



MORELAND
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

NEWSLETTER

Number 17, December 2022

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Recently, I joined a group of U3A Moreland facilitators: those volunteers who develop, organise and deliver our programs and activities. We had morning tea at the Moreland Hotel. The Program Team Coordinator, Pauline Charleston, addressed the group and described them as the 'heart and soul'

of the organisation. Their tireless efforts provide the lifeblood of our U3A. Their emotional and intellectual commitment to our programs ensures that our members keep coming back for more.

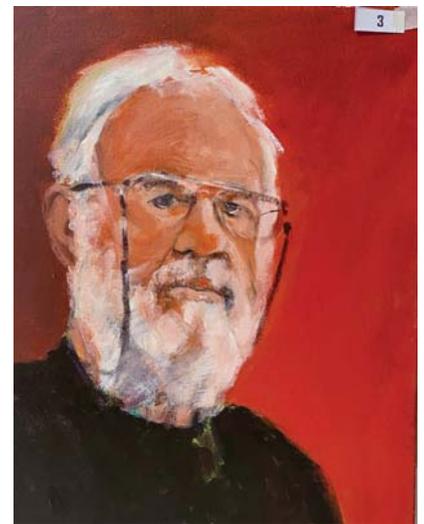
As your President, I aim to ensure that our volunteers - facilitators, Committee of Management members, Teams and other support people - have the resources they need to meet the ongoing needs of our members.

I am pleased that we have recently been successful in applying for two funding grants which will help us purchase new equipment. On top of that, we are well advanced in negotiating with Merri-bek Council and other organisations to secure venues for our programs in 2023, and to find suitable office space now that Siteworks is closing.

The Committee of Management is considering the implications of the renaming of Moreland City Council to Merri-bek. A decision about a possible rename for U3A Moreland will be made at our AGM in 2023.

I'd like to wish our members all the best for the Festive Season, and a safe and peaceful New Year. We look forward to you being part of U3A Moreland in 2023.

Richard Brown, President U3A Moreland



Richard Brown, painted by Robin Randall for the 2022 U3A Moreland 'Georgiebalds'

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2023 CALENDAR

- Term 1** Mon 30 Jan - Thurs 6 April
- Term 2** Mon 24 April - Fri 23 June
- Term 3** Mon 10 July - Fri 15 Sept
- Term 4** Mon 2 Oct - Fri 8 Dec

Gwen Rosengren (at left) with Sheila Quairney of U3A Port Philip during a Conference workshop



In early October, U3A Moreland President, Richard Brown, and Committee of Management member, Gwen Rosengren, attended the U3A Network Victoria Conference in Bendigo. The Conference theme was 'Building Back Better' and brought together some 100 members from over 50 U3As across Victoria.

The Conference explored various themes and topics around future relevance, resilience, resourcing, motivating membership and building links with other U3A's, following the disruption of the COVID pandemic. U3A Moreland will be looking to use some of the many ideas shared over the two days.

One evening at the Conference, various members from across U3As who have choirs, bands, ukulele groups etc introduced us to this song about the U3A movement - courtesy of U3A Barnsley UK. We've adapted it to include U3A Moreland activities:

A song to U3A

Sung to the tune of Blowin' in the Wind

How many times did you say in your youth
You'd never be old and grey.
You said you'd never shirk, and you'd never give up work,
And re-tirement seemed a million miles aw-ay
But retirement has come around, yes and very soon you've found.
That you need a way to keep old age at bay.
The answer my friend, is join a U3-A
The answer is you join a U3-A

How many groups can you fit in a week?
Five, six or maybe even more
There's Nordic walking and Petanque, lots of socialising too
Play cards or paint, learn Mahjong, French and more
You can garden, write or knit, and do most anything.
Why don't you get the time to mop the floor?
The answer, my friend, is you joined a U3-A
The answer is you joined a U3-A.

How many times do you think to yourself
The garden needs a weed and a dig.
The fridge needs a clean 'cos the cheese is turning green,
And a pile of ironing's looking rather big.
You need to clean the loo but have better things to do,
And what the hell, you couldn't give a fig!
The reason, my friend, is you've joined a U3-A
The reason is you've joined a U3-A.

Yes the answer, my friend, is you joined a U3A,
You joined the BRILLIANT Moreland U3-A!

(Courtesy U3A Barnsley, UK)

Continuing the story of OUR VOLUNTEERS

This year we have featured all the members volunteering in U3A Moreland. We introduced our **Committee of Management** and members in the key support roles of **Membership Facilitator**, **UMAS Administrator** and **Information Technology Support**.

U3A Moreland also has numerous hard working **Teams** who work together across the many and varied facets needed for our organisation to keep operating. Here they are ...



The Newsletter Team at work over Zoom

The Program Team brings you our wonderful range of Programs, and has the ongoing task of facilitator liaison and new facilitator support. The Team keeps our Program Guide refreshed with new ideas and does all the timetabling.

The Funding and Grants Team – Yes we do need more funds than our Membership fees provide. On top of managing finances, this team seeks grants from every possible source via the arduous task of preparing grant submissions.

The Venues/Location/Rehousing Team scouts here there and everywhere for locations for our activities, indoor and outdoor, and for our resources and our meetings. The Team books the venues and ensures facilitators know how to access and safely use them.

The Marketing Team promotes the value of U3A Moreland in the wider community, seeking new members and partnerships so U3A Moreland can continue to grow.

Yes we need lots of volunteers to keep us going so why not join a Team? The Committee of Management welcomes whatever time and support you can offer. Join in the fun.

The Newsletter Team produces our colourful and informative newsletters that keep you up to date with happenings inside and around U3A. All editions are available on our website.

The Social team bring you our Socials and the wonderful spreads that go with any function we have. They help us relax together and enjoy everyone's company. These functions are a great way to introduce new or prospective members to U3A.

The Zoom Support Team are still at work bringing many a session to you on Zoom. They help set up numerous Zoom meetings. They were very much to the fore during COVID when it meant so much to connect with each other.

Merri-bek City Council Liaison Team works with our Council which provides many services in our municipality. The Team ensures Council are aware of our presence and our needs. The Seniors Exercise Park and some grants we receive testify to the Team's success.

Fortunately ...

“Um, I’m not sure how to say this. Maybe you could join a writing group in U3A?” Therese knows me well, at age sixty-one I didn’t think I was old enough to join a U3A but I listened and thought, “Maybe this could be an opportunity to share my writing with others and learn from them.” Therese’s friend had mentioned U3A Port Phillip. A quick internet search, found it. Booked in, it was October 2019. Like starting a new job, I’m nervous but not anxious. With excitement I arrived to find the class had been cancelled earlier that morning. Two of the participants are there and they share how each session works and their pieces of writing. Instant connection I can’t wait for next time.

In the Port Phillip writing group each person reads their piece of writing out loud. I read the Prelude to my memoir, in very rough draft. I noticed people lean in when their interest was spiked and move away when I had lost them. I take on board the positive comments and ways to improve, given with respect. This is for me, just what I wanted and needed: people with similar interests and new people in my life. This extraordinary group I get to know well as they share their writing and I share mine. What a privilege, what joy.

This was only the beginning. In 2021 U3A Moreland began a writing group and I joined. A new group of people to get to know sharing their lives, my life, through our writing. An opportunity

Toulouse, France



Toulouse, France

at the beginning of 2022, being brave, I offer to facilitate a writing group at U3A Moreland. I have learnt more, gained confidence and feel a fondness for this extraordinary group of women who share their writing.

Did you know the U3A movement was founded in Toulouse France in 1974? The purpose and focus were essentially associated with Universities and their practice of teaching, learning and research. I had known about the University of the Third Age from years ago. I can remember thinking it might be good for later. Later is here.

I am surprised, bewildered at how many people I speak with don’t know about U3A and what it has to offer. Maybe you could become a ‘Therese’ by introducing others to U3A and giving them opportunities for joy, connection, learning and so much more. Let’s celebrate by sharing our stories of U3A and one day we might hear someone say, “Fortunately ...”

Board and card games *Facilitator Pauline O'Brien*



Quidler players:

L to R: Lorin Ford, Fran McDonald, Gail Grove, Pauline O'Brien and the chap missing because he is taking the photograph, Chris Moss.

If you are thinking “Quidler! Never heard of Quidler?”, that is the point. Neither had any of us until Gail taught us four months ago. Now we are addicts !

When did you last learn something new? Most of us take longer to learn than when we were kids but we do not hassle one another.

We don't play new games all the time. We have Scrabble, Cards, Rummikub, Chinese Checkers, about 20 games in all from which to choose.

We all like to win, and get a rush if luck goes our way and we get a great hand but, with the wisdom of a life time, we really do play for the fun and learning.

Really? Yes, just look at the smiling faces.
Pauline O'Brien, Facilitator

I am not going to claim that Games is the complete package for a satisfying life at our ages, but it is a stepping stone.

Games is mentally simulating and between us we have hundreds of years of wisdom to share over a friendly cuppa but on the wealth front we have nothing to offer.

As for the modern version “mentally physically and socially active” we score well on the mentally and socially active. As for physically active, the most physical thing we do is lift a cup to a mouth.

To quote Meatloaf, “two out of three ain't bad”.

Mahjong *Facilitators Deb Morawsky and Fran Mackieson*

Mahjong is a tile based game developed in China and spread throughout the world with western rule adaptations. It is a game of skill, strategy and good old fashioned luck! It is commonly played with 4 players but can be played with 3.

U3A Moreland conduct two weekly Mahjong classes during school term, one on a Tuesday and one on a Friday. Participants learn what 'sparrows twittering' and 'breaking the wall' mean, not to mention 'pung', 'chow', 'kong', 'fishing', 'goulash' and 'honours'. The aim of the game is to victoriously shout 'Mahjong' first. Most of us are happy if we get to do that just once during the session!



Continued next page ...

The Friday Mahjong group

Mahjong, continued ...



The Tuesday Mahjong group

For several months we had limited opportunities to play. Finally in Term 4 Mahjong tiles began clicking again. Many of us were beginners and found learning this new game had its challenges.

Comments from two members, Noelene and Elaine, capture the essence of the experience: “the classes are fun as there is always something new to learn using new strategies and untried hands”; “I am enjoying Mahjong, learning to play this fascinating and intriguing game and getting to know the other players in a very convivial atmosphere”.

IT Tip

*A regular feature brought to you by U3A Moreland's **Zoom Support Team**.*

Did you know ...

If you're keying a message or note on your smartphone and you spot something that needs changing, it can be tricky to navigate the cursor to the exact spot you want to go back to. Here's an easy way:

With the keyboard displayed, hold the space bar down for a few seconds and the keyboard will go white. Keep holding the space bar down and as you slide your finger up or down, the cursor will move to wherever you like until you release your finger.

My nephew told me this trick and It's been a game changer for me. Well worth trying.

Any problems, contact the Zoom Support Team via: member.u3amoreland@gmail.com

Pauline Charleston, Zoom Support Team Coordinator

The Painting and Drawing Group

THE 'GEORGIEBALDS'!

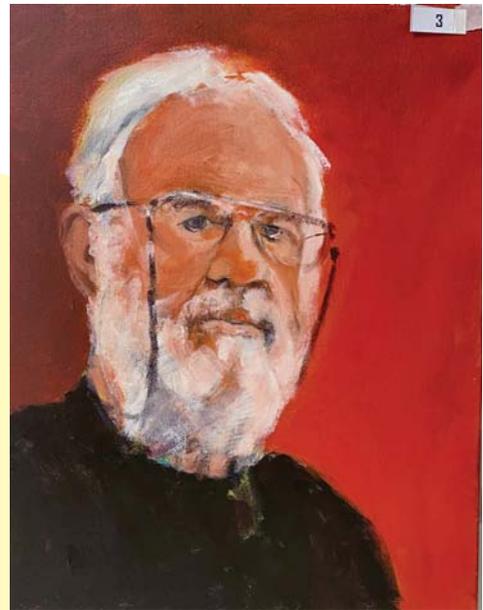
The final challenge for the Painting & Drawing Group in Term 3 was a portrait competition, named in honour of our valued former member, George Costa. The first 'George Costa Portrait Prize' was soon unanimously and affectionately nick-named the 'Georgiebalds'.

This year, 1st Prize Winner was Cheryl Zayec with her portrait of a young woman. 2nd Prize winner was Maggie Bishop, whose subject was her brother. 3rd Prize was scooped up by Robin Randall with a portrait of Richard Brown. Melinda Venticich won 4th prize, while the organisers' prize went to Miranda Cerra.

THE 'GEORGIEBALDS'



Artist: Cheryl Zayec



Artist: Robin Randall



Artist: Melinda Venticich

Second prize winner Maggie Bishop was unable to share her work because of confidentiality needs.



Artist: Miranda Cerra



beautiful sculpture representing all those mothers who had lost their children to adoption against their will in the 50s and 60s entitled 'Taken Not Given'. The mother reaches out, while the daughter stretches back in vain towards her mother's empty hand, whilst the infant plays obliviously with her toy. So striking an encounter that one is compelled to pause and contemplate the enormity of emotions that are aroused.

Then on we forged to visit the conservatory filled with purples, pinks and whites hanging joyfully from every nook and cranny; a feast for the eyes and soul. Also not to be missed, a bust of Mary Gilbert, the first European female immigrant to arrive in Melbourne via Tassie.

Disappointingly we were thwarted in our efforts to reach the Fairy Tree as it was cordoned off to the public. Nevertheless as we wandered about we found the Spring gardens looking stunning; yellow and orange daffodils and jonquils nodding their heads in unison with the breeze surrounded by tiny pink primulas.

Finally we reached the café, hidden away in the depths of the gardens. We had an outdoor terraced space to ourselves, where the coffee was creamy and delicious in real ceramic mugs no less!

A great day out!

We tumbled out of the train carriage like a bunch of giggling schoolgirls on our first day of holidays.

Up the steep steps of Parliament Station, with the faint air of some posh European city such as Paris, but not quite. After crossing busy Spring street we encountered the lifelike figures of a number of past Victorian premiers - all male naturally. Apparently Joan's reign was too short to merit even a bust.

A little further on into the Treasury Gardens we discovered some beautifully arranged flat granite panels with the names of firemen and other essential service personal who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their community; a very touching tribute to those brave souls.

After a further amble we stumbled upon a

A PARK, WAITING

Here is the seniors' exercise park looking all pristine and inviting, waiting to be used. Pop in over the holidays, or meet up there with a friend. It's next to the Harding Street Seniors Citizens Centre.



THE MARIBYRNONG CLAIMS ITS OWN

by Jensine Houghton

Jensine was inspired to write this story after seeing giant grabbers removing household objects from homes. It is a work of fiction.



The giant grabbers were engorged with their prey, having picked it up while showing no mercy to its origins, its meaning to its owners, the grief and anguish with which it had been dragged to the so called 'nature strip' of close mown grass outside the house. Their contents were dropped unceremoniously into the huge cavern of the waiting dump truck, barely occupying a small part of a corner.

The grabbers would keep on with their sorry task, quickly and efficiently gobbling up mattresses, bedding, arm chairs, sofas, book cases, boxes of sodden books, children's toys and more – the loved contents of the house that stood behind the picket fence which was to provide no barrier to the raging and ever expanding water of the swollen Maribyrnong River. Water which had consumed thick soil and detritus, sewerage and clean rain, it poured over the flood plains which now accommodated sports fields, playgrounds and parks and sadly people's homes and businesses. Eating up that which had foolishly been built on the land that the river, when it became mighty, would claim back for itself, even if only once in a few decades. Nature in tooth and claw, reminding those who would, or would not listen that it was mightier than the human endeavour which had tried to claim and tame it.

The owners looked on with anguish, wondering how they were ever going to rebuild their

lives and hold onto the memories which the flood water had destroyed. How could this have happened? This was beyond their comprehension and certainly well beyond their expectation when they had bought this house some decades ago. The home where they had brought up their three children, two boys and a girl; the home where their grandchildren came to play with toys brought out after years in storage, waiting for those darlings, toys which would never again be played with. Their home which was full of mud and slime and where black mould was already showing its presence.

The pressure washer sprang into action as they worked from the back to the front of the house. First the walls, sluicing the mud and mould off them as best they could. Then trying to push the revolting layers off the floors of every room to access the sodden carpets and rugs to be rolled up and put out on the nature strip where their other belongings had so recently been. It was hard work. And what to do with the mud? They had been advised as to its contamination but how would they get it totally out of their property, not just the house? And, having done that, how would they decontaminate their garden?

Oh, their garden! The bedding plants were sadly peeking out from the mud, just a few glimpses of dirty green leaves and grubby flowers. The shrubs and roses were still standing, with the tide mark of the voracious river's flow clearly marked on their trunks and foliage, more heartbreak to feel.

They went back to the home of one of their children, the children who had been helping them try and put their lives back together, whenever that might happen. Exhausted they sat around the kitchen table, so glad of a hot meal together; so glad of a house which still had all its furniture, all its memories, all still intact; so glad that none of their children had bought that house a few doors up from theirs which had become available at the time when that might have come true; so glad to feel safe and dry for a while, surrounded by love.

IN THE COMMUNITY

U3A Moreland liaison with Merri-bek City Council



Over the years U3A Moreland has developed and maintained close liaison with our local Council for the benefit of all members. This has involved discussions about the needs of seniors, the role of U3A in contributing to healthy ageing, and our organisation's accommodation needs.

We have achieved increased recognition and support from Council, especially their recent

help obtaining office premises at Brunswick Town Hall when Siteworks closes in December. There is also the possibility of space there for some group activities during the two years of Siteworks redevelopment. Importantly, Council has arranged ongoing regular quarterly meetings with representatives of our Committee of Management and Merri-bek Council Aged and Community Development staff.

Recently our President received this message from Alex English (Open Space Planner, Merri-bek City Council), confirming these developments:

*Please pass on my thanks to all the U3A volunteers for their work this year which has been critical in reconnecting so many people post Covid as well as a big thanks for **Pauline O'Brien** and all of your group's advocacy work including obtaining Council funding for the **Seniors Exercise Station**. Great work!*

EveryAGE Counts is a broad based national coalition of individuals and organisations committed to tackling ageism. **The EveryAGE Counts** Campaign is an advocacy campaign aimed at tackling ageism.

What is ageism?

Broadly speaking, ageism can be defined as prejudice expressed toward a person because of their age. It includes stereotyping, discrimination and mistreatment. While ageism can affect anyone of any age, the EveryAGE Counts campaign is focusing on addressing ageism relating to older people. In this context, ageism comes from negative attitudes and beliefs about what it means to be an older person.

To find out more about the Campaign, go to www.everyage.counts.org.au



WHEN U3A WENT TO Q&A



An invitation arrived out of the blue for U3A Moreland members to join the ABC's Q&A studio audience on 20 October. And of course, we all thought the topic was going to be mature-age related - health, housing, superannuation, keeping active, or maybe even contemporary options for funerals and interment!

But no, it was just that a bus had been arranged for return transport from Coburg, and all local organisations and individuals were welcome aboard. So we thought, why not?

The bus made it super easy. It left Coburg High School at 7.00 and we were back home by 10.30. Among the others on the bus were students from the school, who impressed us all with their attitude and intelligent questions.

Security was tight at the studio and we had to stow everything including our handbags - but not our phones! The whole process was efficient and streamlined, from check-in to the entertaining warm-up and throughout the live broadcast.

Discussion centred largely around the environment, driven by the floods which had reached disaster level in large areas of Victoria and NSW. Panel members were Chris Bowen, Minister for Energy and Climate Change; economist Ross Garnaut (who was incredibly impressive); student activist Varsha Yajman; Yun Jiang, China Matters Fellow; and Mayor of Maribyrnong Anthony Tran, the son of Vietnamese refugees and Australia's youngest mayor at age 22.

Nine of us U3A members went along and a few had submitted questions, none of which were selected for inclusion among the 10 or so put to the panel. Maybe next time. We all really enjoyed the experience and were very impressed with how the show was put together. We would encourage others to join the audience if the opportunity arises.

by Pauline Charleston

A message from the Program Team



Most of the programs you've been enjoying in Term 4 will be continuing next year and a few from previous years are returning by popular demand. We also have some exciting new programs/activities/events in store. It is all in the Term 1 2023 Program Guide.

Find the Guide on our website at u3amoreland.org.au

THREE GRANTS

U3A Moreland acknowledges three generous grants that will allow us to flourish in 2023.



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

Multicultural Seniors Grant

This grant has been awarded to U3A Moreland by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victoria.

Our Suburbs - Living Local Grant

This grant has been awarded by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, Victoria.



Jobs,
Precincts
and Regions



Membership Activity Grant

This grant has been awarded to U3A Moreland by Merri-bek Community Grants Program 2022-2023, Merri-bek Council.

Please circulate the newsletter to others who may be interested in what U3A Moreland offers. If you have ideas for our newsletter, email the Newsletter Team (Christine Filiamundi, Gwen Rosengren, Cathy Beesey, Richard Brown):

info.u3amoreland@gmail.com

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