



BULLETIN NUMBER 13 MARCH APRIL 2015

NEWS FROM TASMANIA

We are still waiting on Tasmanian U3As to make the decision to join the Alliance. But in the meanwhile things are happening. The picture and story below were sent by Jean Walker.



Port Sorell U3A Receiving an Australia Day Award

Community Support the Key

Chairperson Anne Lockett has accepted an award to our U3A for *Community Event of the Year* from Latrobe Council at today's Australia Day Celebrations at Bells Parade in Latrobe.

In accepting the award, Anne paid tribute to a dedicated and hard-working steering committee and office volunteers, to a wonderful group of tutors who have given so willingly

of their time, knowledge and experience and to a hugely supportive group of local businesses and community groups who have provided the venues.

“However”, said Anne, “without the magnificent level of engagement and participation of over 200 members, all these efforts would not have made our U3A the success it has been in our first year.

The community getting behind the idea has been our overwhelming success. The congratulations really belong to the greater Port Sorell community”.

FROM THE ALLIANCE CHAIR

Welcome to 2015. As the days rush passed in a flurry of busyness do we take time to step back and see how society sees U3A.

Recently I was reading an article by Dr Tim Baker on strategies that influence people. While certainly he was talking about the business world, I was intrigued by the similarities that we face in U3A. He says that four strategies that influence people are Investigation, Calculation, Motivation and Collaboration – how well does U3A manage in promoting itself in the community and indeed to its members?

Investigation. Are we presenting the known facts of the benefits of U3A in a logical and convincing manner?

Calculation. Are we happy with the *status quo*?

Motivation. Do we have a clear, compelling and common vision for the future?

Collaboration. Are we working together to achieve common goals?

In the context of leadership, influence is about persuading others to think and act differently in ways that benefit themselves and their organisation. Food for thought!

At the recent TasU3A meeting our U3A colleagues in Tasmania have deferred the decision on joining U3AAA for a further 6 months. TasU3A is the informal group of representatives from U3As around Tasmania and we will continue to encourage them to join U3AAA.

I look forward to welcoming delegates from our U3AAA committee to Brisbane in May.

Rhonda Weston

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*. Registrations close May 15. (www.u3aqlconference.org/)

NEW SOUTH WALES



Recently a member of my local U3A gave a most interesting talk. Aware it was her first time I wished her well beforehand and told her how I'd been looking forward to hearing what she had to say.

In encouraging members to share matters of interest I'd suggested that if standing in front of a group was challenging then why not sit down. If they had a Power Point presentation they could use the excuse to sit so as to operate the laptop in comfort and that more than likely the audience would be focussed on the screen rather than on them. Whether or not that encouraged her to sit I couldn't say, but she did and no-one was bothered by it. Her obvious initial nerves were quickly overtaken by confidence when her audience warmed to her witty, informative content.

A couple of months later she sought me out to tell me how my words of encouragement had buoyed her confidence and that she'd been wanting to tell me for some time. I, in turn, told her that in doing so she had made my day.

The exchange made me reflect on a visit last year by a well-known musician who held a workshop for local choristers prior to a rehearsal and public performance the following day, which included an item learned at the rehearsal. The local accompanist being indisposed at the last minute the visiting musician took her place for the item. Afterwards he told the audience that after being severely put down by a teacher 30 years before that was the first time he'd played the piano in public since that time.



In our roles as U3A course co-ordinators, presenters and administrators we often have the opportunity to motivate others with a well-chosen word of encouragement. At times, perhaps because of frustration, though unintended, a negative comment can pop out, which for a first-timer, let alone a seasoned campaigner, can be soul-destroying.

For a number of years, in a voluntary capacity, my wife Margaret and I were involved in marriage education through the Uniting Church and in terms of communication skills one of the most important lessons we learned was to use 'I messages' rather than 'You messages,' such as 'I feel I'm ignored in such a situation' rather than 'You make me feel etc.,' which can help to remove emotions from a disagreement.

U3A is a magnet for 3rd agers wanting to continue their learning experience in a relaxed environment. Let's all strive to emphasise its welcoming informality by focussing first and foremost on constructive, rather than negative, comments when supporting other volunteers, who, after all, can be just as intent on a positive outcome for the organisation as we are.

The NSW Network is counting down to its AGM on 1 May. A draft 3 Year Plan awaits the new committee, following implementation of an initial 5 Year Plan and a subsequent 3 Year Plan, which have kept the existing committee and its predecessors focussed on the future. That process has been aided by active Educational Development and Promotion and Publicity sub-committees. Part of the draft plan is to see 10 - 12 new U3As established over its life. Hopefully we'll have the necessary funds to enable us to do so. Decentralisation of NSW's U3As has been aided by its constitution, adopted in 2010, that divides the state into 6 non-metropolitan regions, one of which includes the ACT, while Sydney is a region of its own. The boundaries of the regions were adjusted following a request at the last AGM and state-wide consultation. Each region's U3As elect their own Regional Representative to the Network committee. Other committee positions are elected by all U3As.

Following the successful launch of our 'Balance 'n' Bones' DVD which enables U3As, especially those without qualified instructors in remote areas, to keep members' bones strong and their balance stable, to complete the package we're turning our attention to exercises to keep their brains' active.

The Network continues to arrange cost-effective Public Liability insurance and copyright licences for its members and is currently negotiating with APRA to hopefully provide a more relevant license for U3A groups. Our manuals to assist members to operate and promote themselves effectively and engage with the Network are continuously under review and the segment on incorporation was recently updated. The Network's Resource Library which now boasts more than 100 courses continues to attract enquiries for content. Finally we maintain excellent relations with organisations like COTA, Alzheimer's Australia and the NSW Dept of Family and Community Services as well as the NSW Minister for Ageing.

As by the time of the AGM I'll have reached the constitutional limit of three years as Network president I'm ineligible to stand again though I've put my hand up to remain on the committee.

Allan Haggarty

President

THINKING BIG

What is the difference between a million, a billion and a trillion? This was discussed at a recent U3A activity in Perth. We worked out it would take about three weeks of non-stop counting to reach a million. Continuing on we could get to a billion in a little under 60 years and a trillion in about 60,000 years. There are lots of bigger numbers but we thought that was far enough!

February triggered off intense activity for U3As in Victoria with many of our U3As reporting increased member enquiry levels. The good news is spreading about U3A resulting from increased media exposure and our promotional programmes at both state and local community levels.

This year will be the 30th Anniversary of U3A in Australia marked by the establishment of Melbourne City U3A in Victoria. This U3A will stage a range of celebratory activities including the showcasing of mature age models in **Don't Stop Me Now**, to be U3A feature in Melbourne Fashion Festival programme. The ongoing celebration will continue over approaching months featuring a Classic Film Festival and a Choir Concert.



U3A is all about people and sharing our interest and passions. Mim Egan, 100 years young last October, has been a member of U3A Box Hill's Writing Group for 18 years and continues to share her weekly stories within the group, providing a light upon twentieth century social history. Mim is pictured here being presented with a birthday cake by Box Hill President Bruce Bourke to mark her most significant birthday.

Whilst comforting to recall our national foundation 30 years ago, it also highlights how far we, as a movement, have progressed from such humble beginnings. During this time U3A has been driven by passionate individuals recognising the potential of our self-help concept as a positive contributor to the healthy ageing and social wellbeing of the senior community. The progress resulting from the pursuit of a collective vision and commitment has meant that U3A may now satisfyingly boast of a national membership of over 90,000 all enjoying learning for fun.

Seeking to build upon such vision the Victorian Network will stage a Conference this year entitled **"Thirty Years and Still Growing"**, celebrating the founding of U3A within Victoria. To be held at the historic Rendezvous Hotel in Melbourne we promise a thought provoking programme, not merely celebrating the past but also highlighting vital aspects of change needed to ensure our ongoing relevance for future potential members. We extend an invitation to all interstate visitors who are seeking a worthwhile excuse to visit wonderful Melbourne in August- full details are to be made available on the Network Victoria website.

A partnership initiative by U3As Mornington and Frankston with Monash University, supported by the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) and their respective Councils will see an inaugural provision of Public Lectures destined to challenge current perceptions of living well whilst ageing. Entitled **"Dialogues on Healthy Ageing"** the series of three seminars will be presented (in April, August and October) by noted researchers and will explore the cognitive, psychosocial and gender issues associated with ageing. These seminars are to be subsequently made available as digital files to share the proceedings with those unable to attend. Full details are available from the U3A Mornington and U3A Frankston websites.

A Tai Chi group exercising at U3A Nunawading, one of a wide range of physical options available to members who wish to improve their range of movement, strength and confidence.



A number of our U3As are about to go live with the new online membership management system resulting from our Network's partnership with **Softsys**. U3As now have an alternative to programmes maintained and updated internally by a few dedicated members, often enslaved to adapting their original systems in response to ongoing requirements. Feedback will be eagerly awaited by a number of additional U3As currently considering their own options.

The Annual General Meeting of Network has just been held to review the past year's progress and for the election of the Management Executive for the coming year. President, Elsie Mutton and Vice President, David Jensz were both re-elected for further terms of office.

Victorian delegates are looking forward to attending the U3A Network Queensland and U3A Asia Pacific Alliance International Conference in Brisbane during May and anticipating the opportunity for a meeting of the U3A Alliance.

Lindsay Glen

The Challenge:

Addressing the impact of an ageing population upon future health and welfare demands is an acknowledged national concern. Against this expanding demographic, despite relative success our U3As are presently reaching less than 3% of the over 65 year old national population.

The U3A movement is a unique community platform delivering positive health and well-being benefits directly to the senior sector. These benefits parallel many of the current senior health objectives for both Federal and State Governments. Whilst one or two State Governments recognise the positive value of an association with U3As and have established beneficial relationships there has not been to this date formal Federal connection. U3As are strongly and specifically connected to the ageing sector and its wholly voluntary structure presents a cost effective opportunity for the delivery of compatible aspects of national healthy living objectives.

Lindsay Glen





It has been a busy time for SA with so many changes on the go that some of our old friends may have trouble recognizing us. Foremost amongst these will be a change of name. The Alliance of U3As in South Australia has always been a terrible mouthful and inspired by the clean simplicity of the U3A Australia logo, we will be changing our name to U3A South Australia. We have had the international block logo duplicated in a variety of print-friendly formats and are encouraging all our member organisations to adopt it with just their district underneath. To keep standards high and encourage uniformity, a logo for every U3A is being prepared by a graphic designer. Of course, it is up to the individual U3A if they adopt these logos, but we hope groups will see the benefit of presenting a uniform face to the public.

The name change will be officially registered when we pass a new constitution. A sub-committee is currently working on this with a draft expected to be presented at our April meeting. This could turn around how we operate in South Australia so we hope all U3As will closely consider all options. Apart from the name change and bringing financial handling into the online age, changes to the current one vote per U3A regardless of membership numbers, moving decision-making from the present quarterly meetings of all delegates to a 8-member management committee with power to co-opt, limiting tenure, removing terminology such as 'university' and 'third-age learning' which is not consistent with new marketing, are all ideas under active consideration.

At our January meeting, marketing consultants CBB previewed the new style manual and website. The yet-to-be-launched website looks bright and colourful with quality graphics and is aimed at marketing us to the youngest possible demographic, in the hope of attracting the newly-retired before they commit their time to other organisations. Advertising will accompany our appearance at the May Retirement Lifestyle Expo.

Pleased to announce two new Alliance members. When our network was formed, three U3As chose not to join. We are delighted that the largest of those, Adelaide U3A, has changed its mind. Adelaide U3A has always been synonymous with the U3A movement in this State so it seems very right to have them participating in the State network. Their delegate Pauline McCreery has already proved a pleasant addition to our small pool of willing workers.

The other new member has come as quite a surprise. At this time last year they weren't even on the radar. Erica Majba and I addressed a standing-room only crowd at an initial public meeting in Berri on 20 November and in that short space of time Riverland U3A have acquired over 100 members, developed an impressive website and a small but promising course list. With their talented and enthusiastic committee, they can only be limited by their region where population is spread across several towns. Hopefully the success of Riverland

U3A, our first for some years, provides the impetus for other new U3As. There are lots of gaps on the State U3A map and plenty of potential for new suburban U3As.

Despite all the gloss of a professional campaign, grass root marketing is still vital. Two U3As who showed the way were Murraylands who took a stall at a regional ageing expo and Adelaide Hills who entered floats in both Mt Barker and Stirling Christmas street parades. Adelaide Hills chairman Marjolijn Haraghey says it has helped raise their visibility and the participants certainly had fun. The signs on the floats have since done stints at the entrances to local townships as well as AH's usual stand at Stirling market. The signage was purchased with money from current State funding, a good proportion of which we channel to our member U3As.

Right: Helen Hollick, Barb Haines and Jean Filmer promoting Murraylands at ACH Expo.

Below: Party Professor Mark Randell, Adelaide Hills, outshines Santa.



Tea Tree Gully U3A, already being well resourced, used their grant money to take a busload of members to visit a smaller, regional U3A with the intention of fostering new activities by sharing their skills. Thirteen TTG volunteers travelled to Maitland where they ran sessions on backgammon, iPads & androids, creative photography and digital photography.

About 70 Yorke Peninsula members took part with some travelling over 100 kms to attend. It was designed to foster the creation of new activities in the host U3A rather than just be a one day blitz of student learning. Tea Tree Gully has offered ongoing support to YP volunteers wishing to start a new class in any of these activities. Well done, Tea Tree Gully members.

*Claire Eglinton
Secretary,
Alliance of U3As in South Australia Inc. (for now)*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Meeting with the Minister for Seniors

On Wednesday 28 Jan five U3A representatives met with the Minister for Seniors and Local Government, The Hon Tony Simpson, and his chief policy adviser, Judy Tennant.

The meeting was arranged following a letter from the WA Network sent to the Minister in early December. Those attending were Peter Flanigan, Don McDonald and Paul Thiessen (all members of the Network Committee) as well as Pauline Yarwood and Rosemary Grigg, representing U3A (UWA) Perth.

The meeting lasted for an hour and we were impressed with the Minister's grasp of issues involving seniors. Although he had not heard of U3A before the meeting had been arranged he had been briefed, was sympathetic with our aims and objectives and readily appreciated our desire to get our message out to the broader community.

Problems we brought to his attention included difficulties in dealing with local government, the increasing cost of hiring venues, the increasing cost of printing and the general difficulties of initiating the current generation of seniors to the internet.



WA Minister for Seniors and Local Government, Tony Simpson, with U3A Network Committee members, Paul Thiessen (left) and Don McDonald.

Photo: Pauline Yarwood

He recommended that we persist with local Councils as they have the resources to work in the seniors' area. Many Councils hold seniors' expos. There is no central coordination for these so individual Councils will have to be approached. There is also the possibility of local community grants. He also suggested we seek out other bodies such as COTA, National Seniors and SMAC (The internal Ministerial Advisory Council). The WA Lotteries Commission is the best avenue for substantial grants for events such as a State Conference or an anniversary publication..

He told us there were 368,000 senior card holders in WA and the number is growing rapidly. Last year 100 gold cards were issued to people turning 100.

Many organisations such as National Seniors and Retirees' Associations focus on benefits and/or financial support for their members. We pointed out that U3A was not this type of lobby group but a self-help group where seniors could keep their minds active and also enjoy social interaction.

The WA Seniors' Directory has been recently reprinted and will not appear again until late 2016 but he would like to see us included in the next issue.

Issues of mental health were raised. The Minister talked about new planning developments for communities that were senior friendly, providing facilities but keeping them part of the wider community. There are also new developments in technology that can assist people to stay in their own homes such as a kettle that sends an SMS to a family member when it is switched on in the morning.

Altogether we thought it was a productive meeting and one that gives us a few lines to follow up.

It is with some regret that the Secretary of the network, Norma Vaughan has had to take leave for health reasons. Norma has been secretary since the WA Network was founded and has also created and managed our web-site. Her duties will be picked up by other committee members until the AGM in July

Peter Flanigan



U3A QUEENSLAND

The focus of our Queensland committee this year been organising and promoting the May conference. Registrations have been received from UK, Mauritius, Portugal, India, China, Singapore, Bangladesh, New Zealand and of course most states of Australia. As you would expect the majority of delegates are from our Queensland U3As. As Brisbane City Hall is a large venue registrations will be taken up to the 15th May.

One of our major sponsors, Odyssey Travel, has organised a post conference day tour to Stradbroke Island. This tour is available to all and is advertised on the conference website.

As I travel around the state responding to invitations from U3A groups to be a Guest Speaker, I am always encouraged by the enthusiasm of members. Regardless of how large or small in numbers, the desire to offer positive opportunities for learning and social engagement is evident everywhere. It is a pleasure to share in this.

My term as the Queensland President has run its 3 year timeframe. It has been a journey that I never expected to take, but one that I have enjoyed enormously. The opportunity to learn and experience different facets of U3A is not confined to the classroom, it is endless.

Rhonda



Interview – Ms. Pat Sparrow – Advisor - Federal Department of Social Services

Venue: Treasury House, Melbourne **Date:** 11.03.2015

Present: Elsie Mutton, President U3A Network Victoria,
Lindsay Glen, Victorian U3AA Delegate- U3A Network Victoria

Aim:

Our aim was to detail was to provide a profile of U3A in Australia, its aims, objectives and operational structure in order to define our connection with the seniors sector, and if possible establish a relevant contact within the Department for ongoing dialogue.

Discussion:

Ms. Sparrow is currently Policy Advisor to Senator M. Fifield, the Assistant Minister for Social Services. Pat indicated that she was broadly aware of U3A and its operation through her previous association with COTA and the ACSA (Aged Community Services Australia) sectors.

We were invited to outline U3A's national presence, its regional and Network organisational structure and how it delivers our contribution to the health and wellbeing of seniors. Despite our membership of approximately 90,000 we currently reach less than 3% of our sector. Given the growth of the nation's ageing population and the positive nature of our programme there is strong growth potential for the movement.

The wholly voluntary and predominately self-funding nature of the U3A the movement is viewed somewhat obliquely at Government level. Whilst acknowledging the value of our presence and contribution only two State Governments currently extend funding support to their State U3A Networks (Vic. and Sth. Australia). A table we submitted outlined membership distribution and funding status of Alliance members (copy attached).

Ms. Sparrow, whilst listening attentively, stressed her connection to the Aged Care sector, whilst we highlighted our organisational aim was to delay the need to access Aged Care and that we were involved in enhancing the quality of life for those able to participate in our activities.

The purpose of our interview was not "plead" a need for funding but to highlight the opportunity existing for Federal Government to utilise our movement to economically deliver selected components of their health and wellbeing policy initiatives to the Senior Sector.

Outcomes:

Promotional: A suggestion was for us to expand our promotional efforts by seeking to establish website linkages within organisations linked to Aged Care and Health such as “My Aged Care” (Contact: Craig Harris – located in the ACT).

Funding: A further suggestion was made that applications for funding support could be made to a number of charitable foundations, offering project based funding e.g. ACS Improvement and HAC grants. We responded that that we were not aware of how many of our Networks currently maintaining DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) status which is often a basic requirement for funding or grant applicants seeking funding support from charitable trusts and foundations.

Conclusion:

While this particular interview did not totally satisfy the aim of establishing a sympathetic connection with this level of government we should continue to seek a more relevant contact within the Healthy Ageing area of the Department.

Given the current unstable electoral climate we should also ensure that we collectively maintain regular contact with our local Federal representatives and the opposition party candidates in order to remind them of our community presence.

Lindsay Glen

FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks to the contributors for this issue.

The deadline for Issue 14 will be 22 July.

I hope to get some good pictures and stories from the Brisbane Conference, which, unfortunately, I am not able to attend.

Peter Flanigan

U3A Membership Distribution and Funding Support Summary

State	Affiliated U3As	State Membership	Federal Funding	State Funding	Departmental Source	Notes
NSW/ACT	67	28,000	Nil	One off	NSW Dept. of Family Services.	Approx. \$70k one year expansion expires 6/2015
Victoria	106	31,000	Nil	\$300k pa	DHS, Victorian Seniors	Second Four year PGS Agreement In place to 20?
Queensland	33	21,000	Nil	Nil		
South Australia	19	4,000	Nil	\$53 k pa for 4 years	Dept. of State Development	\$20K Promotion. \$15,000 p.a. x 4yrs. \$38,000 p.a. x 4yrs.
Western Australia	21	1,500	Nil	Nil	-	Occasional State Lotteries grant for Equipment or Special events
Tasmania	12	1,000	Nil	Nil	-	
U3A Online	1	2,000	\$25k pa	Nil	Broadband for Seniors	Agreement for 2 ½ yrs.
Totals	259	89,500				

Thanks to Lindsay Glen for compiling the figures.

Finally, a word from our sponsor (see over)



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