

Newsletter

Issue 2025

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From the President

Tyrl Houghton



Tyrl Houghton, President

U3A Network WA

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I was honoured to be reappointed the President of the U3A WA Network at our AGM via ZOOM on 13th August. Currently, President of Bunbury U3A, and passionate about enhancing the profile of U3A within our communities, I am delighted to work with our new members who join those who are continuing to share their expertise and time.

Catherine Baxter, relinquished Secretary to join the committee organising the 2026 Conference. Thank you, Catherine for an excellent job, guiding us as we revised our Rules as well as all the usual workload of any Secretary. Di Turner from Mandurah replacing Catherine is to be commended on her proficiency.

Val Jarrett-Crowe, our Treasurer from Armadale, has decided that Queensland beckons to enjoy sunshine and her family. Val has been invaluable re governance issues and providing excellent management of our funds. Di Turner has assumed that role. Thank you, Di.

Lyn Frings, happy to continue as our Network Newsletter editor, will welcome your contributions.

The Rules of our Association outline the way in which you elect representatives. All Network meetings, via Zoom aim to engage all groups, especially Geraldton, who previously found it difficult to have their voice heard because of the tyranny of distance. Communication within any organisation is always a challenge. I appeal to Presidents and Secretaries to distribute information provided by the Network. Your suggestions and feedback are welcome so that we can truly represent you. Contributing to our communities is vital; in our educational and social activities, and to advocate for those who have no voice.

Call out Elder Abuse, Elderspeak (when others speak as if you are not there), highlight lack of access to transport and affordable accommodation. Enjoying presentations, courses and activities, will ensure our senior years are happier and healthier.

Please plan to be in Perth, 14th and 15th September to attend the 2026 U3A Conference/Gathering hosted by U3A Perth. More details later.

Wishing you well as we prepare for the festive season.



U3A Network WA Inc.

<https://u3anetworkwa.org.au/contact-us/>





Editorial

*"As a U3A member, time passes so quickly
you cannot be bored"*

Unknown

I started this newsletter in November, 2024, having just finished the U3A Network WA Biennial State Conference, and I could fully attest to that saying above!! For 2 years, I definitely had NOT been bored. However, life then got in the way, my hubby had a major operation and the newsletter went on the back burner. His op was a success, so I TRIED again in March with another version, but factors beyond my control caused that one to be shelved. Here's my 3rd attempt, and I'm determined to finish this one, with or without stories from various groups and contributors!!

I began that first newsletter by reflecting on the huge commitment delegates made to come and join U3A Bunbury, (Conference hosts for 2024), and noted that the comments from the post Conference survey would definitely help the next Conference hosts in planning the 2026 event, with a plethora of information on who, what, why and where things were successful or not.

The camaraderie and fellowship that was generated at the 2024 Conference, much like the 2022 Armadale one, was very special, and I know I have formed special relationships with a large number of visitors from all over the State. We had representations from all the independent U3A's - Geraldton, Armadale, Mandurah, Bunbury, Busselton and Margaret River as well as a few from individual groups in the metropolitan area. We even had some representatives from our fledgling group in Donnybrook.

We had Generous Speakers; Melodious Bellringers; National U3A information; Artificial Intelligence and Yoga. We enjoyed tasty food and hearty conversations, and most of all a LOT of LAUGHTER. For those of you who missed the event, our talented U3A Film Crew captured the happenings, and you can see what eventuated on the U3A Network WA Website.

Last, but by no means least, it was all organised by a wonderful team of individuals who came together with not one cross word between them, to produce a very worthy event. To the great people who helped see it through to the success it was, THANK YOU, and

Editorial continued...

thank you to the delegates who came down, or up, to Bunbury to enjoy the fruits of our labour.

Now we have a new Conference committee who will be doing their bit to make the next one an event to remember, too, due on 14th & 15th September.

U3A Perth have decided to take the reins for our 2026 event. Further in the newsletter you will see a "Save the Date" post. Once you have your 2026 Diary, you will need to add the dates to ensure your presence at Anzac House - the venue for the event. Let's all wish them well with their plans.

Your next newsletter may look a bit different from past editions. Publisher has been the chosen programme to use, by several of your Editors. However, Microsoft have decided that they are going to retire that programme, so another one will have to be found that gives the same "freedom" that Publisher does. Stay tuned!!

As there will not be another publication this year, I wish everyone in our wonderful U3A "family", all the best for the Festive Season, (which is fast approaching), and a Safe and Healthy New Year. 2026 will be the Chinese Year of the Horse, which (I read), could be a year of *"High energy, adventure, ambition and freedom."* Let's hope this is a positive omen for all those people living in a land with conflict, famine and disaster. Always remember how lucky we are to live in this wide, brown land.

Editor, Lyn Frings

WA Network Committee for 2025/6

PRESIDENT: Tyril Houghton, Bunbury

V PRESIDENT: Liz Balding, Perth

SECRETARY: Di Turner, Mandurah

TREASURER: Di Turner, Mandurah

COMMITTEE: Ric Stacey, Bunbury

Julie Dignon, Margaret River

Denise Beer, U3A Perth

Pauline Rockley, Naturaliste

Pat McLeod, Geraldton

Web manager: Ric Stacey

Newsletter editor: Lyn Frings

Notices

Consistency using our U3A brand is important for recognition and presenting a professional image. Large format images of the brand without text can be downloaded from the Network website.

If you use your own local pic we do ask you to include an image of the 3-cell logo which comprises 3 equal squares and should not be stretched or distorted. You can have your own branded logo prepared by Network staff if required.



Further guidelines are at:

u3anetworkwa.org.au/about-us/branding-images/

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be after the Easter festivities which in 2026 will be April 3 - 6. Here we will be able to catch up on your programmes for 2026, so far.

So please think about your next contribution and careful choice of good quality photographs.

Lyn Frings.

DEADLINE: SUNDAY, APRIL 19th



Many of you would be familiar with the above Logo and what it means, with several of our U3A groups signing a Memorandum of Understanding to be part of this great enterprise.

Act Belong Commit is all about staying active, connected and having purpose – the simple things that keep us mentally healthy.

Community groups make a real difference to people's wellbeing. All your Board/Committee members try to make you part of this group so it is better for your mental wellbeing.

Taking part in activities or spending time with others in our U3A family can help you feel good, even although it can be a bit daunting at times. You can always follow the philosophy of "you'll never know if you don't give it a go!"

We can all help our wider communities by sharing our experiences with our friends who may be wanting to join a group of older people but don't have the courage to speak up and ask. Some of us are from the generation that were taught to be seen and not heard!! Now is the time to use your voice and encourage others to join U3A. When they do join, make them feel welcome, maybe allocate a member to be their helper until they find their feet.

With our long break coming up, maybe your New Years' Resolution could be to help someone gain better mental health by joining the U3A "family" and having fun?

Age doesn't make you forgetful. Having way too many stupid things to remember makes you forgetful!!



Why did the Scarecrow win an award?

Because he was 'out standing in his field'.

What do you call a fake noodle?

An im'pasta'.



Why don't skeletons fight each other?

Because they don't have the guts!!

Why can't your nose be 12 inches long?

Because then it would be a foot!!



Would you believe these all came from AI? Microsoft Copilot to be exact - and the AI voice laughed, too!

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

I'm not sure how many West Australian U3A'ers know the history of the U3A movement. Australia is part of the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE, or AIUTA for short, and their website www.aiu3a.org has some exciting reading - if you are interested. There are articles relating to various conferences and U3A organisations around the world, some of whom relate to the "French" way of running a U3A, some running as the UK version and even others who use a combination of the two or a different way to either. Regardless of the way they run their group, they are all there for the same reason = to help older people, who are no longer working full time, continue their journey of life long learning. Here is a snippet of a working paper, (also available at this site), talking about the comparisons of the two main versions.....

Toulouse University of Third Age (France). Toulouse University of the Third Age was founded in 1973 by Professor Pierre Vellas who was Professor of International Law at the Toulouse University of Social Sciences. It originally offered a course on gerontology within Toulouse Uni's Faculty of Social Sciences. The lectures were exclusively for pensioners. They focused on the expansion of memory and activities and actions to improve health and diet.



Building on the success of this course, Professor Vellas opened new courses such as gymnastics and languages. Toulouse University of the Third Age is a branch of Toulouse University (Social Sciences) and part of the Continuing Education Department.

The British model is based on local initiatives mainly registered as associations and NGOs with membership to a National or Regional Organisation. The British Third Age Trust (UK) is a Charitable Company Ltd by Guarantee incorporated and registered as a charity in 1983. It is managed by a National Executive Committee and consists of a chairman, 3 other officers and 12 representatives from the UK regions. The Third Age Trust is funded mainly by annual subscriptions from member U3As, with the occasional grant for specific projects. It has 7 full-time and 7 part-time staff. There are now 950 U3As in the UK and 350,000 senior members. Only the members of the Third Age Trust can use its registered logo. The Third Age Trust's mission is to:

- facilitate the growth of the U3A movement
- provide support for management and learning in U3As
- raise the profile of the U3A movement
- promote the benefits of learning in later life through self-help learning.

There is no law in the UK regulating senior education or lifelong learning. The British State has little involvement in the British U3A movement neither on the governmental or local level and U3As are mostly independent associations.

Australia started in Melbourne in 1984 as a result of a public meeting. All independent U3A's in Australia are incorporated NFP's, with some of them registered also as charities, and function with a governing Board or committee, some using speakers, some using courses and others using a combination of both. They are self-funded, voluntary associations with the critical features of self-determination and self-help principles, with their volunteers responsible for all the administration and tutoring of their individual group.

Interestingly, all these "versions" still have the one CORE mission:-

to continue to pursue life-long learning and advance health and mental well-being among its membership.

U3A DONNYBROOK

For more information about the Donnybrook Branch contact Maddie Smith on 0448 169 785.

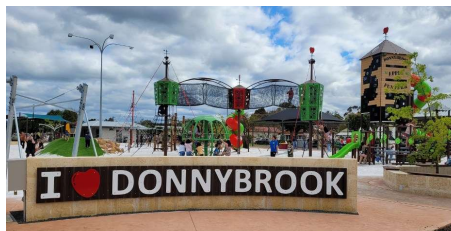
Their 2025 programme started in February with their first speaker being Chris Walsh, a retired teacher. Chris entertained the Donnybrook members with lots of stories about her time as an educator, originally as a teacher in Watheroo and many other rural schools, before retiring as a Principal from Maddington Primary School. Throughout that time she could recall many, many changes in the education system and how technology is now having a huge impact on the younger generation, and not always in a good day.

Maddie, their very capable coordinator took a short holiday to Vietnam, but managed to secure Speakers for March and April before she left. Some of their other speakers have included:

A return visit from Professor Brian de Garis in August. Brian was one of the speakers at the 2024 Conference and members of Donnybrook and Bunbury enjoy his talks on anything to do with Australian History. This time he was speaking about how the Commonwealth of Australia evolved.

September saw the group listening to Julia Smith about Dementia and other neurodegenerative disorders - very appropriate for our age cohort.

October also saw a return visit from another speaker, Tim Jones. Tim has previously talked about the Camino Trail that he had walked, and this time spoke about his time volunteering in a Camino hostel. Hostels on the trails are called "hospitaleros" and are dotted along the various Camino's throughout Europe, loosely based on youth hostels, where for a small donation travellers can rest up in a bed and enjoy basic facilities before continuing their pilgrimage. Tim and his wife "managed" one of these for two weeks earlier in the year, and met a multitude of nationalities travelling the route, and having an amazing experience.



We are all aware of the "texting" language used when sending messages on our phones. I came across this funny take on them with Seniors in mind.

BFF = Best Friend Fell

BTW = Bring The Wheelchair

OMG = Oh, My Gout!

LMDO = Laughing My Dentures Out

TTYL = Talk To You Louder

ROFLACGU = Rolling On Floor Laughing And Can't Get Up

Silly I know, but also a bit of a giggle!!



On a more serious note regarding technology, I found this article on the BBC website. ([bbb.com/news/articles/](http://bbc.com/news/articles/))

"Scammers using AI to lure shoppers to fake businesses."

8 October 2025 Alice Cullinane & Rebecca Woods, Birmingham"

It seems some AI foreign companies are using AI-made images to lure unsuspecting consumers to purchasing fake, mass-marketed and mass-shipped cheap clothing and jewellery.



Apparently, they are producing websites that contain AI-generated images of people who run businesses, in the UK, showing them smiling, often with a background showing their "products" and a credible story about their success as a business for "X" amount of years. This is then sometimes followed by a second story of woe and sadness - the wife has just had her husband die, the young woman has had a great company, started with her Mum, but things have gone haywire and she needs to sell her products fast and at a reduced rate. There are even stories of images of cobbled streets, Union Jacks and roses used to represent the British-ness of the site, when in reality the goods are being shipped from warehouses in and around Asia.

According to a Professor of Artificial Intelligence at the University of Birmingham, Mark Lee, the images of these "people" are literally *too* perfect and staged, to be real. Previously many of us could tell the images were obviously AI-generated, with little tell-tale signs like too many fingers on a hand, or the hand itself not in a normal pose, but it is getting harder to observe mistakes as AI gets better.

Birmingham, in the UK, has an area called the Jewellery Quarter, and businesses there are saying these sorts of scams are damaging their reputations and hard work. Other customers that have purchased clothes from these scammers, have had a hard time returning the often poor quality products, with the address of returns going to a Hong Kong address, but not before they demand more money for the product to be accepted for return.

So, as always when shopping online, remember "Shopper Beware" and "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!" We should always check reviews online to see how others have found the "so-called" company product and services to be. It's also worth checking where the company is based - terms and conditions pages can often reveal this. Also right down the bottom of the webpage most legitimate companies will often put their addresses. Prof Lee also suggested to look for images of the "person" in different settings with different backgrounds and see if you can recognise real, identifiable places.

AI is becoming better all the time and we need to be aware of this and be as diligent as possible with our "hard-earned" finances.



Here's a sweet poem to lighten the mood somewhat.....

Recipe For Life by John Davison

Take a large bowl and mankind as a whole, pour in one ocean of love.
Sprinkle with reason and compassion to season, and fairness mixed with the above.

Over honesty's fire, stir all you desire, add one cargo of smiles.
Blend urges to roam with comforts of home, and one dose of trouble free smiles.

Fireside chats with sweet bric-a-brac's, one measure of tolerance for others.
The warmth of a hand, grit for earth's sand, and happiness too for all brothers.

Blend courage and breath to face up to death, for life brews tragedy's care.
As it works and ferments appear arguments, misery too is there.

Yes, stir it all in, even hatred and sin, for to the surface all evilness comes.
Take the good knife and scrape off the strife, and remove all poisonous scums.

For to make life complete mix sour with sweet, some blends can often be void.
But should the mixture be right life can be quite, a dish to be really enjoyed.



NATURALISTE U3A NEWS

TOPICAL TALK AT THE AGM 2024 by JOHN SLEE

John Slee is the grandson of Edwin Rose (1863-1948) who, for a time, managed Quanbun Station, a pastoral lease and cattle station located about 40 kilometres southwest of Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley region which was established at some point prior to 1887. John is, therefore, very interested in the Kimberley's and also about the fate of the local Aborigines after European settlement.



Quanbun Station (Edwin Rose on the left) c 1900 "No screws, no nails, no roofing iron, no nothing."

In 1895 a police party led by Inspector Bill Lawrence was sent, with the approval of the government in Perth, to the West Kimberley in the remote north of WA to "disperse" the Aborigines. This particular story of the shooting of 49 Aborigines was kept under wraps for years. When in about 1991 John found (in Battye Library thanks to librarian Ann Archer) Inspector William Lawrence's report of the journey up the Fitzroy River and was astonished at how it had been kept. It was 15 pages, loosely wrapped in a piece of cloth or canvas. The pages were not even clipped together and when John read through them they were not even in numerical order. It had obviously not even been catalogued; just swept under the carpet. To his knowledge nobody had ever written about this until in 2016 when WA historian Chris Owen referred briefly to it in his brilliant historical book about policing the Kimberley Frontier of WA — *Every Mother's Son Is Guilty: Policing the Kimberley Frontier of Western Australia 1882-1905*.

It was Owen who revealed evidence in a police report in 1893 of a Sergeant Lavery who was disciplined for his failure to shoot natives on an "expedition to disperse natives on King River" thus "defeating the purpose of the trip." Lavery said he "could not shoot a nigger in cold blood" in spite of orders to do so.

We were well-entertained by the historical records and discussion around the topic of the fate of Aborigines in WA. We salute John for his journalistic endeavour over around 30 years. An enquiring mind led to this astonishing find and to our good fortune when John offered to tell us his story of Murders in the Kimberley.

Colleen Liston. President

NATURALISTE U3A NEWS Cont.....

Naturaliste U3A October Report

Naturaliste U3A held their AGM on 15th October with 62 members in attendance as well as four community guests. Current committee members were re-elected, and our secretary position is still vacant. We will work together to see how this can be managed until the position is filled. A showcase of some current courses as well as new ones was presented and proved to be of great interest to all present. Our Drama group presented a short skit which provided many positive laughs from the audience.



Mahjong group demonstrated how this is played,

and our Wildflower Warrior presented his knowledge and skills.

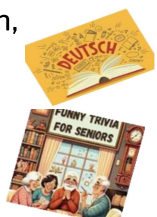


NEW COURSES TO BE OFFERED INCLUDE

Conversation German,

and

Let's Get Quizzical.



Spanish Guitar for Beginners

An updated Writing and Publishing course "Everyone has a story" and other yet unnamed courses are also being worked on.

Many of our current courses are finishing up in the next weeks for the end of the year, with most of these continuing in 2026. We currently have 179 members and with the new courses we hope to attract new members.

In November, Professor Alexey Muraviev will once again be talking to us. This will be the third time this year he has provided us with thought provoking information and discussion. This Topical Talk has been advertised as an Event on Facebook to attract not only members but community guests, too.

The talk will address:

THE WAR IN UKRAINE, RUSSIA-NATO STANDOFF IN THE BALTICS

The unfinished business of World War Two or a prelude to a new major war?

This year marks the 80th anniversary of two pivotal events in modern history - the end of WW2 and the beginning of the UN. From the ashes of the worlds' deadliest conflict, the UN represented a collective hope for peace, security and international cooperation, including on the European front. Eight decades on and Europe is again facing an array of risks from rising authoritarianism, geopolitical instability, technological transformation and environmental crises, to the shifting balance of global power and a major war. Did WW2 really end?

Dr Alexey D. Muraviev is Associate Professor of National Security and Strategic Studies at Curtin University in Perth. His research interests include problems of modern maritime power; contemporary defence and strategic policy; Russia as a Pacific power among many more themes. He is the author of many publications as well as a member of many defence-related boards and studies.

Pauline Marsh



The great participation from members in setting up, presenting, organising, and teas, as well as attending presentations and outings is what makes our group exceptional.

Becoming more and more popular in Mandurah are the

Discussion Groups run by Anne McGladdery. Everything from "What were you doing when you were 23" and "Christmases past and present" We get to learn so much about other members' lives, and experiences. Also becoming popular are our Games Days - introducing members to new games and recalling those they haven't played for a long time.

Twice a week, on a Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, Mandurah U3A members always learn something interesting and are sometimes reminded of things they have forgotten, but a very important part of our group is Socialising! Our once-a-month Coffee mornings are always well attended.



Around a 1/4 of our membership regularly attend meetings/presentations, with most of our presenters sourced from our membership. There are a couple of new presentations coming up, and we're always looking for new and different subjects or activities to encourage more participation.

Di Turner, U3A Mandurah



U3A Online

A Virtual University of the third Age

Web: www.u3aonline.org.au

Email: enquiries@u3aonline.org.au

21st CENTURY LEARNING FOR OLDER PEOPLE

EXERCISE YOUR MIND AND LEARN AT YOUR LEISURE

U3A Online is the world first virtual U3A that offers short online courses and many other useful resources for people who are geographically, physically or socially isolated.

U3A Online Offers:

	WIDE RANGE OF SHORT COURSES
	MEET OTHERS LIKE YOU ONLINE
	NO EXAMS
	MINIMAL YEARLY COST
	LOTS OF HELPFUL RESOURCES
NO PREREQUISITE REQUIRED	

What Courses are there?

Topics vary from time to time but the range is constantly growing and being updated. Visit the website www.u3aonline.org.au for the current list of available courses.

Membership

Once you are a member you have full access to courses, information and assistance. Membership is a minimal yearly cost and allows you to enrol in as many courses as you wish throughout the year as Independent Study.

If you want to do a course with a Leader (certain courses only) you need to pay an additional small fee for that particular course.

Organisation Membership is also available which enables an organisation to enrol in a course, print the notes and copy them for face to face teaching within their organisation. For more information about this option please contact U3A Online via enquiries@u3aonline.org.au

The Members' Lounge is an area where members can participate in general Discussion, play games, vote in polls and socialise with other members online.

Management

U3A Online is an incorporated association run by an elected Committee of Management and everyone is a volunteer.



The U3A Online move to U3A Australia Ltd. site has been completed, although not without a few problems, especially with transferring their data. It took about 10 years to refine their previous website, but the refinements to this current site should not take that long. Most of the courses have been loaded on to the new website and although they may look different they remain the same. Their list isn't in alphabetical order, but they are working on that. There is now a video on the site to help members with navigation and also documents if you would like more help.

The site is more modern and has a lot more to offer than the old one. If you are having some troubles you can either email them through the contact tab or request assistance by clicking on their Help button. Member Wizard was developed, designed and is supported within Australia and can also be tailored to fit different needs. The Classes module was developed specifically for U3A and it allows branches to create classes there, which are automatically displayed on their website allowing students to pay and enrol in the course. It's great to see more flexibility for such an important part of the U3A overall experience. Well done, team.



U3A BUNBURY

After all the “buzz” of the WA Network State Conference, we settled back to our regular programme of speakers in November 2024, before the December-January break.

One of the last speakers we were privileged to hear was Dr Phil Smith, who came and gave us an insight into the Australian Doctors for Africa, (ADFA) which is a not-for-profit medical organisation with its HQ in Perth, although Phil is one of our retired Southwest specialists. Their mission is a commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable communities in East Africa, predominately in the regions of Madagascar, Ethiopia, Somaliland, and Zimbabwe.

Madagascar has a diverse history, influenced by early Indonesian settlers and later by traders from Arabia, England, and India. The French colonisation began in 1883, but Madagascar gained independence in 1958. Their population is approximately 32 million, with a significant Christian majority but also working alongside traditional pagan beliefs.

Healthcare and infrastructure are limited, with only 3.5% of the population being over 65 years old. This is due to their lack of proper healthcare. Madagascar's GDP in 2015 was \$10 billion, with 70% of the population living below the national poverty line, surviving on the equivalent of \$1.00 per day. While the central highlands are agriculturally rich, the western lowlands are sandy and rely on ocean resources. Most imports are brought in by boat, with small barges travelling out to pick up the goods.

Australian Doctors for Africa is an volunteer charity providing medical aid and skills training to countries like Madagascar. Phil worked out of Toliara which is probably the poorest part of the island. People mostly walk to get to healthcare and the illnesses can be as varied as possible. Phil was an Anaesthetist and found it tricky training people. In Australia it takes many years of medical school, training and then more medical school to be an anaesthetest. He had to be careful not to overwhelm nurse anesthetists with too much information, as well as not donate too complex a machine, because when he left, there was no-one to service the machine. Other focus areas are orthopaedics, clubfoot, gastroenterology, urology, gynaecology/obstetrics, ENT, and paediatric surgery.

Clubfoot affects 1-2 babies per 1,000 births globally and if untreated can lead to lifelong disability. Imagine a 17 yr old not being able to provide for his family because of this disability, when it is quite curable. The Ponseti method is still the most accepted treatment, using sequential splinting and bracing and if applied soon after birth, the foot is usually healed within 3 months. Cultural beliefs in Madagascar attributed clubfoot to incest, preventing people from seeking treatment.



Following Phil's lead, Cassie, a medical student, (and also Phil's daughter), conducted ethnographic research on clubfoot in Madagascar. Her team created education programs to encourage treatment without confronting the Malagasy cultural views. The Australian Orthopaedic for Africa programme was established, with clinics in Bunbury and Perth at St. John's and education efforts included posters and comic-style materials to inform and reassure the community.

This model has been very successful and is now used in other parts of Madagascar. Cassie has given talks at World Health Organisation meetings about how it all happened, which is a great achievement for her, and Phil was very proud to have supported it.



It seems a life-time ago now, scrambling to make sure all delegates who attended were going to have a great conference, but there were so many happy faces that I feel we need to see as many of them as possible. Below are most of our speakers that informed us on a variety of subjects.



Delegates from U3A Donnybrook and our Keynote Speaker, Keith Bradby, O.A.M., who gave a fascinating insight into the workings of this world heritage area, and the hardworking groups that are making inroads into the preservation of the Gondwana Link.



Keith Bradby, O.A.M. and his talk on the Gondwana Link, possibly the most bio-diverse area in the world



Professor Brian de Garis, who presented on History, Myth and Memory, with Jennie, one of our hardworking conference committee, who thanked him for his talk.



The very talented Brookhampton Bellringers. They were a joy to listen to, and even had the CEO of our venue, Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre, taking time off her busy schedule to listen to them.

They are a unique group of tintinnabulating (don't you just love that word?) musicians who perform throughout WA bringing the pleasure of beautiful handbell music to everyone. Also one of a very few teams in the WORLD who play in the "off the table" method of bellringing and have been continuous in their playing for over 100 years with descendants of the original players also now playing.



Professor Cobie Rudd, Vice Chancellor of ECU Bunbury, with U3A Network & Bunbury President, Tyril Houghton.



Daryl Francis, our AI expert who gave an insightful talk on the future using this medium. Ric our U3A Bunbury & Network "techie", and one of the organising committee, thanking him for his time.





Friday's Speakers:



The very versatile Rodney Glossop, from the Act Belong Commit, Mentally Healthy Programme. He spoke to us about the programme and how U3A members can benefit from belonging to it. U3A Bunbury is a partner with this, as we feel we are able to gain so much from the various campaigns that Act Belong Commit present.



Graham Houghton with Maureen Bowden, both from U3A Bunbury. Graham was also one of our excellent speakers



Nicky Smith with Fiona Smith - no relation! Nicky took us through some gentle Yoga exercises after explaining about the yoga she teaches. Very helpful



U3A Speakers & Margaret River members, Bill and Jenny Bunbury, who related thoughts on the spoken word, listening and learning. Here they are with John Frings from U3A Bunbury



More smiling faces at the conference.



For those members not aware, these lovely photos were taken by our U3A Film Crew, and if you want to hear the speakers from the conference, you can visit the U3A Film Crew YouTube channel or the U3A Network website. Many thanks to them all for a job well done!

This is a report originally sent in for the earlier Newsletter, but I thought it was still a good idea to print it here to illustrate how although we all belong to the U3A “family”, we can start from different beginnings.



Report from branch Cambridge

A meeting of interested parties was convened at the Ocean Gardens Village in December 2023 to discuss the prospect of starting a new branch of U3A Perth in Cambridge. The branch would serve to fill the gap in representation between Western Suburbs and North Coast (Hamersley) and hopefully attract support from people living in City Beach, Wembley, Wembley Downs and neighbouring suburbs.

About sixty people attended the meeting and out of this a decision was made to start as a Sub-branch of U3A Western Suburbs. A Steering Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Jim Barns. Other members were Bill Richardson (Program Coordinator), Lindsay Stewart, Howard Rosario, Peter Farr (Western Suburbs) and Judith Amey (Council). The management team at Ocean Gardens offered as much support as we required at the beginning, and this has

proved to be the case since.

We had one speaker at our first two meetings (February and March) and two speakers thereafter. There were 138 attendees at our first meeting, largely due to the popularity of speaker Eric McCrum (The Bird Man) and support from other U3A branches. We averaged 62 -70 members and visitors throughout the year.

Cambridge now has 75 members, about 60% being residents of the Retirement Village. We appear to have struck the right blend in our monthly speakers as there appears to be little or no loss of attendees after afternoon tea which is served between speakers.

Our Speaking program has been supported by an entry in the local newspaper, the Post, and a wide distribution of our speakers' flyer through social media. It says volumes for the U3A brand that we have had little problem in attracting quality speakers.

Thanks are due to all members of our committee. Special thanks go to Bill Richardson (Program Coordinator), Peter Farr (Western Suburbs) and Judith Amey (Council), and Meg Roche and her afternoon tea helpers -- also, to Ian Dang and Ivan Ward for their excellent management of all things audio-visual. Nothing can damage a meeting more than problems with audio-visual equipment.

What of the future? Jim Barns has stepped aside as Chairperson and will be replaced by Bill Richardson. We have a Membership Committee but still need a Treasurer. Hopefully we will find one soon. Until then we will remain a Sub-branch of Western Suburbs.

Jim Barns – with help from Bill Richardson

Jim has been a long-standing member of U3A with prior membership in U3A Mandurah & U3A Perth Nth Coast branch.

So good to see another U3A Perth branch forward an article, and what an interesting start to a new branch. We hope you continue to contribute to the Network Newsletter. With that large a membership, there shouldn't be any trouble sourcing speakers, that's for sure.Ed

Nigel (Ridgway) President U3A Perth



"As President of U3A Perth, I have seen first hand how much work goes into our Council for the enjoyment and learning opportunities for our members.

With 12 city branches and 8 country branches now - we have a strong representation amongst seniors and retirees. However, we mustn't be complacent as we need to attract new membership from the generation coming up after us.

There are many senior volunteer organisations in WA and all are vying for members! We do have something unique to offer as we, "Learn, Laugh and Live!" What with musical concerts, great seminars and lectures in the city - plus the huge variety of speakers at the different branches and all the other activities on offer, U3A is pretty special.

Next year, it'll be our 40th anniversary and the planned conference and gathering will be another opportunity for country and city members to mingle and socialise at a wonderful venue in Perth City.

Judith Amey and her team are working hard to make this a success. Anzac House can, unfortunately, only cater for 200 so we have to determine how places will be allocated so that we have representatives from each of the country and city branches.

Lots to look forward to - so pass the word about U3A around!"

Regards, Nige 0419 921 131

Save The Date

*Hear Ye, Hear Ye,
You are requested for
"The Gathering"
U3A WA Network Conference
15 & 16 September 2026*

STAY TUNED FOR MORE NEWS....

U3A GERALDTON

Two WA Lone Trefoil Guild members crossing paths at the conference.



This is the camaraderie of our wonderful U3A organisation in practice. Denise (left) is a member of U3A Bunbury, and Pat is the joint Secretary of U3A Geraldton. However, they are also both WA Lone Trefoil Guild members. For those of you who do not know what the Lone Trefoil Guild is, it is a group of past Guide Leaders who meet a number of times during the year, to hear speakers and generally network with each other.

How fitting that they should both be U3A members, too! Pat combined a visit to her son, and a cricket match or two when she joined us for the conference.

We are a small branch with 14 members meeting twice a month on a Tuesday afternoon. There is a U3A Book club which meets once a month, and on months where there is an extra Tuesday, we meet for a coffee afternoon. The programme for our sessions are planned on with members given the opportunity to suggest topics. These are then researched by all members and presented to the group. As the topics are not prescriptive, it is left to the individual to decide what



or who they research. It is interesting to see how many different angles and ideas are brought to the session. Rarely is there any duplicating. Recently we had the topics of US Presidents, UK Prime Ministers and Australian Prime Ministers covering 3 sessions. We commence our meetings with a quiz which may be general or on that day's topic.

We are fortunate to have a member who has expertise in the fields of Singing and Drama and we have had a session where we learnt the basics of singing and harmonising while singing songs we had chosen. Another session was devoted to Drama where we each took a character in a short play and read out parts as instructed. Both sessions were very enjoyable and informative.

In October we had Ranger Dan, one of our City Rangers, speak to us, with information on local rules for domestic pet ownership. He also included other aspects of his job as a City Ranger. See the above photo. In November, we will be having our Commonwealth Bank Manager to talk about Staying Safe on Line.

We will be having our end of year Christmas lunch early in December and resume our meetings on the first Tuesday in February 2026.

Contact the U3A Geraldton secretary, Pat on 0437 703 730



BUNBURY U3A - October 2025

The Bunbury branch has enjoyed an active 2025 programme of formal presentations, community engagement activities, informal “Topical Talking” sessions and new online activities.

Formal presentations (see full details at www.u3abunbury.org)

The 2025 programme commenced in February, consisting of fortnightly meetings based on presentations by invited speakers on a wide variety of topics. Presenters are community members or U3A members who address the members for a 40-60 min presentation followed by discussion, at the SW campus of ECU.

A wide range of topics were covered, this year, including the work of Medecins San Frontieres;

Rebuilding a Well and Cairn on the Canning Stock Route;

an explanation of a Tag-Along Tour concept;

an explanation of Pandemics and when we can expect the next one; keeping cyber-safe while travelling;

a NASA camp experience;

a history of Portraiture;

Life on a Yacht for 12 years;

how to write a life story; Biodiversity and volunteering and wildlife management in Africa.

November concludes our year with a talk on Advance Health Planning and a visit to the Maternity teaching room at ECU, followed by our Christmas break-up luncheon.



In addition to the meetings held at ECU, we had outings to the Moorabinda Croquet Club to learn and play croquet; a visit to a new concept in Eaton, called the Mick Bennet Make-It-Space and a river walk along the Preston River in Donnybrook followed by lunch at the Hotel.



Topical Talking

These are informal meetings held fortnightly on a Tuesday, where the attendees meet at the Bunbury Library. There is no agenda for these meetings, except to discuss and explore topics raised by the participants on the day.

New Initiatives

A number of members have trialed an online programme on the theme of Short Stories. They met at a members house and discussed the range of stories provided by the U3A Online course. All participants agrees it was a great experience, and decided to explore some more options for the 2026 season.

Ric Stacey, U3A Bunbury Delegate to U3A WA Network, October 29, 2025.

National News

Have you heard about the Canberra Tuesday Forums via Zoom? Something you can plan for next year

Forums have a "current affairs" focus covering local events, politics, science, the environment & international events.

Sessions are held via **Zoom** commencing on Tuesdays at 12:30 pm and run from March to early June and from mid-July to November.

There are two registration options:

Pre-register for all talks during the year and you will automatically be sent Zoom login details each week

Register on a weekly basis for the Forums which interest you. Registration will open in the week preceding the talk and the details are advertised with each Forum.



Register at:

forums@u3acanberra.org.au



Online courses, activities and events that can be enjoyed from wherever you are.

Some Network Victoria courses are available to anyone of retirement age, although some are open only to people who are already a member of a U3A. In Victoria.

Bookmark this page to find out about more

Online Activities — U3A Network Victoria (u3avictoria.org.au)

Future courses on digital inclusion organised by nbn Co will be accessible via the U3A Australia website so check out

<https://u3aaustralia.org.au/>

As a Network member your U3A group can enjoy business pricing at



Officeworks.

Further information on the U3A Australia website at:

<https://u3aaustralia.org.au/officeworks-u3a-australia-buying-group/>

Links for other newsletters

National Alliance News: <https://u3aaa.org/news-bulletins/>

Victoria Network News: <https://u3avictoria.org.au/publications>

NSW Network News :<https://nsw.u3anet.org.au/newsletter/>

Queensland Network News:
<https://u3aqld.au/network-queensland-newsletters/>

International U3A website: <https://www.aiu3a.org>