



Whittlesea U3A News Sheet

ISSUE 08 September 2020

COVID-19 version

TERM 4 Commences on 5th October –27th November 2020

President's message....

It is now spring and a little more warmth in the air and I am receiving more emails, messages and phone calls from members sharing how much they value being able to ZOOM to contact, see and discuss their interests with other Whittlesea U3A members, friends and family.

Reports indicate new COVID-19 cases are reducing daily and we expect we will be provided with a "road map out of COVID-19 restrictions" in early September. There is hope.

I was inspired by the attendance of 127 members at the Whittlesea U3A Annual General meeting on 27th August. All attended from home using the ZOOM application. The chatter and smiles as members logged in was an experience I will never forget.

Congratulations go to our 2020/21 committee of management who were confirmed at the AGM and named elsewhere in this newsheet. The new committee is committed to meeting the challenges of our times and will ensure that Whittlesea U3A will continue to grow its classes and activities and be well prepared to lead our organisation back to "face to face" classes and activities.

Enquiries are starting to be received from former members who had not re-joined this year due to COVID-19 issues and seniors generally to join Whittlesea U3A to participate in our ZOOM "Chat from Home" sessions, classes and activities.

Our Social Seniors program led by Janice Boswell and Peter Cleary is building in popularity and has supported a number of members gain the knowledge and confidence to safely use ZOOM to join Chat sessions, classes and activities. Any member can enrol in Social Seniors or ZOOM self help sessions via the Whittlesea U3A website "View and select courses" <https://whittleseau3a.org.au/members/massTemplate.php?action=listEvents>

Until we can meet face to face on screen in ZOOM activities.



SOCIAL SENIORS PROGRAM



Introduces participants to the use of their mobile phones and computer devices to connect with each other, use closed social media groups to share interests and produce short films on topics of interest.

The participants in each program have continued to use ZOOM and other applications to meet regularly to share experiences and continue to learn.

PATRICK - Walking around Mernda Lakes and photos of the new Mernda Town Centre adjacent to the station. Work in progress

Another little Mernda Gem Patrick has found is Berry Lane. - Today I crossed over Plenty Road from Bunnings, heading city bound for a short distance and discovered this little pocket of tranquillity, just off Plenty Road on the left hand side. Welcome to Berry Lane.

A smallish floral patch, hidden amid the houses, featuring a myriad of flowering Daisies, spring isn't all that far away and a small Children's playground. A little hidden gem.. That eventually led onto the walkway that runs adjacent to the train line, leading back towards Mernda Station.



Comment from a member:

Listening to the ZOOM chat with Kathy and the Busy Hands group I realised that women have no problem with not only chatting but with sharing their feelings, problems and sometimes making some of us wishing to cry for them. After they finish talking, and everyone listening, you can see that sharing these problems, is overcoming the effects of isolation and there is a friend to listen. We are not all alone. Mary R.

I would like to advertise that this new group is up and running in my emails

Line Dancing via ZOOM

It's been a long time since we have been able to enjoy our line dancing classes and just as we were ready to re start the classes (with social distancing), we had to go into further lockdown. As it may be some time before we can resume classes in any of our halls, we have decided to hold a line dancing class via ZOOM.

Level 1 and Level 2 classes will be combined into one class to be held on Friday mornings at 10.30. You will need access to a computer or device to join in.

If you are interested in joining us, please register for the class online or call Afroditi on 0431 488 346

Our line-dancing leader was recording a half-hour video in her carport.

She was half way through when a neighbour waved through a side gate.

Her priority was to complete the recording, so she ignored her neighbour.

After completing her recording, she went into her house with concerns that her neighbour may have complained to her husband about the music from her recording session. She found out that her neighbour and his visitors, had muted their music so to enjoy the music she was dancing to and wondered if they could obtain a copy of her music for themselves.

She approached her elderly neighbours to explain what she was doing and why she ignored them through-the-side-gate-wave and to offer a copy of the music on a USB memory stick.

When she mentioned line-dancing, the 81 year old visitor spoke of an interest in learning line-dancing, and as for a USB memory stick, "What the heck is that?", so the line-dancing leader was happy to explain and leave them with the knowledge that they could learn about computers and line-dancing along with much more by joining Whittlesea U3A.

With interest piqued, I expect there to be another instalment in this COVID-19 lockdown drama.

NEW ZOOM CLASS BORN in 1940 ZOOM Class 11:00 am to midday on Saturdays.

The members in the class who have not been able to celebrate a milestone birthday this year have decided to form a discussion group to share topics of interest and memories since 1940.

Margaret is excited about this class and is looking forward to hearing from you.

Busy Hands Circle with Frederica Bordin/Mary Renshaw
weekly chat together
time 2pm -3pm Fridays

Online Excel and more
Correspondence with Ben Caruana

PROPOSED NEW ZOOM CLASS - - Everything Football

I received this email from a member and have accepted the challenge:

Hi Glen, I have a challenge for you! For the next few weeks of football only.

I had another thought for a new Zoom Chat and thought you may be interested.

Glen, what about the men in our U3A?

A new chat group, convened I hope by you, only lasting a few weeks, could be called **EVERYTHING FOOTBALL**.

It could be even at night or weekend as long as there is no football on that time.

An email will be sent to all members with date time and details to enrol.

We encourage any other interest groups to consider starting a ZOOM interest group. Support is available to assist in setting up discussion groups.

Almoner

if you know of anyone that is sick, in hospital or unfortunately lost a loved one that has passed away, I would like to hear from you so a card can be sent to them to let them know that we care.

I can be contacted by text or phone on 0414925567 or home phone message 94652726 or by email kathylizio@bigpond.com



The 2020/21 Committee of Management elected

President: Glen Wall
Vice President: Kathy Lizio
Secretary: Elaine Bateman
Treasurer: Peter Rodaughan

General Committee:

Kevin Whelan
 Afroditi Toso
 Michael Murray
 Bryan McNally
 Yolanda Avery
 Peter Cleary

128 members who attended the 2020 Whittlesea U3A Annual General Meeting. It was a pleasure to see the happy faces as they logged in. I know we are going through difficult times but more ZOOM classes and activities are being added to our program. Please visit our Whittlesea U3A web site (www.whittleseau3a.org.au) to see the current list of classes and activities and I encourage you to enrol in ZOOM classes that are of interest to you.

Important Notice

To comply with security, privacy and copyright provisions ZOOM invitation links to access ZOOM classes under no circumstances are to be posted or shared on social media accounts. All members enrolled in a ZOOM class will be emailed a ZOOM link.

Click on the link which will admit you to a waiting room. The Tutor / class leader will admit you to the class. The Whittlesea U3A ZOOM coordinator Peter Cleary has a team of ZOOM mentors who can assist any members who experience difficulty access a ZOOM class. There are a number of ZOOM information classes listed on the Class calendar which any member can enrol in for assistance. Contact details for Peter Cleary are also included in the emailed ZOOM class confirmation and ZOOM link.

Think of the most deafening sound you can imagine. Describe it in detail, and have your character hear it for the first time at the start of a story.

The Thundering Sound of Horror - Just when you thought it couldn't Get Worse

Bryan McNally 2020

I didn't get a chance to peer out of my tenth floor hotel window in downtown Beirut. It shattered with a deafening sound of what I thought was the apocalypse. Time to meet my maker.

I was on assignment from Deutschebank, in a last ditch attempt to plan a way the Lebanese Government could drag itself out of the deepest financial hole any country had endured in modern times. I chose a hotel away from the many ethnic and religious driven conflicts. This meant I was near the Beirut offices of Deutschebank and a Lebanese Government satellite office for our workshops and planning sessions. Not having to risk any type of vehicle commute was a bonus in this war-torn, flat broke country.

As I picked myself up off the floor, shaking my head to try and dispel the ringing in my ears, I ran to what was left of the hotel window. I peered out, making sure I contorted myself enough to avoid the shards of thick broken glass hanging perilously from the frame. All I could see was the mayhem caused by that ten second unbearable boom which had knocked me off my feet. The blinding flash that followed reminded of those old newsreels of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and what it would have been like to endure the nuclear end to World War II. Surely Beirut hadn't been the victim of nuclear terrorism now?

That ten second blast and its accompanying afterglow had all but levelled every structure I could see from here to the docks five kilometres south. The concrete jungle of Beirut had become a rubble jungle in the blink of an eye.

I then grabbed my camera, zoom lens attached, and headed back to the window. On full magnification I could see nothing but devastation. People who hadn't lost their limbs were running in a synchronised panic. In circles, backwards and forwards; dodging bodies lying lifeless and prone; either looking for loved ones and friends, or just trying to understand what had happened to them.

The next less blinding flashes I saw were the lights of dozens of emergency vehicles heading down the main drag, past my hotel towards the docks. The carnage was so widespread that the emergency teams had to peel off into smaller groups along the way to attend to the injured and dying as they headed towards the source of the explosion.

I felt helpless. The nightmare was real and I knew I wasn't going to exorcise it by merely waking up. I just lay on my bed, closed my eyes and waited for the hotel evacuation process to take place. I must have been asleep two hours. My ears had cleared and my eyes had stopped watering no more spots from the flashes that followed immediately after the blast.

I went to the window once more, thinking, no hoping, that this was all a bad dream. The answer lay before me. The panic had turned into a more calm realisation of the horror that had taken place. Ambulances, fire tenders, police vans and cars; all heading to and from local hospitals, I guessed, no doubt stretched beyond their capacity to treat the dying and injured from such a catastrophe.

I just lay back down wallowing in the futility I was experiencing.

When I awoke it was dark outside. All was quiet now this end of town. The sound of death and disaster was locked in my memory. A caricature of a country, for many reasons, that may never recover; may never return to the days where its culture and people were as one.

The End