



BULLETIN NO 9 OCTOBER 2013

THE U3A NETWORK VICTORIA AND THE U3A ASIA PACIFIC ALLIANCE
CONFERENCE, MELBOURNE, OCTOBER 2013



The Indian Delegation with Elsie Mutton (President, Network Victoria) and Paul O'Connor, Master of Ceremonies
(More photos from the Conference p2,p3)

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Tom Holloway (UK and India) Elsie Mutton (Vic) Lindsay Glen (Vic) and Thomas Kuan (Sing)

□



Francois Vellas (France), David Weston (Vic) and Hang KianOng (Sing)

Feeding the Masses





Karen Phillips(Speaker Day 2) signs a copy of her book "Women's Words" for John Parker U3A Baw Baw



Interstate Representatives: Paul O'Connor and(seated from left) Lindsay Glen (Vic), Rhonda Weston, (Qld), Allan Haggerty (NSW), Claire Eglinton (SA), Peter Flanigan (WA)



Robyn Temby (Moonie Valley)and Julie Porteous (Qld)



International Delegates
 Di Delchau (U3A Online), Francois Vellas (France), Sylvia Leggett (NZ), Elsie Mutton (Aust), Kim Goy (Sing), Ian Funnell (UK)



Chairman's Report:

The recent Victorian and Asia Pacific Alliance Conference held during October included a number of delegates from international U3A. Their participation highlighted the diversity of the global U3A movement. Some countries' U3A organisations concentrate upon health and welfare, others are an extension of Government Aged Care agencies, the French model evolving from Universities while the UK has a community based model similar to our own. Management structures also reflect these differences.

Bringing together our international U3A partners, whilst a challenge, enabled many to establish personal relationships and connections which may assist future cooperation and consultation.

The Alliance met formally during the conference welcoming guests Ian Funnell (UTAI- UK), Patricia Corby, Clarence U3A Tasmania and Susan Webster Network Victoria who joined delegates from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, U3A Online, South Australia and Western Australia.

Ian Funnell took the opportunity to address the gathering and suggested the possibility of negotiating an MOU between our U3AAA and the U3A Trust UK. Flowing from this there is an additional opportunity to participate in the drafting of an International Charter, initiated by France, which is being prepared for submission to the United Nations. This presents us with an opportunity to participate in the development of a more universal recognition of the U3A movement.

Local U3AAA Delegates presented a roundup of the progress within their respective areas. Steady expansion is taking place in Queensland and New South Wales whilst South Australia and Western Australia struggle for membership growth due to local circumstances.

Efforts to negotiate State Governmental funding by other Networks continue to meet with mixed success.

Further matters discussed at the meeting included:

- Tabling the current Victorian concern to protect the U3A trade name through registration, its ramifications and the experience and views of fellow Networks.
- Negotiations initiated by Queensland Network with APRA regarding live musical performance licencing arrangements. Given that these arrangements may impact many of our Australian U3As they have expanded their negotiations to try and provide a National Licence format to accommodate those U3As who may wish to participate. Whilst negotiations have been slow details of the licencing provisions are anticipated soon.
- In order to reinforce national recognition of U3As positive influence within the senior community we are arranging an interview with the newly appointed minister responsible for this sector - Victorian Senator the Hon. Mitch Fifield - Assistant Minister for Social Services and Manager of Government Business in the Senate. It is intended that this opportunity should be shared with the President of U3A Network Victoria.

I am presently anticipating some news from Tasmania where a couple of U3As are discussing possible affiliation with the U3A Alliance following a period of negotiation. We would welcome any additional opportunity to more widely represent the U3A movement in this country.

Lindsay Glen – Chair U3AAA

The recent Victorian Network and Asia Pacific Alliance Conference programme was well received judging from most reports by those attending.

Presenters variously demonstrated approaches to enhance planning techniques, widen our perspective when seeking to attract younger generations to the movement and preparing for the future of our U3As. In addition U3As were alerted to the possibility of participation in a range of community learning partnerships. A number of our regional U3As – Warragul, Leongatha and Morwell from the Gippsland area amalgamated in addition to Prom Coast and Brimbank U3As all secured grants in one of these initiatives under the PATCE – Productive Ageing through Community Education Program. This will continue to generate advantages for these U3As for sometime.

During the Conference local delegates took the opportunity to exchange ideas with the international delegates whose organisations offer alternative approaches to the delivery of learning programmes. Most delegates expressed satisfaction with the opportunities provided by the staging of the Conference and its associated functions.

The Network has been busy examining its current Constitution in order to update to both conform with provisions of the new Associations Incorporations Act and to prepare a more suitable structure for our current requirements.

This years' Victorian Seniors Community Service Awards were presented at Government House and featured no less than three award recipients who are currently associated with the U3A movement. Victorian Network President Elsie Mutton was recognised for her outstanding service to the U3A movement and other community groups over many years. The Victorian Network was once again present at the launch of the Victorian Seniors Festival at Melbourne's Federation Square and had a presence during the week of the Festival at The Hub situated at the Melbourne Town Hall.

Our Network has received a most generous bequest from the estate of the late Jack McDonnell, founding president of Network 25 years ago. Jack died a few months ago and has left a significant sum to support the efforts of the Network and its membership. The Conference Room at Network Offices has for some years been called the McDonnell Room, and Executive is now looking for a suitable project to be funded by Jack's most generous and welcome donation.

The Health Minister David Davis announced recently that Mr. Gerard Mansour the first Commissioner for Senior Victorians has been appointed. The Commissioner's role will be to promote an age-friendly society and enhance community participation by senior Victorians. We were also pleased to learn that our Network Secretary Susan Webster will serve on the Commissioner's Advisory Committee. We are pleased to receive this form of acknowledgement and recognition of the role we are able to play in our sector of the community.

Live Learn Enjoy

Lindsay Glen

U3A Network Victoria

QUEENSLAND

The question for Network Qld is how can we assist our U3A member groups to successfully manage the huge growth that is being experienced at unprecedented rates across our State. At the recent Melbourne Conference I stated that growth was in the 20% in most areas. Much to my great delight, yesterday at the Sunshine Coast Region Meeting, I learnt that several groups have grown by 30% and one by over 50% in 2013.

We have welcomed Greg Doolan, Brisbane U3A, to our Network management team and we now have a full committee. A positive endorsement of the need for and the purpose of a State body when we have offers from members to be part of the team.

Network now has a seat at the Seniors Roundtable. This Roundtable is the peak Qld body, liaising with the State Government and comprising representatives from the following organisations:

- Australian Pensioners & Superannuants League, Qld
- Association of Independent Retirees, Qld
- COTA (Council of the Ageing) Qld
- Ethnic Communities Council Qld
- National Seniors Australia
- Older People Speak Out
- Older Women's Network Qld
- Queensland Retired Teachers Assoc.

Members of this Roundtable work collaboratively on issues of State Government policy, and in particular on a joint annual State Budget Submission. The range of policy issues relate to health, security and participation of Older Queenslanders and in particular fairness and equity. Having a say at this level will further enable Network to contribute to the future development of policies that effect seniors.

Qld Seniors week was celebrated by many of our groups. Toowoomba celebrated with the 4th Annual Seniors Expo, which attracted 75 organisations all relating to Seniors, and over 1250 members of the public visited during the 6 hours. These sell out events held across the State indicate that the current retirees are expecting to be informed and catered to. It is U3As future interest that we keep pace with the need.

Activity is happening in the South West of our State by the Warwick U3A, working tirelessly under the leadership of their President Arthur Maynard, and being instrumental in bringing U3A to Goondiwindi. Also on the Fraser Coast, Burrum District, at present a branch of Maryborough, is ready for Incorporation and will become autonomous in January 2014.

Two of our U3As have hosted Region Meetings this year. Warwick on the Darling Downs, and Sunshine Coast, both presented a program of learning, sharing and interaction. The benefits to our smaller and newer groups who attend these days may be greater than for the larger and well established groups, however the sharing of ideas and the networking links that are forged on these occasions is beyond measure.

The promised APRA/AMCOS Licence that will be U3A specific is still with the Legal Department of APRA. It was due out in July, then October and is now hopefully coming to your inbox before Xmas. My apologies, however it is completely out of my hands at this point.



Trudy Graham with a prospective new member at the Seniors' Expo.

Crowd scene at the Seniors' Expo



On behalf of Network Qld and my attending co-delegates – Adrienne (Qld State Secretary) & Peter Brougham, Julie Porteous and my husband David, I would like to thank Network VIC for the enlightening and enriching program that they organised for the U3A Network Vic Inc. and U3A Asia Pacific Alliance International Conference. It was a delight to meet the visiting delegates, listen to their reports and strengthen friendships already formed. Events such as these are important to our program of interaction between our Australian States and our worldwide counterparts. Elsie and the team excelled.

One important fact that I have noted is that regardless of which corner of our state the U3A is, the community knowledge and positive perception of U3A as an organisation is increasing. Our aim is to keep that happening.

Rhonda Weston President U3A Network Qld Inc. 

MAKING CONNECTIONS

As a result of a discussion I recently had with the CEO of Adult Learning Australia, Sally Thompson, ALA has now included U3A as a source of adult learning sites on its 'Find a Course' page. Access the ALA website at www.ala.asn.au, click on the 'Find a Course' image, and browsers can then access the individual network sites.



My superannuation provider, Unisuper, issues a regular newsletter, and has recently included short articles on 'Keeping active in Retirement' which make positive reference to U3A. Unisuper members include both former academic and general staff. Have a look at www.unisuper.com.au/super-informed-eneews/october2013/living-retirement-to-the-fullest. I have sent the list of U3A network websites to the editor, for (hopefully) future publication in the Unisuper newsletter.

Coalition policy on Ageing can be located at www.liberal.org.au. click on 'Policies' then on 'Coalition Policy for Healthy Life, Better Ageing'. The emphasis is on services and access to care, access to the workforce, dementia research and a single word reference to 'wellbeing', but there is no mention of 'positive ageing' or lifelong learning as part of the policy.

Ainslie Lamb NSW

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

In many ways not a lot has happened since my last report.

Our Communications and Promotions Group continues to impress with its efforts in terms of its activities and on-going efforts to better promote U3A in Canberra. One of the initiatives we have running to try to further address this issue is a review of our publicity material with a view to heightening public awareness of U3A in libraries and other suitable public places.

Our efforts to attract more course leaders continue, as our membership grows and some, many of them long-standing leaders, retire from that role.

We have followed through with the University of Canberra and have now completed an agreement through which U3A members may access suitable courses run by the University of Canberra as 'audit' students (which means they can 'listen in' to appropriate courses but do not participate in the assessment processes and cannot earn a qualification). This is perceived as having two way benefits to our respective organisations and a number of our members have expressed interest in availing themselves of this opportunity.

Other issues before us include finding a project manager to oversight a re-design of our website to increase its functionality, and enhance our overall management of U3AACT.

Robyn Beetham President U3AACT



I was a participant in the World Conference on Computing in Education (WCCE) that was held in Torun, Poland at the beginning of July. This was a large conference with many speakers from all over Europe --- many sessions running simultaneously --- so it was a great opportunity to get the concept of U3A generally and U3A Online in particular to the forefront. I also had the opportunity to meet with and discuss issues with Jim Soulsby from the UK who had involvement with the Third Age Trust but is now a consultant for Later Life Learning – Education for older people across Europe. He was there for a meeting of the European Lifelong Learning group that had been arranged and was chaired by Anna Grabowska who had invited me to the conference. Anna invited me to address that meeting after the conclusion of the WCCE conference.

I attended the ALA online AGM on the 21st August --- this was held using the Blackboard Collaborate (also known as Elluminate) software.

After putting out a call for volunteers to undertake the development of a Strategic Plan for U3A Online a very enthusiastic group was formed and they have created an excellent plan – Vision 2020. The Committee has moved to endorse and implement the plan. This served to show how much can be achieved using only the online forum system by producing such a great outcome.

The AGM was held during the first full week in October and we are delighted to have a committed and enthusiastic committee with a number of new faces, including a Vice President with an understanding about succession.

Rolf Rekort is gradually taking over as the U3A Online representative with the Broadband for Seniors discussions. Rick can now enjoy his travel without the constant need to be there for Consortium meetings. Despite the change in Government it is still anticipated that the next round of funding will go ahead.

The new enhancements of the U3A Online web site are still underway but I hope they will be applied, and solve a number of issues we currently have with the site, by the end of next month.

I attended the U3A International Conference in Melbourne in October and would like to congratulate Elsie and her Conference team for the wonderful event they organised. I was a great conference with many interesting speakers and great opportunities to network with other U3Aers.

Di Delchau
President

TASMANIA

We have been advised that U3A Glenorchy is to become affiliated with the U3AAA, representing Tasmania until such time as a State Network is established. Our thanks to Pat Corby and Jean Walker.

Lindsay Glen, President

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Since our last contribution, SA has managed to squeeze in two quarterly State meetings. The latest of these was our AGM where we welcomed a new president, Erica Majba from Tea Tree Gully U3A, and treasurer, Arthur Davies from Gawler U3A. We are so pleased they have agreed to add the Alliance to their already considerable commitments to other organisations. Willing workers are always at a premium and under our constitution only about 11 of those attending were eligible to hold the four major offices. Member U3As are reminded to select delegates for their ability and willingness to hold office.

Each meeting had a professional development topic so delegates have taken back to their U3As information about age-friendly website design and tips on writing grant applications.

COTA recently ran an online survey to consult with the general public on making South Australia an age-friendly State. Our members were encouraged to participate and put lifelong learning on their wish list. In the past we had submitted information to COTA's policy committee without much response. This time a representative contacted me and promised to include the information in their government submission. COTA tends to lobby on the big ticket items like pensions and it pays to remind them there are other issues. Remind them (and thus politicians) that seniors deserve better than bingo for mental stimulation.

The title "Third Age" made me home in on a recent article in *The Review* by Shirley Stott Despoja. She suggested it may be time to establish a political party to represent senior citizens. If 4WD enthusiasts can manage to get representation in the Senate, why not us? It could be the only way we clinch national funding.

Did everyone notice the report in *The Senior* newspaper (June 2013) of WA University research which discovered (after an 8 year study of more than 5,000 men aged 65-85) that the risk of dementia is about 30 to 40 per cent less among those who use computers than among those who do not. We should use that as support for health funding for our computer classes.

Some of our distant country groups rarely make it to State meetings so it was a great pleasure to finally meet with members of the Mount Gambier U3A. Over the years I have maintained an email correspondence with several gentlemen from this group (why always men?) and we had a chance to say g'day in person when they accepted an invitation from Lower North U3A to take their annual field trip in the Clare Valley. A group of about 16 from The Mount toured the Valley's scenic attractions and we met up for a couple of meals and spent a magic sunny afternoon trying to convince them of the joys of playing Petanque. They returned home equipped with the rules and a set of boules so we hope it catches on with their members.

During some recent research into U3A in Ireland I was viewing the U3A Northern Ireland website and idly clicked on their promotional video. In the background of the opening shot was an unmistakably Australian piece of art (a shearing shed interior by Lower North artist Alfie Hannaford). Blow me down if it wasn't the promotional video made by our own Mt Gambier U3A. It appears to be one of a series available on the Northern Ireland site. Just shows what big ripples a little pebble can create when you release it onto YouTube.



Gawler U3A has just celebrated its 25th anniversary with local dignitaries invited to a short concert followed by afternoon tea. Gawler has a popular bell chime group which allows people with no musical background to taste the joy of making music. There is more joy to be found in their ukulele groups. Encouraged by their flamboyant musical director, Sandra Heath, this colourful mob certainly can strum up a storm.

Still on a musical note, Kapunda U3A has acquired an established choir who found U3A more accommodating than their former parent body. With all this music happening, we keenly await the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) releasing information on their new U3A-specific contracts. Disappointing to learn that we won't be able to hold one umbrella contract on behalf of all our member U3As as we do for copyright on written works.

Another thing SA has been eagerly awaiting for many months is news on the status of our government funding. Under the new cost-cutting regime there has been such a turnover of staff that conversation with the department is like communicating with a revolving door.

Thank you to the organisers and hosts of the Pan Pacific Conference in Melbourne. Elsie Mutton and her team showed us great hospitality but they must have enjoyed seeing us go, knowing finally they could collapse in a heap because it was all over.

*Claire Eglinton
Secretary,
Alliance of U3As in South Australia Inc.*

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA



SOUTH WEST MEETING

On Tuesday 24th Sept Busselton U3A hosted a meeting of representatives of four local U3A Groups – Busselton, Bunbury, Manjimup and Margaret River.

Peter Flanigan, Network President, and his wife, Rosemary Grigg were also present.

A sumptuous spread, put on by Busselton U3A, greeted the participants as they arrived. It was to be a working lunch.

Peter opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and outlining the structure of U3A in Australia, including state networks, the U3AAA and U3A Online. He then invited everyone to tell their U3A stories.

There was a wide ranging discussion with all delegates participating. Each group outlined their programs and there was a very fruitful exchange of ideas. Problems such as attracting and retaining members, insurance, obtaining speakers, accommodation and persuading people to take leadership positions got a good airing.

The meeting concluded at 3 pm with some further refreshment to see people on their way. All agreed it had been a worthwhile experience.

Many thanks to Creena Holly, Busselton Secretary, and her assistants for making the arrangements and for preparing the delicious food.



*U3A (UWA)Perth Choir in action
at their recent concert in City*



Two of this year's initiatives for U3A (UWA) Perth have been a film course and a choir. Both have been successful, but, starting new things always leads on to the question "Where do we go from here?" The film group have had some training and they have some new equipment, courtesy Lottery West. Their first attempts at film-making have shown that it is both complex and time-consuming. Nevertheless they are proceeding and have reached the stage of entering their first production into a competition. Great work.

The choir, likewise, have progressed to the stage of their first public concert which was well received by those that attended. Some problems, attracting more men and, particularly, the long term costs, still remain to be resolved. Pictures of this concert are shown above.

The Network Newsletter for October is out and makes for lively reading. Many thanks to our busy secretary, Norma Vaughan, for her untiring efforts.

Peter Flanigan, President U3A Network WA

NEW SOUTH WALES

Those of you who read the NSW Network's *Newslink* may find what follows familiar as it appeared in the August edition, but after Karen Phillip's inspiring talk at the recent U3A conference in Melbourne I thought it worth repeating. Karen posed a couple of challenging questions, namely 'Are you living a profound life?' and 'What can we do to make a difference?'

All organisations are comprised of givers and takers. The givers are those that make the organisation tick. The takers, on the other hand, tend to sit back and take what's on offer without contributing to the running of the show.

In the case of U3A the givers are the course co-ordinators and leaders as well as the committee members. Too often they are few in number and tend to be the same few, year in year out, yet they rarely complain, perhaps because by putting in so much they get a lot back.

The recent death of one of my former law partners, following a short illness, made me reflect on his contribution. As well as involvement in a number of local organisations, including one of the founders of Meals on Wheels in his community, after practising law for a number of years he took up writing at an age when most informed people would be joining U3A.

His first publication, occupying two large volumes, was a comprehensive insight into a range of legal topics and included numerous documents for use by the legal profession as precedents. It was also online, a novel approach more than 20 years ago.

An authority on water law he then compiled an encyclopaedia on water in NSW, an amazingly detailed resource. Both publications have left a lasting legacy for not only the benefit of the legal profession, but its clients. He then turned his talents to historical fiction, publishing several books. And a keen tennis player for many years, even into his eighties, to encourage the over 60s to take on the sport he wrote *Fun Tennis for Seniors* which was only published earlier this year. His life was fruitful until the very end.

It reminded me of my late mother who was somewhat put out when on reaching the age of 95 she was asked to give up the volunteering role she looked forward to each week.

Any organisation would be better off if more takers became givers. In my experience most will be quick to say they can't. It reminds me of a saying attributed to Henry Ford. 'If you think you can, or if you think you can't – you're bound to be right.'

Everyone is good at something. I'd encourage you to focus on ascertaining your members' strengths and then motivating them to have a go.

Allan Haggarty

FROM OUT SPONSORS

Odyssey Travel was pleased to have met and introduced ourselves to so many of you at the U3A Asia Pacific alliance Melbourne conference.

The three of us; Mark, Arnie and Phoebe, appreciated the opportunity of introducing ourselves to you and the districts that you represent. Odyssey has put together a range of U3A programs for your students that reflect many of the learning programs being undertaken by your members.

For those of you who registered for the IAUTA congress in Toulouse, France in June 2014 Odyssey is developing a program for you to consider, which will be available shortly.

In the meantime, Odyssey's Earlybird Offers with 5% off the list price on a variety of programs booked before 20 December 2013 is available. We are also pleased to offer new lower prices on:

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CONFERENCE POSTSCRIPT

Next time you go to or past the Melbourne Town Hall, say hi to Paul Van Kalken, the doorman. Always cheerful, Paul has been doorman for eleven years, ever since Ansett Airways folded. Prior to that he worked for Ansett in their Melbourne office, handling some of the company's largest accounts.

Paul was born in Holland and came to Australia as a youngster of 5 in 1955. The family settled in Balmoral, Western, Victoria. His father insisted the whole family speak English from the start. "You want to get on, get a good job, make lots of money? Speak English." He got a job in a general store, rapidly moving up to be manager. When the owner wanted to sell, he offered him first refusal. "22,500 pounds? I've got three hundred in the bank. A man he knew offered to go guarantor for a bank loan. He accepted, bought the shop and prospered, it later becoming the first supermarket in the town

Paul worked in the shop. Then one day, his father said. "You go to Melbourne – more opportunities in a big city." Paul took his advice. He arrived with no idea what he would do. He started off stacking shelves but, then, he saw an ad for a job at Ansett. He applied and was accepted. Over the years he worked his way up to a top position.

He married an Australian girl and they had children. One day he saw advertised a Dutch St Nicholas Party (Dec 6 when children are given presents). He decided to take the family along – introduce them to their heritage. When he got there they were all gathered under a large Dutch flag. He had second thoughts. They're all "ethnics", he thought. I'm not an ethnic – I'm Aussie. Come on", he said, as they left, "I've got a better idea".

In 2002, one of Australia's iconic companies came crashing down. "We didn't see it coming", said Paul. "But they did do some strange things. Old Reg must have turned in his grave". Too young to retire Paul had to find another job.

His official tasks as Doorman are to open and close up, direct people to the right part of the building and prevent functions in progress being interrupted. Unofficially he is a visitors' guide to the city. Lots of people see his red waistcoat and assume he is the man to ask. Happy to help, he points them in the right direction.



Paul Van Kalken

"What will you do when you retire?, I ask him. "I'll find something, don't worry about that." "Perhaps you could join U3A" . I might just do that", he said.

PF.

FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks, as usual, to all contributors. Deadline for next issue:

Feb 25, 2014.

Have a great finale to 2013.

Peter Flanigan