



Class News

Let's Do Class Now Started –

Following a meeting of all interested members on 7th August, the Let's Do Class is now underway.

Their first outing is a lunch to get to know each other at Café 23, North Ringwood on Thursday, 7th September.

The group will meet on a monthly basis and so as to accommodate more members, some dates will be Thursdays and some Mondays with the occasional Saturday.

We have outlined a number of scenarios encompassing different venues in the following categories:

Gardens and Nurseries, Museums of different cultural backgrounds, Art Galleries and Heritage Buildings, various City of Melbourne Adventures, Fun days at restaurants with possible speakers, Art and Craft Tours/Markets, Activities in the Croydon/Ringwood areas, Days exploring the Mornington Peninsular.

Convenors are

- Carol Marvin : email: ckmavin@bigpond.com or phone 98790462 and
- Lynn Blackbell email: justlynn@tpg.com.au or phone 98793526

Summer School Courses

Since January is often a quiet month for us all, we have decided to offer a Summer School to be held over 3 weeks in January between 8th and 25th January. Enrolments will take place with the normal annual enrolment days in November.

Courses being offered are: Folk Music, Healthy Ageing, Creative Arts Therapy, Film Appreciation, Media, Scrapbooking, Change in the 1970s, Patchwork, Writing, Elderly & Ageing which gives us a wide range of interesting short courses to choose from.

Watch for more details out shortly.

Your 2017 Committee

President – Daryl James
 Vice President – Alastair McCracken
 Secretary – Jeanette Cain
 Treasurer – Alex Robertson
 Committee Members -
Antje Bauer
Kathie Bishop
Lynn Blackbell
Heather McCracken
Lily Ouw
Deirdre Penhale
Trevor Sheppard
Peter Wakeham
Ruth Wilson

Class Timetables

Term 3 Dates:

Monday 17th July to Friday 22nd September 2017

Term 4 Dates:

Monday 9th October to Friday 8th December 2017

Enrolment Dates for 2018, including Summer School:

Thursday 9th & Friday 10th November –

Room 1 at Parkwood between 9.30 am & 1.00 pm

Preparations for 2018

We are currently preparing our course list and details for our 2018 classes.

The list includes some new courses which we hope will be of interest.

These include a Table Tennis class which will be run on Tuesday afternoons, Media Watch (something that should be of interest as the traditional role of the media is being challenged by social media) Italian for Beginners. With these and other new classes commencing in 2018 and some vacancies in existing classes there should be ample opportunities for members to fill in those gaps in their busy schedule.



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Maroondah City Council Grants Presentation

Daryl James & Jeanette Cain attended the Council's Grants Presentation Evening on 23rd August to receive a cheque for \$480 which is to cover the cost of maintenance on our photocopy machine.

The Rising Costs of Operating U3A Ringwood

We are very fortunate to have modern and bright accommodation at the Parkwood Community Hub, the Norwood Sporting Club pavilion (The Kevin Pratt Pavilion) and the North Ringwood Scout hall.

However accommodation at this high standard comes at a cost and many of our members may be surprised to learn that our Lease/Hire Agreements now amount to approximately \$4,000.00 per annum and our electricity costs amount to approximately \$5500.00 per annum.

In addition, at Parkwood we pay for water usage, cleaning and consumables.

Today our accommodation and utility costs alone, amount to around \$9500 per annum (roughly equivalent to the membership fees received from 200 of our 230 paying members).

There is little that we can do about our lease costs as these are specified in our lease with Council and are increased by a known percentage each year.

However we can try to minimise our electricity costs (which is important in a climate of rapidly increasing electricity prices) by ensuring that we take a reasonable approach to the use of our air conditioners for heating and cooling.

To help keep this cost down we ask everyone to ensure that our air condi-

tioners are:

- only used when it is necessary (not merely turned on as a matter of course);
- set at a comfortable temperature; and
- turned-off at the end of each class.

As our operating costs are now starting to exceed our revenue, we must either reduce our costs (which can help but not solve our cost issue), and/or recruit new members and/or as a last resort, increase our membership fees.

With respect to membership, the Committee has been and continues to, put a great deal of effort into increasing our profile in the community through advertising and promotion and by introducing new courses to make U3A Ringwood more attractive to a broad cross section of the community. Hopefully this work will lead to an increase new members.

Currently we have vacancies in many of our classes and also have new classes we wish to introduce. So, if you become aware of someone who may be looking for something interesting to do and wants to keep their mind and body active, please tell them about U3A Ringwood and the benefits of being a member.

With respect to membership fees, the Committee has decided to maintain our membership fee at its current low level of \$50.00pa for at least the 2018 year. This will of course require us to meet any shortfall between our costs and income by using some of our reserved capital. However, this can only provide a short term solution as it is prudent for us to maintain a reasonable level of reserves to cover unexpected costs, take advantage of op-

portunities that may arise and improve our equipment and amenities for the benefit of members.

Deakin Community Awards

This year, U3A Ringwood was once again invited by the office of the Member for Deakin, Michael Sukkar, to nominate a member to receive a Deakin Community Award.

The Committee's selection criteria, amongst other things, includes the nature of the contribution made by a member to U3A Ringwood and their contribution in the broader community as a volunteer.

As members would appreciate, we are very fortunate to have a number of members who have and continue to make, a significant contribution which would more than meet this criteria.

Accordingly, after a great deal of thought and discussion, the Committee decided to nominate Francis (Frank) Holmes for a 2017 Deakin Community Award. You will find a word picture of Francis and his contribution to U3A and other organisations, elsewhere in this Newsletter.

On 31 July 2018, Francis received his Award at a presentation ceremony held at the George Wood Performing Arts Centre at the Yarra Valley Grammar School.

Francis' major concern after receiving his Award, was finding a suitable place to hang it on the walls at home, which are already "groaning" under the weight of artwork, fossils and other items that Francis finds interesting.

Congratulation Francis.

Know Your Tutors and Class Leaders

Over numerous sessions of U3A Newsletters we will feature articles about our Class Tutors and Leaders in order that you may get to know them a little better – some of their background, interests, classes they attend as well as how they like to conduct the classes they lead.

We can only fit in a few articles each time, so stay tuned for all the future ones to come!

In this issue we feature Francis Holmes, Helen Garbutt and Irene Pomeroy.

Francis Holmes

'Frank' (to many), had just entered his teens when, together with 440,000 or so other children, he was evacuated from London on 1st September, 1939, to spend the next 3 years at school in the town of Lewes, near Brighton. What no one realised at the time, he said, was the eventual danger of living in a locality so close to the south coast of England, particularly when, following the Dunkirk evacuation in May 1940, there was a real threat of a German Invasion.

Returning home to London in 1942, he commenced a 5 year Diploma in Architecture Course at Regent Street Polytechnic; not the best of times to study during air raids, and later the threat of flying bombs and V2 rockets. For 'recreation' he continued to develop his athletic skills, an adjunct to joining the Air Training Corps.

Frank said he volunteered for service in the Royal Air Force in early 1944 just before his 18th birthday, but for reasons unknown, wasn't called up until a couple of months after the end of the War.

This resulted in 2 ½ years as a R.A.F. Physical Training Instructor, and at one stage an 'orrible' Drill Instructor (hence his loud voice). Returning to London in 1948, he got married, finished his Architectural studies, and to keep fit joined the Horne Hill Harriers, a prominent London Athletic Club.

In 1952, he was offered a 3 year contract to work in Adelaide as an Architect for the South Australian Government. It was not until he arrived that he found out he would be designing hospitals for Mental Patients; a far cry from his Architectural Diploma Thesis design of a brewery (or is there a link?)

Having worked out his contract, he and his wife moved to Melbourne where opportunities for advancement were considerably better. After working for private architectural firms, he joined the Hospital and Charities Commission (later part of the State Health Department) in 1962, eventually retiring from the position of Principal Architect in mid-1986.

During this period he became a Foundation Member and first Treasurer of the Nunawading and District Lapidary Club, later designing and acting as builder for their Clubrooms. As if this wasn't enough to keep him occupied, he managed to build his own house in Heathmont at the same time. Thanks to two Geology courses at the Council of Adult education in Flinders Lane, he rekindled his childhood interest in fossils and formed the Fossil Collectors' Association of Australasia in 1980, editing and producing a tri-annual newsletter, *The Fossil Collector*, for over 25 years.

Upon retirement, he joined his late wife Enid as a volunteer with the Invertebrate Palaeontology Department of Museum Victoria and subsequently became an Honorary Associate of the Museum. Although strictly an amateur, he has managed to author six scientific manuscripts describing recently discovered Australian fossil echinoids (sea urchins).

Finally in 2005, after his wife passed away, he joined U3A Ringwood on the suggestion of one of our Foundation Members, Bep Wolfers. Having chosen three courses on the registration day – Art, Archaeology and Music – he was told that all were full! Undaunted, he talked his way into the first two, and was rewarded soon after when the second Music Appreciation class was formed by Wendy Richards.

Within a few months of joining U3A he was co-opted onto the Committee as Property Officer, a position he held for several years together with a short stint as Treasurer. For whatever reason, he

said, "I always seemed to be coerced into temporarily filling-in for Committee Officers unavailable at any given time, although surprisingly, I was actually elected a Vice President for 2009/10".

Apart from two short courses titled 'World of Fossils', held in 2006/7, his time as a Tutor in both Earth Sciences & Ancient History (2007-2016) and Sketching for Pleasure (2015-) were again the result of filling-in to avoid cessation of the classes.

If one doesn't consider volunteering, tutoring, or being press-ganged, as hobbies, then Frank's only printable vices are Photography and Family Ancestry Research.

Helen Garbutt

Here is an absolute dog lover in every sense of the word.

Helen's two high school years were spent at Brisbane Commercial High School. She then started work as a Punch Card Operator, which was working with the early giant sized computers.

When her children were in their teens, she returned to TAFE College to become qualified for full time work again.

Helen's husband Brian was transferred to Melbourne 32 years ago, and Helen then worked for a company called Composite Buyers as a buyer - a job she loved as no two days were ever the same. The company was subsequently bought out and she took redundancy.

Whilst working, Helen became a Rotarian. Their sister club was in Bangalore, India where they visited and helped install wells in country areas. She also went on a working bee in Popondetta, Northern Papua, New Guinea where they were working to build living quarters for the girls and the nuns as the church school was to be a co-ed school.

On finishing work, Helen did a course with Gita International Yoga and qualified as a teacher in 2003. Due to spinal injuries and osteoporosis she must and needs to keep stretching and exercising. Helen says Yoga is not a mindless exercise but a way of life where we love and respect ourselves, others and all of creation.

Her friend Jeannie introduced her to U3A Ringwood, to Eileen's Exercise to Music. Eileen retired and she volunteered to take the class. (A little imp pushed her hand up to volunteer she's sure). As Helen knew nothing about Music or Exercise to Music steps, fortunately Barb Ryder who teaches at U3A Nunawading welcomed Helen into her Exercise to Music class and allowed her to video the class and from Barb's class and the videos, she became more confident.

Helen had health issues and asked for a volunteer to help with the class, to which Jeannette Bridgeman kindly put her hand up.

So now Helen leads Exercise to Music with Jeannette at Ringwood and also teaches yoga at Ringwood, as well as at Nunawading and goes to Barb's Exercise to Music class for herself.

Helen tries to conduct her classes with love, respect, observation and joy.

Her hobby and big love are her dogs – Max, a St Bernard aged 5, Charlie, a Golden Spaniel aged 17, Till, a Long Haired Terrier aged 12, Bernard, a Maltese Shitzu aged 10. Helen says she finds her doggie friends non-critical, non-judgmental and loving no matter how gumpy one is and tries to learn from them.

Unfortunately, her children, grandchildren and great grandchild are interstate, except for Ray and Deb, her son and daughter-in-law who also live here....that's probably why she treats her dogs like children.

Irene Pomeroy

A fascinating story of arrival in Australia in the 1950s which makes us appreciate what we all had back then.

On 7th October 1952 Irene arrived in Australia by ship from Haarlem, Holland with her parents, three brothers and two sisters. Two babies had died on the voyage over – very sad. When they arrived at Station Pier, Port Melbourne, they then had to travel on the red rattler train to Albury, which took a long time. Once in Albury they then

travelled by bus to Camp Bonagilla which was a huge shock to them all.

They stayed at the camp with their mother for six weeks. During this time Irene's father hitchhiked to Box Hill North where his brother lived. Whilst there, he purchased a block of land with a bungalow, which had three windows and a door, sight unseen!

When they arrived from the camp, they were surprised – the house was as small as the shed! When Irene's father opened the door, the ceiling was on the floor and the birds living inside flew out. In Holland her father had purchased collapsible beds and chairs, for ease of transport to Australia. As eight of them were in such a confined living space, they made for easy storage against the wall.

As their things were still at Station Pier, her father walked to a nearby farm and purchased some hay. They all slept on the floor lined with hay for a week. Eventually, they got their things and lived in that bungalow for two years. Irene's baby brother of 18 months old slept in his cot under the sink as that was the only space available. In time, they got an upgraded bungalow where the kids could sleep.

Irene and her brother went to Doncaster State School. They spoke very little English. Her mother was a School Teacher in Holland and she taught them to say "The" and "Three" with a hot potato on their tongue. That was fun!

Irene's mother got a job in the grocery store at Whites Corner in Doncaster. Her boss, Mr Glasgow told her to relocate her family to live above the store. They were all happy as there was lots of space and stayed there for two years, then moved to Ringwood where her father had built a house.

Irene's father worked very hard. By day he was a bricklayer and plumber, and by night a baker which was his trade. He still had time for sing-alongs and their kids on the weekends. Her parents told them that they came to a new land to become Australians, so that is what they embraced.

Irene attended Our Ladies of Sion School, completing form 2, however,

she didn't really enjoy school. When Irene was 15, she got her first job at Coles in Ringwood. She was there 18 months before getting work at a milk bar and stayed there for 7 years, leaving when she got married. She was a stay-at-home Mum for 10 years for her son and daughter.

An opportunity came up to work afternoon shift (3-11 pm) at Johnston Tiles factory and Irene worked there for 11 years. Her mother would come over, and be there when the children got home from school, which was great.

In 1985, Irene was offered a part time job in a dress shop. Over time, the role became full time and she worked her way up to Manageress at Rita Louise. She was there for many years, before moving on to Hiltons Fashions and was 2nd in charge until her retirement in 1999.

Irene started some hobbies, including flower arranging and making fruit bowl and ash tray mosaics.

In 2001, she started making cards at the Beatrix Retirement Village with a group of Dutch ladies.

In 2004 Irene joined U3A to do Shi-bashi classes with Bep. She was also involved in the knitting group on Thursdays at June Dobberstein's house. Whilst at June's one afternoon, they created some cards from recycled ones. From there the card group was formed in July 2005, held in the Annexe from 12 noon to 4 pm on Fridays. Irene was also on the U3A committee for 3 to 4 years as Publicity Officer, taking photos of all the classes and also creating the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Recipe Book for U3A Ringwood.

At EPR, Irene is currently the almoner and also on the committee. In 2014, Irene joined Probus and hold a card making class there once a month.

To this day, she still very much enjoys making cards, and sharing her passion for this with others. She is still fluent with writing, reading and speaking Dutch.