arab Muslims, were men and a few women in modest western dress. There was not a bare arm or a bare leg to be seen. I was modestly dressed in a loose fitting long sleeved pant suit.

As in most countries, the Nationals had separate queues for passport control, I joined a queue which had other "Westerners" and struck a conversation with a British man standing just in front of me who worked somewhere in Jeddah. We stood together chatting for a long time as we inched towards passport control. Finally, it was the British man's turn, he was called over and I was also waved to come with him. I tried to explain we weren't together...Then it was realised, my God, shock, horror, I was a single woman, travelling alone, without my husband or son.

My passport was taken and I was escorted to a single room about 10 by 12 metres with chairs around the wall. Seated on these chairs were young women, wearing long gowns and scarves, they looked like Asian women. I was upset and frightened, no one seemed to speak English and I didn't have my passport. I sat down and tried to figure out my next move. Then a young woman wearing a black abeya and scarf came across to speak to me. She was an Indian nurse and worked in a hospital somewhere in Saudi. She also had to wait in this room though she was used to it. Her English was good and she explained that this room was for unaccompanied women and we had to wait there until our connecting flight was ready to leave. She told me most of the women were young

Indonesian Muslim women coming to work in Saudi as domestic servants of some sort.

My connecting flight wasn't until the next morning, I was horrified, there was nowhere to sleep, I assumed there were toilets somewhere adjoining but I couldn't see anywhere to get something to eat. The door was locked so we couldn't leave anyway. I noticed some of the women seemed to have lunch boxes. After awhile, I realised this was not as I wanted to be treated and demanded to see someone in charge.

A Saudi woman completely covered by a long gown and headdress with only a slit for her eyes, responded to my urgent ringing of the bell. Her only English was to call me "Sister". I thought she must have known I was a nurse, I didn't realize it was a common form of address. With the help of the Indian nurse, who spoke Arabic, I explained that I couldn't stay in the room and demanded to be put up in a hotel so I had somewhere to sleep before I was to catch my connecting flight. Fat chance of that, but I was moved to a single room somewhere nearby which had a recliner chair and an ensuite toilet (Arab style).

I felt sorry for the young women sitting upright on their chairs waiting for heaven knows how long. I was given tea and bread and sat worrying for most of the night as to what I had got myself into. The next morning, I was collected and escorted to the domestic airport for my flight to Tabuk. a city about 1200 kms north of Jeddah.... I thought to myself, hold on tight, this is the beginning of my adventures in the "Magic Kingdom".

Note: I arrived in Jeddah in June 1999. This short story was written when I was part of our U3A Creative Writing Class. Karen Baff

**MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE
LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
AT OUR CHRISTMAS TRIVIA PARTY**

Safari from Cairns to Thursday Island

On the first day, Margaret Beckett and I, joined the group in the huge 4wheel drive and travelled only 80 kms to Port Douglas. The next day we drove to Daintree National Park. Then the next morning, we journeyed on the Bloomfield track, impassable in wet weather. The track can only be tackled by 4 wheel drives. Then, arrived at Cooktown where Lieutenant Cook beached his ship the Endeavour after hitting a reef.

We departed Cooktown along the Bastle Camp Road and visited the Laura Homestead before arriving at Laura. We drove along a very rough dirt track to the Qunikan Galleries, which held a large body of prehistoric rock paintings identified as being at least 15,000 years old.

That afternoon we travelled through Nifold Plain and open savannah characterized by our first view of thousands of termite mounds. Later, I had a photo taken of me in front of an enormous one.

A helicopter flight over the Binyirru (Lakefield) National Park was our exclusive treat the next day. We flew over swamps, lakes and forests before following the Kennedy River to Princess Charlotte Bay.

At Weipa I was looking forward to taking a photo of the memorial to Willem Janszoon, the first European to set foot on Australian soil in 1606. In the afternoon, we made our way to Moreton Telegraph Station. Moreton served as a repeater station for the overland telegraph line, opened in the 1880s.

The next day we drove to Piccaninny Plains, a wildlife sanctuary with a mosaic of rainforests, woodlands and wetlands. Cape York was connected to New Guinea for much of the last 150,000 years so there is a strong New Guinea flavour.

Leaving Moreton we travelled on the Telegraph Track. We all enjoyed a swim in Fruit Bat Falls, then crossed the Jardine River in a ferry, arriving at Pusand Bay late afternoon. The next day saw the fit people climb to the Tip, the topmost point of Australia, not for me!

It was ferry ride the next day across to Thursday Island. It has a population of 3,000 and is the main administrative centre for Torres Strait.

On our last day, we took a ferry across to Horn Island, the only island with an aerodrome. After walking through the WWI museum, we took a Qantas flight back to Cairns.

Patricia Degens



Huge termite mound

Message from the President.

Greetings to all members!

We are coming to the end of another successful year! Lots of work by our dedicated tutors and many hours of participation, discussion, new ideas, old ideas rethought, adventures in science, space and among rocks. French, Spanish and Italian nouns and verbs, Shakespearean drama and adventures with pencil, watercolour and acrylic have enriched our minds and dirtied our hands. Those with an exercise bent have walked, dined and explored the worlds of tai chi and dance. Those of us who have travelled have also shared some of our stories through this Newsletter.

Thank you all for your contributions big and small which together create such a successful U3A. A special thanks to Karen who puts together our Newsletter.

I'm looking forward to next year's program and of course, seeing many of you at the End of Year Trivia Event on 27 November.

Best Wishes, Joyce Lillyin