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Issue No. 22

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# NEWSLETTER

## HAPPY EASTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT .....

*Whittlesea U3A  
Motto:*

*"Sharing  
of skills and  
knowledge"*

The month of March 2017 is very significant in the history of Whittlesea U3A. It is the 15th. anniversary offering classes and activities to its members. The first being presented in March 2002. It is even more pleasing to note that of the original members who joined in 2002 there are still 19 who are members today and of the 19 there are 11 members who have been members continuously since 2002.



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The 11 members are: **Mary Renshaw (member no 1 and a Life Member), Patricia Domigan, Beryl Clarke (Past President & Life Member), Don Clarke, Maureen Hawken, Brendan Gorely (Past President & Life Member), Helen Campbell (Life Member), Sonja Sherer, Bet Pearce, Frank Pearce and Theresa Zammit.** At the March member's morning tea, these members were acknowledged by the 115 members present.

I am also pleased to confirm that the City of Whittlesea Positive Aging, Aged and Disability Unit has been allocated funding under the "Strengthening seniors' inclusion and participation in local community's project" and Whittlesea U3A is participating in the project as a support local organisation. This gives Whittlesea U3A a voice in the project which is focused on identifying seniors in our community experiencing social isolation and loneliness. The project is a twelve-month project which includes the development of and improved utilization of community resources and engagement tools to enhance the age friendliness of organisations in the City of Whittlesea while improving the participation opportunities for older people

A very good example of Whittlesea U3A partnering with other organisations is the close working relationship it has with the Yarra Plenty Regional Library network (YPRL). The YPRL has invited members of Whittlesea U3A to participate in monthly Chess Master Classes. These classes are excellent for members who have played Chess in the past and are interested in playing again to exercise their minds. The Chess Master Class leaders and participants are pleased to teach the finer points of playing Chess to Whittlesea U3A Chess Class members. You can participate by joining the Chess Class on Tuesday mornings at Mill Park Lakes meeting rooms.



Printed by Hon. Andrew Giles

## From the President (continued)

For members who have found that their iPHONE or iPAD is replacing their camera and have found features on the devices that you are having difficulty using we have good news!!! We have been able to secure the services of a Tutor and two support members to lead an Apple iPHONE class which will commence in second term. The class will be a self-help class where the Tutor will respond to problems members are experiencing and will provide members with the opportunity to share their knowledge of iPHONE features.

In closing Whittlesea U3A has strengthened its relations with providers of resources and facilities to enable us to expand the classes and activities offered to members. On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank all members for their enthusiastic participation in the classes and activities we offer.

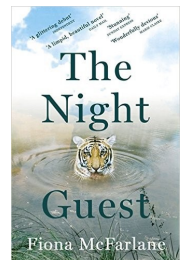
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***Apologies from the editor. In the January edition, I mentioned Lillian Madden was taking the Friday line dancing. This is incorrect. Tita Kolonis is the tutor for line dancing on Friday morning.***

This is a book review written by Brenda Gorley who leads the Book Discussion group every 3rd Wednesday of the month.

*A mesmerizing first novel about trust, dependence, and fear, from a major new writer.*

### THE NIGHT GUEST by FIONA McFARLANE



I found this book totally absorbing in spite of the fact one could easily visualise the final outcome very early on. It didn't detract from my enjoyment. In fact I was so taken by her writing that I needed to know how things progressed to this end.

Ruth, a woman in her seventies on the cusp of dementia, wakes up one day thinking a tiger is in her room. She lives alone with two cats, her husband is dead and her two sons live overseas. Suddenly she feels vulnerable. It must be a dream, but maybe not. Later that day, Frida walks along the beach behind Ruth's house and introduces herself as a Carer for Ruth, sent by the local Council for one hour per day and assessment of her needs.

Gradually she ingratiates herself into Ruth's life, initially being very helpful and caring, but soon starts manipulating her mind by adjusting her pills and sapping her confidence insinuating she is really losing her ability to function independently.

Ruth tries to maintain a normal life, making contact with Richard, a man she knew in Fiji when she was a teenager. He visits and they have a romantic interlude but Frida,

unknown to Ruth, intervenes, obviously to protect her own plans. It is through Richard that Ruth finds out Frida has actually moved into her house without her knowledge or permission.

One can visualise Ruth's confusion. Is she losing her mind? Is she being duped by Frida? Is the tiger real or is it a dream that she vaguely recalls on waking? In the space of a short time her confidence is eroded, but she feels powerless to alter the situation.

The author conveys the confusion of Ruth so well, going from fact to imaginings that you never quite know what to believe yourself.

Frida's plans backfire in the end, but I won't spoil the ending by revealing the final outcome.

The scenario is one played out too often in real life – taking advantage of someone when they have no family nearby to safeguard their interests. So many families are scattered about the world these days and however well-meaning ones children are, they can't be on hand all the time.

We would like to invite and encourage members to contribute to the newsletter. It may be a story about your arrival or experiences in Australia, your childhood memories, a bit of trivia or some jokes. Please don't feel shy. Here is a story from one of our members.

### **"Australia 1973"**

I have been a member of U3A for over six years now and presently enjoy attending Canasta, Exercise and Line Dancing classes as well as the occasional Sunday Breakfast.

I am from a small village near Barcelona which is the capital of the province of Catalonia in Spain. The language spoken in Catalonia by 7.5 million people is Catalan, which is one of the four languages spoken in Spain: Galician, Basque and Spanish being the official language. Catalonia lost its Independence 300 years ago and is currently in the process of regaining it despite the opposition from the Spanish government who is not allowing to hold a legal Referendum citing to be unconstitutional.

My schooling was done in the Spanish language, as at the time Spain was under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco therefore making me bilingual (three, if you count English) plus a bit of French and Italian.

It was a very hot day in January 1973 when I arrived in Melbourne with my Australian husband whom I met the summer of 1971 during my holiday in Italy. We married in London on 28th July 1972 after writing to each other for almost a year and lived in London for 6 months before coming to Australia to live.

The beginnings of my Australian life were very difficult particularly because of the language barrier as my knowledge of English was very poor, actually almost none existent. I found it very difficult to adjust to the different culture, the food and change of hours with meals and shopping as they were very different to what I was accustomed to in Barcelona. One could go to the City on a Sunday and find it completely deserted as the shops were not open, hence Ava Gardner's famous words "*Melbourne is the ideal city to film the end of the World*" as the title of the film she was filming at the time in Melbourne was called "The end of the World".

After three weeks of my arrival I commenced a 3 month full time English course and it was there where I discovered how Melbourne can have 4 seasons of the year in one single day. On getting ready for the class on a cold 12 degrees February morning, I wore a thick high neck woollen jumper only to find out that at lunch time the temperature had risen to 40 degrees and wanted to rip the jumper off me, and there was no air conditioner in the portable classroom installed on the rooftop of the RMIT in the City.

I worked the first two years at

Bourke ACTU (The Union store), where despite my lack of English I was promoted to Credit Manager. I left that job in 1975 when my daughter Kirsten was born but my marriage ended up in divorce after 7 years. I remarried a German 25 years ago, hence my German surname.

After 13 years in Australia I had not met any Catalonian and as I was not able to practice my Catalan language, I had the idea to organize a Picnic in order to reunite the Catalan community in Melbourne.

I investigated some names and phone numbers and bit by bit one person gave me the phone of another and after a few phone calls plus an advertisement I inserted in a newspaper I waited impatiently for the date of the Picnic. As the weather bureau forecasted storms and hail for that day, I reluctantly made my way to the Park with the sensation that nobody would turn up .... What to my surprise when on arriving to the Park there were people waiting already.

The picnic was well attended and a Catalan Club was formed, in which as well as being the Founder I held the positions of Secretary, President and Treasurer, and the Club is still going after 30 years.

Nowdays, not only I am able to practice my Catalan language in the Catalan Club but also via Skype with my family in Catalonia. I also practice Spanish (my second language) with the Spanish Speaking

Ladies group I attend to every Thursday in Epping.

On 11th January 2017 I celebrated 44 years of my arrival in Australia.

Montserrat Becker



### Catalonia



This is a region in NE Spain that includes the modern provinces of Barcelona, Lerida, Gerona, and Tarragona. Settled by Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans, it was occupied by Goths in the fifth century A.D. and fell to the Moors in 712. Charlemagne conquered Catalonia in 795, and it became an independent Frankish duchy in the ninth century with its capital at Barcelona. The nationalist movement has become a force in both Catalanian and Spanish national elections. United with Aragon in 1137, it held territory N of the

Pyrenees in the 13th and 14th centuries and enjoyed a monopoly of trade in the western Mediterranean.

Catalonia's importance declined following the unification of Spain under Castile in 1469. A separatist movement broke out in the 17th century when Catalonia engaged the protection of the French king Louis XIII, but the region was completely subjugated by Spain under Philip V in 1714. Separatist movements continued to flourish in the 19th century, however, and a Catalan republic was proclaimed in 1931. This was suppressed after Francisco Franco's victory in the Spanish civil war, and Catalonia then became the center of opposition to Franco's regime. After the adoption of a democratic constitution in Spain in 1978, Catalonia recovered its autonomous status in 1980 with the election of its first parliament.

**Anyone for chess?** We have vacancies for our chess class on Tuesdays.

Checkmate happens when the king is in a position to be captured (in check) and cannot escape from capture.

*"It's not as hard to play",* says tutor Nellie Edmonds. *"It's more fun than you realise".*

Nellie is very passionate about the game and is a very patient and capable teacher. Come in out of the cold (or heat) and join in the fun.

**Snooker** is a game played with cues on a billiard table in which the players use a cue ball (white) to pocket the other balls (fifteen red and six coloured) in a set order. This game is on Tuesdays as well and we're looking for participants.

The next newsletter will be issued in June 2017. The cut-off date for the newsletter is 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017

If you have a contribution inclusion or article please email to;

**Term 2-**

**18th April—30th June 2017**



## **PROGRAM COORDINATOR ~ MARCH 2017**

We have settled in for the year and already 1st Term is nearly over.

This Term finishes on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Second Term resumes on Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Some classes are on during school holidays.

Individual Tutors will advise their class of availability.

At the moment nearly everyone got the classes of their choice. A lot of our classes are full (especially our computer classes) however majority of our classes have still some vacancies.

We are having a new computer class for Beginners in Lalor Library every 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 3.00pm - 5.00pm. If anyone likes to join, please feel free to give us a call on 94641339 and we will be more than happy to help you out.

We are planning to start new classes on Public Speaking and how to use our Smart phones, so we are looking for expressions of interest for anyone that would be interested in enrolling.

I would like to dedicate this Newsletter to all our VOLUNTEERS who play a major role of keeping U3A alive. Without all of our tutors/leaders and helpers we wouldn't have been able to operate.

A Big thank you to all our Volunteer Tutors, Leaders and Helpers who all are doing such a wonderful job giving their time and skills in running the various courses and activities which make U3A what it is.

Each and every one of you in your own way play a very significant role in helping U3A members socialize, learn and actively participate with everything we can offer. Thank you all for the invaluable work that you do!!

All our tutors and leaders are volunteers and they offer their knowledge, patience and expertise to assist Whittlesea U3A to provide such a variety of classes. Most of those people are not trained teachers but peer educators with a skill or an interesting hobby to share with all of us. They continually volunteer many thousands of unpaid hours of their time in the interest of helping others. They run some 89 classes and activities for all of us to enjoy.

We are always on the lookout for additional Tutors and Leaders with new skills to start up new classes in order to widen our curriculum and to broaden our appeal.

If anyone is interesting to help out we welcome all offers and skills. At the moment we are having a request for a Guitar Tutor.

Please contact me on 9466 1339 every Tuesday from 12.00pm-4.00pm and every Thursday from 10.00am-4.00pm to discuss anything of interest.

Regards

Afroditi Toso

Whittlesea U3A

Program Co-Ordinator

## **WHAT'S ON**



**SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017**  
***Get your dancing shoes on and join in the fun***  
**WHITTLESEA U3A MID-YEAR EVENT**  
**ROCK & ROLL & KARAOKE**  
**AT EPPING MEMORIAL HALL**  
**827 HIGH STREET EPPING**  
**TIME: - 11.30 AM – 4.00 PM**  
**DJ: MOBYDISC**



All Tickets: \$25.00 p/p

(Includes spit roast lunch & non-alcoholic drinks. BYO alcohol)

Bookings are open to the first 200 people

Contact Dianne Germaine: 9436 9174 or [gdgermaine@bigpond.com](mailto:gdgermaine@bigpond.com)

Payments: - cheque made out to Whittlesea U3A Inc or cash to Treasurer Margaret Mitten.

All payments must be finalised by May Morning Tea (1<sup>st</sup> May)

Cancellations are to be notified by Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May and money can be refunded.

- ♦ Morning Tea at Epping Memorial Hall **3rd April 2017** - 10.00 am - 11.30 am.

Come & greet old friends & meet new ones.



## Easter traditions around the world



Can you believe Easter is almost upon us?

Where has the beginning of 2017 gone, didn't we just have Christmas?!

All around Australia kids are getting excited about Easter Egg hunts, participating in their schools Easter bonnet parade or attending the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

For us Aussies, Easter is also the first school holidays since the Christmas break and a time we like to travel and getaway over the long weekend with our families and enjoy the last warm days before winter arrives.

While this may be the norm in Australia, Easter is celebrated around the world in a surprising variety of ways, with traditions differing from country to country according to their ethnic and cultural origins.

### Hungary

"Sprinkling" is a popular Hungarian Easter Monday tradition, in which boys playfully sprinkle perfume, cologne or water over a young women's head, and ask for a kiss.

People used to believe that water had a cleaning, healing and fertility-inducing effect.

### France

In the town of Haux, a giant omelet made with 4,500 eggs that feeds 1,000 people is served up in the town's main square. The story goes, when Napoleon and his army were traveling through the south of France, they stopped in a small town and ate omelets.

Napoleon liked his so much that he ordered the townspeople to gather their eggs and make a giant omelet for his army the next day.

### Sweden

Easter in Sweden sounds a lot like Halloween, with the children dressing up as Easter witches wearing long skirts, colourful headscarves and painted red cheeks, and going from home to home in their neighborhoods trading paintings and drawings in the hope of receiving sweets.

### Corfu, Greece

The traditional of "Pot Throwing" takes place on the morning of Holy Saturday. People throw pots, pans and other earthenware out of their windows, smashing them on the street.

Some say the custom of throwing of pots

welcomes spring, symbolizing the new crops that will be gathered in new pots. Others say it derives from the Venetians, who on New Year's Day used to throw out all of their old items.

### Indonesia

There are around seven million Catholics in Indonesia, Christianity was brought here by Portuguese missionaries, and statues from this time are carried through the streets. Young men consider it an honour to be chosen to play Jesus and be tied to the cross in various locations.

### Florence, Italy

A huge, decorated wagon is dragged through the streets by white oxen until it reaches the cathedral, and when Gloria is sung inside the cathedral Archbishop sends a dove-shaped rocket into the cart, igniting a large fireworks display.

Called *Scoppio del Carro* (explosion of the cart), this is followed by a parade in medieval costumes.

### Bermuda

On Good Friday, the locals celebrate by flying home-made kites, eating codfish cakes and hot cross buns.

The tradition is said to have begun when a local teacher from the British Army had difficulty explaining Christ's ascension to Heaven to his Sunday school class. He made a kite, traditionally shaped like a cross, to illustrate the Ascension.

### Egg Rolling in Scotland

Easter in Scotland is a mostly laid-back event. The Scots do the traditional things commonly associated with Easter like attending mass and having a big meal, but they also add a bit of fun, particularly for the kids. Easter fun here is all about eggs. After they're boiled and painted in all kinds of colors and designs, they're taken to the park hills for rolling on Easter Sunday. While it may just sound like playtime for the kids, the event is very symbolic as it is carried out to represent the rolling away of stones on Jesus' tomb thereby assisting in His resurrection.

### The Joyous Christmas Adventures of Professor Bear December 2016 – January 2017

Hi everyone, Happy New Year to all. As you know I am an official member of Whittlesea U3A. I received my membership from Mayor Ricky Kirkham on Wednesday 7th December at a fantastic lunch at Manor on High.

What a busy few weeks I have had since joining Whittlesea U3A.

You know, before I was an official member, I went to Lakes Entrance with Pam and Richard and all the happy gang of travellers, I will not go into details, you can see it on the website. I travelled to meet with Coral, Val and the talented ladies of the knitting group. A lovely lady called Norma, who made my jumper, was there and I am



thinking of asking her to make me another one as I have been dining so much with my Whittlesea U3A friends, I think I am bursting out!

They were meeting at Mill Park Lakes meeting room and I had time to go and feed the swans before the class. These black swans glide gracefully around looking for me to feed them but I wasn't going to do this as I was told that it is not good for us to feed them when they can obtain their food from the lake. This is a great place for a walk, must tell Mary.

December already, and I was invited to help out on the 2017 enrolment. What a busy day. After the helping the U3A professional enrolment team and listening to the excited chatter

from everyone, I really had to sit and rest for a moment. Everyone seemed to be happily talking to each other. I could hear snippets of their chatter and most were talking about how inexpensive it was to join but all were excited to know if they would get into the courses of their choice. New and old members were greeted and given a cuppa whilst they waited. It was not too long, but I think the greeters just wanted to meet them and invite them into the Whittlesea U3A community. Smiles were everywhere and they were catching.

Although the enrolment day tired me, I was in party mode, I attended the Trivia Christmas break up party in the same hall but what a transformation, no more computers but lovely Christmas decorations on decorated tables and loads of nibbles for me. Kathy, Peter and the team had the hall transformed. I went to join my friends at our Trivia table; they didn't know I had been reading all the quizzes in the Herald Sun to make sure I would be able to answer the questions, but low and behold tonight was party night, no trivia. This was my first trivia night out and did I enjoy it. So many new friends to meet and there was a Father Christmas and lovely presents given out. How do they think I can stay slim when they tempt me with so much food, three courses! I thought Santa forgot I was there because I waited and waited, Santa must have been a bit short of presents this year but with a big smile he asked me to join in the group photo and I was given the pride of place at the front.

It is still early December when I attended the Whittlesea U3A yearly Christmas party at Manor on High. This is a Christmas party to remember, they sure know how to party. Again, we had delicious food, happy members

and dancing to the music of Horizon with our favourites, Rory and Isabella.

This party is where I became an official member of Whittlesea U3A and Mayor Ricky Kirkham presented me with my Degree in "*Bearology and Hugs*" and I was given to Mary as my carer. The Manor was buzzing, music laughter and dancing, so colourful and joyous, what a very happy U3A. My table purchased lots of raffle tickets. Mother Christmas with her basket skipped her way around the hall to help with the raffle and what delight when they the winners opened these gifts. Everyone joined in, some winning two prizes.

This day was so well organised by Dianne and her group that you could not help but smile, the decorations, the Christmas Tree,



the music the joy and laughter, what a day, the cameras didn't stop with me as a focus of course and I got a hug from Mother Christmas. So many hugs and lots and lots of photos, I felt like a movie star. After this I needed to spend a few quiet days with Mary where I have taken up residence. Mary has me placed in her lounge room where I can greet all the visitors. The remote is not too far away and I am surrounded by cushions. What a life!

This is only half the story, if you like it please read more on the website.

Professor Bear

Whittlesea Committee Inc. U3A 2017 - 2016  
COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE

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**WHITTLESEA U3A INC. POLO SHIRT**

Royal Blue with Gold Logo

The Polo Shirt is 220-gram Polyester/Cotton Pique Knit, with a fully taped neck seam, half-moon yoke, ridged collar & side vents.

**AT THE SUBSIDISED PRICE OF \$20 EACH**

Sizes available: (cms)

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	5XL
Half chest size	51.0	53.5	56.0	58.5	61.0	63.5	66.0	68.5	71.0
Body Length	69.0	71.5	74.0	76.5	79.0	81.5	84.0	86.5	89.0

There is also a size K14, slightly smaller than the XS. Payment required with order.  
Available at Monthly Morning Tea or from Brenda Gorely on 9436 9203.

**CHAIR AEROBICS DVD ALSO AVAILABLE AT \$10 EACH.**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We wish to acknowledge and thank the Hon. Andrew Giles M.P. (Scullin) Bronwyn Halfpenny M.P.(Thomastown), Hon. Lily D'Ambrosia M.P. (Mill Park) and their staff for their generosity and their assistance in printing and copying our Newsletter, Forms, Calendars, and mail outs. A big thank you also goes out to Mill Park Library for the use of their rooms