



**AUSTRALIA**

**BULLETIN 14**

**JULY 2015**

## **THE POWER OF AGEING**



*The 175 people at the Seminar held in the WA State Library and run by U3A(UWA) Perth on July 22 were testament to the interest in this year's topic, "The Power of Ageing". This all day seminar is an annual event. Topics vary. In 2014 the whole day was given up to a study of Indonesia. This year we came back much closer to home. Do seniors have as powerful a voice as they should have in decision making in our community?  
Speakers included Ken Marston CEO of COTA, Greg Mahney CEO of Advocare and Professor Christopher Etherton-Ber from the University of WA.*

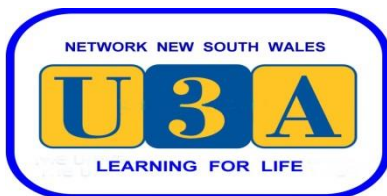
# BRISBANE CONFERENCE

"The U3A Network Queensland and Asia Pacific conference held in Brisbane City Hall on the 28- 29 May was an outstanding success" said Rhonda Weston, President of Network Qld. and the organising committee. The conference was opened by the Lord Mayor, Graham Quirk with speakers from as far afield as Portugal and the UK plus many more local presenters, including 19 year old Sophie Ryan, an impressive speaker, who received a standing ovation for her inspirational talk "Starfish, Teacups & how to change the World".



*Tom Holloway from World U3A addresses the conference*

Delegates were treated to a very special couple of days and found the conference to be a great opportunity to meet with other U3As from around the world and Australia, exchange ideas and make new friendships. A very informative and enjoyable time was had by all who attended the conference in the iconic surroundings of the newly renovated Brisbane City Hall.



**U3A NETWORK NSW**

*'The Art of Belonging'* was celebrated with great success at the 2015 U3A State Conference, hosted by the Southern Highlands U3A at Mittagong on 29 April – 1 May. A record attendance of almost 200 members, from 40 U3As, attended the Conference and AGM. We were pleased to welcome the Chair of U3A (Rhonda Weston, President Queensland U3A) and the President of U3A ACT (Robyn Beetham) among the registrants.

The pre-conference Civic Reception hosted by the Wingecarribee Shire Council at the Bradman Museum in Bowral set the tone for a friendly conference with a "dance card" ploy

to encourage people to mingle and meet each other, a technique which spilt over onto the two following days. The Conference dinner similarly encouraged new friendships. The keynote speakers – Dr Hugh Mackay on ‘*The Art of Belonging*’ and Tony Whittingham on ‘*Third Age Learning in a Digital World*’ provided complementary perspectives on the role of the internet, as social media and a learning tool, respectively. The workshops provided choice of a wide range of topics. The presentation by the Highland Buskers – an orchestra with a varied range of instruments including cello, guitars, recorders, flutes, clarinet, xylophone, keyboards, violins and harp (pictured below) – had several getting up to dance in the aisles - while the Southern Highlands U3A choir brought the proceedings to a happy conclusion.

All in all, an opportunity to meet, learn, and enjoy ‘the art of belonging’ to a vibrant movement which encourages mental stimulation and social interaction for older members of the community. Congratulations to Southern Highlands U3A on organising such a hugely successful conference.



The

2015 AGM brought a

new President and several new faces to the Network Committee. Ainslie Lamb AM (previously Vice-President) was elected as President, while immediate past President Allan Haggarty took over the Vice-presidency role. Secretary Jean de Hossen, Treasurer Geoff Hatch, and members Bev Peken (President of Sydney U3A), Sandy Freeman, and Jim Nichterlein were re-elected. Following the retirement of Des Davis, Shirley Cook, Barbara Caldicott and Rita Spencer, six new members were elected – Lorraine Beukers (Port Macquarie), Liz Imrie (Clarence River), Christine Parker (Oberon), John Sharkey (Tamworth), Lyn Stewart (Gloucester) and Margaret Stratton (Northern Illawarra). A blend of experience and new ideas, plus a fair representation of U3As across NSW, augurs well for the future

The *Balance'n'Bones* light exercise DVD has proved so popular that more copies have been made, and continue to sell well, both to U3As which find it a useful addition to their programs, and to individuals. It's success has prompted the Network to consider promotion and production of exercise for the brain as well as the body. Peter Beale, an amazing 92 year old from Eastlakes U3A and former engineer and psychologist, has made his *Keep the Marbles Rolling* course available to any U3A, and it may be downloaded from the Network website. Additionally, the IRT Foundation has awarded a grant of \$2500 from its Community Grants Program to the Network for the production of a Brain Games Project, which will provide guidelines and creative suggestions for U3As to run other types of brain exercise activities.

In 2016, the Network will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to coincide with the next State Conference to be held at Belmont ( just below Newcastle) on 27-29 April (note the date in your diaries now). Dr Ron Browne AM, a past President of the Network (and foundation chair of U3AAA) has been authorised by the Network committee to prepare the History of The Network, to be launched at the Conference.

And now, more photos from the 2015 Conference ...



Above Left: Beth Denny leads a *Balance'n'Bones* session.

Above right : 3 Presidents – Robyn Beetham (ACT), Rhonda Weston (Queensland), Ainslie Lamb (NSW)

Below Left : The Southern Highlands U3A Choir.

Below right: Right: dancing in the aisles to the music of the Highland Buskers



*Ainslie Lamb, President, U3A Network NSW Inc.*

## U3A ONLINE

U3A Online is having a very productive and exciting year. We have a number of new courses available due to the work of great writers and the technical efforts of David Mitchell. Under the leadership of our president, Jean Walker, we have held several productive committee meetings resulting in a recent very newsy newsletter keeping members up to date, establishing wider contacts within communities and overseas and sharing the opportunities of U3A Online with numerous Seniors Publications. we now have a Facebook page which is allowing interested folk to keep up to day with our organisation.

Our vice-President, Bev Tapper, most ably represented us at the very interesting and worthwhile NSW network Conference and several members were able to attend the May U3A Asia Pacific Alliance International Conference in Brisbane where various International and Australian speakers inspired us with ideas, research, practices and just their sheer enthusiasm for what is happening in their part of the world. Our President, Jean Walker, took part in a panel Q & A, along with Tom Holloway who shares Signposts with our members and Faye Weatherly from New Zealand. I was fortunate the day after the conference to spend a day touring Stradbroke Island with UK President Barbara Lewis and her husband, Stewart, and learn first hand the way the UK establishes and supports their organisations.

There are many photos available at  
<http://www.u3aqldconference.org/gallery.html>

Patricia Corby

CFA TAS/Clarence & Online U3A C of M



## **U3A ASIA PACIFIC ALLIANCE**

The technology revolution, the ease of international travel and the desire to know and understand our neighbours, have facilitated the growth of the Asia Pacific Alliance (APA). The ability to be involved in joint conferences enables us to build relationships and foster the exchange of ideas. Australia has been the host of two very successful joint conferences in recent years, Victoria in 2013 and Queensland in 2015.

The countries involved in the Asia Pacific Alliance - Australia, Singapore, South Africa, Nepal, Japan and India were joined recently by New Zealand and Mauritius. Full details are available on the website

<http://u3a-asiapacificalliance.org/>

The Alliance is an informal group of country representatives, meeting fortnightly by teleconference. It is currently run by a 'steering group' of nine.

Like all U3A groups worldwide the APA offers support and encouragement to emerging U3As, particularly in the Asia Pacific. Consultation with existing U3As in Malaysia and Thailand and discussions with interested academics in Kazakhstan and Bangladesh are projects currently being progressed.

The 2016 Asia Pacific Alliance Conference will be a joint event hosted by APA member Japan under the leadership of Akiko Tsukatani MBE who is Director General of Age Concern Japan, and President of U3A Osaka. IAUTA (International Association of Universities of the Third Age) will be teaming up with APA in the spirit of "hands across the world". The event will offer not only the usual high standard of Speakers, it will be a platform to promote the exchange of ideas and strengthen international relationships. The dates are October 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Osaka Japan.

*Rhonda Weston* Chair – U3A Asia Pacific Alliance

# TASMANIA

The Tasmanian state group, we call ourselves just U3As TAS, meets twice a year, next F2F meeting will be early September. We meet at Campbell Town as this seems about the middle point! We comprise 10 U3As and our important Launceston School for Seniors Affiliate - Hobart, Wynyard (Formed in early 2015) Port Sorell, Clarence, Tasman, Cygnet, Kingborough, Tamar Valley, Glenorchy and Meander Valley.

We don't have any official committee or joining fees but have elected 3 representatives to keep us organised, sub-committees then handle specific issues. As well as sharing information on our local situations we also discuss current issues and concerns. Currently a small sub-group with advice from the other member U3As, has been lobbying politicians in regard to some of these. The F2F meetings are well attended, very friendly and enjoyable and the support available has helped new groups, such as Wynyard, get up and running.

Patricia Corby

# WESTERN AUSTRALIA



*Many people will have heard of the recent tragic death of Paul Thiessen in a traffic accident. Paul was a U3A stalwart who turned his hand to many things in his time with U3A – treasurer, lecturer, publicist, organiser and webmaster to name a few areas of his expertise. Paul was the Director of the recent seminar, The Power of Ageing. The loss of his drive and initiative will be greatly missed both by Perth U3A and the WA State Network.*

A recent PR initiative by Mid-North U3A (one of the Perth regions) was a Hobby Day exhibition. A large number of hobby groups were invited to come along and display their activities. Exhibitors ranged from model cars to arts and crafts to historical societies to genealogy.



*Christine Smith (left) and  
Christine Oliver at The  
Hobby Day run by U3A  
Mid-North*

This year's Seminar run by U3A(UWA) Perth was entitled The Power of Ageing. Congratulations to the committee from U3A SW Metropolitan who had to pick up the pieces after Paul Thiessen's death.

*Jim and June Barnes  
enjoy a bite to eat at  
the Power of Ageing  
Seminar*



The AGM of the Network was held at the conclusion of the seminar. Don McDonald has taken over as Chairman, allowing Peter Flanigan, inaugural Chairman, to take a back seat (not too far back – he will continue as Vice-Chairman). Helen Baker is the new Secretary and Jean Duff (U3A Online) takes on the Treasurer's job. Christine McDonald from Naturaliste U3A has also joined the committee. After the loss of Paul Thiessen and Norma Vaughan, foundation Secretary and Webmaster, through illness, there will be plenty to do in the coming year.



*CONCENTRATION  
Don McDonald (left), Peter  
Flanigan and Helen Baker at the  
Network Meeting*

Peter Flanigan

# U3A

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Alliance of U3As in South Australia is no more and we are now U3A South Australia: a shiny new name to go with our shiny new website. Do visit [www.u3asouthaustralia.org.au](http://www.u3asouthaustralia.org.au) and help webmaster Pauline McCreery keep it current by submitting newsworthy stories and coming events. Quality photos of U3A in action always welcome.

We also took the opportunity to approve a few other minor constitution changes so it better reflects how we currently operate. This has taken a little pressure off our major constitution overhaul and will allow us the luxury to give it the time and debate it deserves. Finding a format which balances efficiency with inclusion of all stakeholders is a challenge. All delegates took home a draft for consultation with their committees so we look forward to a lot of feedback and further debate and modification.

Our \$20,000 marketing budget climaxed in May with website, brochures, promotional bookmarks and an advertising campaign just before the Retirement, Lifestyle and Travel Expo. By marketing to people who are planning or just entering retirement we hope to keep our membership refreshed with younger members who are looking for new social networks and ways to fill their days. At the next Expo in October 2016 we have been offered use of the stage area so we could make a big impact with Gawler's ukulele groups or Kapunda's choir.

Murraylands U3A celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday with an excellent lunch and launch of their creative writing group's booklet. Members of other U3As joined in to congratulate the friendly folk from Murraylands who always attend State meetings and are happy to help.

*Front: Visitors Kerrie Smith and Vale Pederson, current and past presidents of Campbelltown U3A, with local members Warwick Hack and Jean Filmer at Murraylands 10<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.*





Mt Gambier U3A, our most far-flung member, celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday on 3 July complete with a few challenges for organisers, especially when the guest speaker was a last minute apology. Unfazed they found a worthy replacement closer to home and had a great day. President Paul Lucas seems to embody the Keep Calm and Carry On slogan as he negotiates his way through any crisis . . . and all without a secretary.

On the same day Campbelltown U3A enjoyed entertainment by Die Lustige Kapelle (a fun band whose oldest member is 93) and presented Life Membership to their past president and our previous State president, Vale Pedersen. Vale played a major part in revitalizing Campbelltown and establishing it in its current premises.

Vital to good publicity is good photography. Everything except radio is a visual medium so every group needs a keen photographer or two. Adelaide Hills U3A received a double page spread in a recent COTA Bulletin and the ‘money shot’ was a great snap of colourful kayaks showing members doing an adventurous activity and obviously relishing the achievement.



*Learning the importance of being upright citizens and having a camera ready to record the victory.*

The success of this new activity can be seen in the expanding list of follow-up outings. It started in May with eight members doing a Paddle on the Patawalonga. They had such a great time that more outings soon followed. On water activities resume in the warmer weather including paddling on West Lakes around Delphin Island; on the Port River with dolphins through the wrecks of the ship’s graveyard, mangroves and around Garden Island. No doubt there will be lots of talk about ‘on water matters’ in coming newsletters. Looks like fun.

We learnt at the Expo that new retirees are looking to be actively involved in learning and acquiring new skills rather than passively sitting and listening to speakers. If we want to attract this younger cohort, we might have to rethink some of our activities.

*Claire Eglinton, Secretary, U3A South Australia*

**U3A, You and Your Community**

U3A means many things to participating members. The exact nature of their view of membership depends upon their individual circumstances; influenced by the range of activities, programme content and most importantly the environment prevailing at their U3As.

While overwhelmingly the report is positive, addressing social isolation is an issue confronting many ageing seniors who see long standing relationships and their own circumstances alter adversely, prompting many to gradual or abrupt communal withdrawal. Testimonials, shared spontaneously, often refer to participation in U3A as a personal life changing experience, enriching lives and transforming their personal circumstances.



**Showcasing U3A**

A U3A flash mob at Box Hill Shopping Centre Melbourne, *Elder Abuse week.*

*Seniors CAN Dance!*

Such revelations stress the need to maintain community and social contact in later life and remind us of U3A’s worth in providing both as well as the more obvious benefit of access to an ongoing learning experience. U3A is increasingly being recognised as a vibrant element of local communities achieved through its development of and participation in local activities, which is assisting to transform a negative perception of old, age.

**Showcasing U3A**

U3A Craft items on display in Ararat - country Victoria



**Show and Share!**

U3A Bacchus Marsh quilters utilised a new sewing machine obtained through a Council community grant to generate seventy quilts for the intergenerational **Quilting with Love** programme. Quilts were donated to the local branch of the CAFS (Department of Children and Family Services) Kinship

group assisting children being raised by other than their own parents. The Victorian Quilters Guild distributed the other quilts to children undergoing treatment at the Royal Children's Hospital. This is a further example of how U3A may participate in a community programme, building social capital and spanning the generational divide.

This year represents U3A's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Australia. Founding Victorian U3As, Ringwood, Monash (now Waverley), Melbourne City and Hawthorn will summarise their beginnings and subsequent progress at our "Thirty Years & Still Growing" State Conference, to be held on 17-18<sup>th</sup> August at the Rendezvous Hotel in Melbourne. The Conference programme will also focus on aspects of inter-generational learning, digital literacy and the potential that both represent to the future of our movement.

A number of our delegates joined interstate and overseas delegates at the Asia Pacific international Conference in Brisbane late in May. They were treated to a programme delivered by both local speakers and overseas U3A guests and we congratulate Rhonda Weston and her hard working Conference Committee on the success and our resulting enjoyment of this event.

Meeting with fellow U3A State leaders at these events provides the opportunity to conduct an Alliance meeting. The ensuing interchanges often indicative of interstate diversity are none the less valuable as the opportunity to exchange ideas, express views, and highlight opportunities. Participants are exposed to new opportunities and approaches, some of which could benefit our own states.

At our May Victorian Presidential Briefing we heard how U3A Kooyong has trialled, in conjunction with Vision Australia the use of Telelink to deliver courses. Telelink utilises the telephone to connect up to ten participants at a time and is proving a valuable tool for conducting classes involving those who may be visually impaired or the socially isolated.

The Victorian Seniors' Festival, which launches the Seniors Week programme, is to be held at Melbourne's Federation Square on the 4<sup>th</sup> October. This year the U3A movement will again be opening the day with a U3A big band on stage and housed in 20 marquees along the riverbank, handing out information to the general public. The Victorian Network will, throughout this week, hold an art exhibition in the Queens Hall, Parliament House, providing members with a chance to showcase their artistic ability to the public. Many U3As will be participating at both regional and local festivities throughout the state promoting U3A's wide range of activities, highlighting its work in the senior community and accessing potential members.

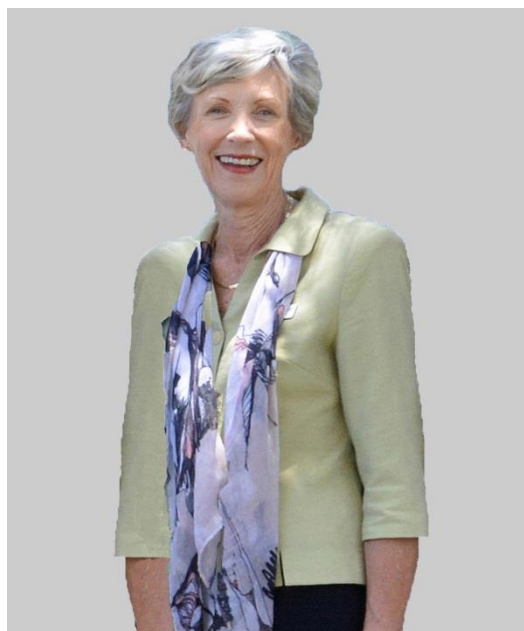
Many existing U3As have significant ethnic groups within their membership contributing through their provision of courses such as languages, history, national dance, Tai Chi and Yoga. The establishment of a new Chinese U3A in the Melbourne suburbs, an example of our continuing diversity has provided established neighbouring U3As the opportunity to exchange and share their course programmes. Network favours this cooperative integration model as the most suitable structure for encouraging such cultural interaction.

Lindsay Glen  
U3A Network Victoria Inc.  
2015

July

Live Learn Enjoy

## **Julie Porteous, Queensland President and U3AAA Chair**



### **A message from the newly elected President of U3A Network Queensland.**

“My goal as President is to make a difference. The immediate aim of the U3A Network Committee is to lift awareness and the profile of the U3A organisation within the community and the State Government. Our combined vision is that in 5 years’ time, seniors everywhere will be able to access a U3A organisation close to where they live and to enjoy academic and social activities in all parts of the state.”

Julie has now taken over the Chair of U3AAA from Rhonda Weston. She will hold this position until March 2016 when the secretariat will move back to NSW.

#### **FROM THE EDITOR**

**Many thanks to all who contributed to this  
Bulletin. Everything on time, as usual!**

**Deadline for Issue 15 is 28 October**

**Peter Flanigan**