



Decision Not to Resume Face to Face Classes in Early Term 3

In early June the Maroondah Council advised that they were preparing to clean Parkwood and the Kevin Pratt Pavilion in preparation for them being re-opened for use. At its meeting on 17 June, your Committee considered whether we could reasonably meet government (Chief Medical Officer) and Council requirements e.g. social distancing, maximum numbers in rooms and sanitisation regimes, etc. for the safe resumption of face to face classes at each building.

After careful consideration, your Committee decided that it could not safely resume any classes at Parkwood but formed the view that we could safely conduct some classes at the Kevin Pratt Pavilion, including some classes usually held at Parkwood. In preparation, we developed a set of safe practice rules which all members who wished to attend face to face classes would be required to comply with.

As the first step towards implementing the Committee's decision, we invited tutors to attend an on-line Zoom meet-

ing on Thursday 25 June, to discuss what classes would be suitable to resume at Kevin Pratt Pavilion, tutors' preparedness to resume face to face classes, when and where classes would be held and how we could best resume classes.

Unfortunately, due to the dramatic increase in Covid19 infections in the community in the time between the Committee meeting on 17 June and its meeting with tutors on 25 June, the Committee decided to reassess the risks associated with resuming face to face classes at the Kevin Pratt Pavilion.

After obtaining the views of our Tutors, it was decided that it would be best to defer any resumption of face to face classes for the time being.

As the Covid19 situation has continued to rapidly deteriorate, the likelihood of us being able to resume face to face classes in Term 3 has now all but disappeared.

Your Committee will continue to closely monitor developments and keep members advised, but as our membership falls into a demographic which is considered to be at high risk, it must continue to take a very cautious approach to resuming face to face classes.

Grant Updates

Be Connected Grant of \$5,000

Be Connected

In our previous newsletters we advised members that we had received a grant via U3A Network, to purchase one 'Zoom Pro' on line conference license and that we were seeking another grant to purchase a small number of Android tablets for on line classes.

The Android tablets are intended to be offered to members (including tutors) as a six-month loan, to assist those who are unable to use the internet or attend our online classes due to them not having a suitable device or sufficient internet capacity.

We are now pleased to report that Alex Robertson, our Treasurer, has continued his amazing run of success, and once again was successful in obtaining a grant from the Good Things Foundation.

The Foundation offered a \$5,000 grant to purchase internet-ready tablets for loaning out, at no cost, to members and the public.

As a result, we have purchased eight new Android tablets which come pre-connected to the internet – no home internet required.



These will be loaned out to members who presently cannot access the internet (or have poor and/or costly access to it) and who wish to learn more about what the internet offers and participate in our online classes.

The loan of a tablet to a member will be subject to an Agreement which includes the recipient undertaking our on line 'Be Connected' class, which demonstrates how to use the device and to safely use the internet.

At the end of the six-month period the loaned Android tablets will be returned to U3A Ringwood and used in classes including the computer literacy courses and for in class 'chromecasting' of videos.

Contact Alex Robertson on 0400 443 460 if you would like access to one of the devices. (two have already been loaned out).

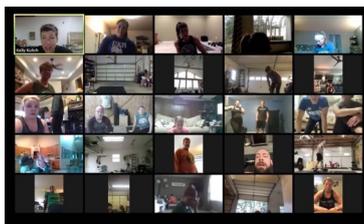
Maroondah Council Grant \$750



U3A Ringwood Inc acknowledges the ongoing support of Maroondah City Council's Community Grants Funding Program.

Their 2020/21 grant of \$750 will largely cover our ongoing printing costs.

Zoom and On Line Classes



Since purchasing a Zoom Pro license we have gradually increased the number of classes that we are offering on line, to the point where we had 15 classes being held on line at the end of Term 2, vis:

- National Affairs;
- International Affairs;
- Art Appreciation;
- Tai Chi;
- Gentle Yoga;
- Be Connected – Mentoring;
- Film Appreciation;
- French – Beginners;
- French – Advanced;
- Family History On-Line;
- Free Online Tech Help;
- Taste of Life;
- Cryptic Crosswords;
- Book Club;
- A Taste Tour of Southern European Wines;

As a result of our recent decision to not resume any face to face classes in early Term 3 due to the sudden spike in Covid19 transmission in the community, we purchased of an additional Zoom license, which will enable us to begin the following classes on line, in the first week of Term 3:

- Elders and the Law;
- Music Appreciation;
- Zoom Basics

The Committee wishes to thank our tutors for being prepared to 'give it a go' to see if their class can be successfully run on line.

It is always a challenge to do things differently, or do things that we haven't done before, particularly when it involves technology, so we are all going through a learning process to work out what is the best way to deliver each class on line.

The technical support provided by Alex Robertson to our tutors and on line class members to smooth the transition from face to face classes to online, has been instrumental in our success.

Accordingly, we are pleased that all our on-line classes are running very well, and due to the on-line format, some classes that were previously 'full' when conducted face to face, can now accept addition-

al members.

If you wish to participate in an on line course, please have a look at our website (u3aringwood.org.au) to view our online class calendar.

With our recent purchase an additional Zoom Pro license, it is important that members check our website not only to:

- see what classes are being held on line, and
- what new classes have been added but also to be aware of any change in the day and/or time that on line classes will be held.

Changes in the day and/or time when an on line class is held, will generally be made at the request of a tutor to better meet that tutor's needs and to enable more class members to participate.

What Our Members are Saying about Using Zoom for On line Classes

Yvonne Bruinsma

Dear U3A members, a short note from me to let you know that I am grateful for the Zoom classes that have been created, allowing us to stay in contact through this difficult time.

We should all be encouraged to be involved as much as we can, so when normal times return we will not have to start off again as complete strangers.

Thanks to Alex for this technical support which has helped greatly, and has encouraged some of us to be more Zoom/ Computer literate, which is what U3A learning is all about. I can assure you that if I can do it, you will find it quite easy to be involved and use Zoom (and help is always available if needed).

Also big thanks to our volunteer instructors for sticking with us. Hope to see you on the screen again soon and keep warm and safe in the meantime.

Jeanette McColl

We are still in lockdown - for me, it is now 16 weeks. I did attend the U3A Tai Chi class at the Kevin Prat Pavilion every Monday morning, which I did enjoy for the exercise and social contact but, now for the time being, this is not possible.

However, because of modern technology, every Tuesday morning I am able to 'zoom' in to Jill Cowie's home (our class tutor) for the Tai Chi class.

An added bonus is that I see the members who have "Zoomed" in, and after class there are farewells and see you all next week.

Many thanks to Jill for leading our class on line and to Alex for organising it each week.

In my opinion this method does not replace face-to-face contact but, for now, it is better than the alternative.

If you have access to the internet, I do encourage you to consider continuing your class/classes on line because no one knows or can predict when our current situation will change.

For now, stay well and stay safe

What is Your Committee Doing During the Lock-Down?

While we are all subject to "the lockdown" the U3A Ringwood Committee has been meeting each month on line using ZOOM and working in between meetings, to make sure that we do all that is possible to maximize the number of classes held on line, communicate with members and plan ahead.

We are attending meetings with other U3As via Zoom to share information about conducting classes on line and maintaining contact with tutors and members etc.

We have sought and obtained approval from Consumer Affairs Victoria to defer our AGM until 31st August 2020 due to the Covid19 restrictions on gatherings (under normal circumstance our AGM is required to be held by 30

May each year)

With the deferred AGM date quickly approaching, we have applied for a further deferral.

If a further deferral is not granted, we will not be able to hold a face to face AGM under current Covid19 rules as to the maximum number allowed to assemble in a room etc., so we have been examining how we might hold our 2020 AGM on line.

Should it become "necessary to hold an online AGM using Zoom (which many U3A's have already successfully done) we would need to:

- rely on members providing proxies to another member who will be attending the on-line AGM (e.g. committee members) to vote on specific issues listed to be dealt with at the AGM;
- ensure that we have enough proxies and members attending on line to satisfy the quorum requirements in our rules;
- provide those members who advise that they wish to attend our on line AGM with a Meeting ID and a password to access the AGM.

It should be noted that it is important that we confine access to our on line AGM, to those who are entitled to attend the meeting and that we guard against admitting others whose intent may be to disrupt the meeting.

This hopefully explains the need for members to have a Meeting ID and Password.

We will keep you informed about our 2020 AGM when we have more information to share.

Preparing for Normal

During 2019 we introduced a new membership records and on-line enrolment system (UMAS) that was developed by

U3A Network Victoria.

This enabled members, and potential members, to join and enrol in classes on line, but the payment of membership fees remained, as in the past, to be paid at the office.



We have now made arrangements to enable members and potential members to not only enrol on line, but pay their membership fee on line as well.

Members and potential members will in future have the option of paying their membership fee on line by either Debit Card or Credit Card or Bank transfer via online banking.

This will not only simplify the enrolment process for members (no paperwork if you re-enrol and pay online!) but will also reduce the administrative effort required by the Committee to process applications and membership fees manually.

Of course, as in the past, members will still be able to enrol with a paper form and pay their membership fees by way of cheque or cash at the office.

What About Membership Fees and Members' Reduced Access to Classes?

Your Committee understands that most members have had their access to classes reduced and in some cases have not been able to participate in any U3A Ringwood class since the suspension of all U3A Ringwood classes in late March 2020 due to the Covid19 pandemic.

As yet, we don't know when we will be able to resume face to face classes, nor the costs that we will need to meet in respect of service charges and leases etc. during the 'lock down, as these remain to be fully determined.

Irrespective of U3A Ringwood being a membership based organisation, the Committee has decided that it would be appropriate to take this situation into account when setting our membership fees for 2021.

Accordingly, the Committee has decided that the 2021 membership fee for all current 2020 U3A Ringwood members will be reduced to \$30.00 p.a. for members and \$20.00 p.a. for associate members.

The 2021 enrolment fee for new members will be unchanged at \$60.00 plus \$5.00 joining fee. Our 2021 fees for new associate members are also unchanged.

Join an Online Class

Some of the classes now being offered online can accept additional enrolments although they are marked as being full.

Some classes are marked as being full because the maximum number of participants is determined by our tutor on the basis of the optimum number for tutoring. Other classes have a maximum number of participants, for a face to face class, determined merely by the dimensions of the classroom and the number which can be comfortably accommodated in that classroom.

Accordingly, with respect to the latter category with classes now being temporarily held on line, the maximum number who can be enrolled in a class may be greater than when held face to face. If you are interested in joining an online class you are invited to contact either of our two Course Coordinators:

Ruth Wilson:
ruthwilson7@outlook.com or
Richard Prior:
richard.prior8@bigpond.com

who will let you know whether you are able to participate in that class while it is being run on line, and if you can, make arrangement for you to be admitted to that on line class.

Obviously, we would welcome any offer by a present or potential tutor, to run an additional class on line or make a 'one-

off' on line presentation on a topic of your choice.

If you are not attending an on line class because you are unsure about using Zoom, (it is very simple and safe to use), please have a look at our website: u3aringwood.org.au where you will find information under '[Online Courses](#)' on our Home Page.

You can also find very good 'Zoom' tutorials on YouTube and our web site.

But, if after doing this, you have questions or need assistance you are invited to contact Alex Robertson our Zoom Coordinator and IT tutor, email: u3arwood@gmail.com or telephone: 0400 443 460.

Alex would be pleased to assist with your queries including a Zoom introduction class.

Join our Online Computer Classes

With many activities now being held online, this might be an ideal time to learn more about using Zoom, your smart phone, tablet or computer (laptop or desktop) and how to use the internet safely.

Alex Robertson, our IT tutor is running classes especially for those members who want to learn more about safely using the internet, Zoom as well as how to use your device.

Zoom is very easy and safe to use and is very popular (over 300M users worldwide). Large corporations use it and families use it.

We have two technology classes that use Zoom:

- Mondays 12:30-1:30PM for our members
- Tuesdays 3:00PM-4:00PM for our Be Connected members.

Free Be Connected Classes

U3A Ringwood provides free Be connected classes on behalf of the Good

Things Foundation. They are open to everyone. Topics include:

- Getting to know your device
- Safety first, Online skills
- Connecting to others
- ISPs, Wi-Fi networks and mobile networks
- Loading and using apps on your devices
- Using online shopping and banking
- Using social media
- Looking up information such as news, weather, recipes, price comparisons, etc
- myGov, detecting scams and fake news

To sign up send an email to u3arwood@gmail.com or call Alex on 0400 443 460

Changes to our Web Site

We have made some changes to our web site. The look is a bit more modern plus you can now **pay your memberships fees online** with:

- Your PayPal account,
- Your MasterCard/Visa cards, or
- An online Bank Transfer using our PAYID and your financial institutions internet banking platform.

Paying online with a PAYID is much safer than keying in BSBs and account numbers. Check out how your Bank handles PAYID payments—each Bank can be slightly different in their approach. For more information go to: www.u3aringwood.org.au

In September there will be a new way for you to use UMAS that works on all of your internet connected devices particularly handheld ones. It looks better and is easier to use.

Term 3 and 4 Dates

Term 3:

Monday 13th July to Friday 18th September.

Term 4:

Monday 5th October to Friday 4th December.