



RINGWOOD



Newsletter Term 2

June 2024

WHAT HAPPENED AT OUR 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our 2024 AGM was held at the Kevin Pratt Pavilion on 21 May 2024. At that Meeting (in additions to dealing with reports from the Committee):

1. The proposed changes to our Rules, as distributed beforehand to all members as part of our Notice of AGM, were unanimously approved.
2. A new Committee was elected for 2024 – 2025, vis:

President: Daryl James

Vice President: Alastair McCracken

Secretary: Jeanette Cain

Treasurer: Alex Robertson

Committee:

Lynn Blackbell

Yvonne Bruinsma

Heather McCracken

Doug Parlee

Richard Prior

Peter Wakeham

Congratulations go to all members elected to the 2024/2025 Committee.

Thank you to Members

We were very pleased to have a number of members volunteer to cook and serve at our sausage sizzle, which was held on Saturday, 20 April at Bunnings Ringwood Warehouse. The sausage sizzle raised just under \$750. Thank you, Shirley Miles, Elaine Craig, Linda Parlee, Antje Bauer, Bob Jackson, Jill Carroll, Lesley Lloyd, Joan Dooley, Peter Mitchell, Graeme Roy, Anne Johnson, Ron Collins, Rosemary Curtain. We also thank the members of the Committee who acted as Shift Captains and purchased the food and supplies needed for the day.

We are also very pleased to thank the 53 members who attended our AGM on 21 May 2024 – we hope that you enjoyed the afternoon. A special thank you go to those who also volunteered to assist the Committee with signing in attendees and providing afternoon tea. Thank you, Graeme Roy and Kathie Bishop, who ensured that all members were signed in and to Carolyn Stone and Val Baxter who volunteered to assist with afternoon tea. In



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addition, thank you to those members who pitched in on the day, to put chairs away after the AGM and helped serve afternoon tea. The Committee really appreciates your willingness to help.

RESUSCITATE A MATE PRESENTATION

We are fortunate to be able to offer another Resuscitate a Mate presentation at 1.30pm on 1 Tuesday 18 June 2024. This is the last in a series of presentations conducted by Life Saving Victoria. It is designed to take the mystery out of what to do while waiting for paramedics to arrive when there is a health incident and also demonstrate how a defibrillator works. This knowledge may save a friend's or even your own life and should not be missed.

We need more members to register to make this presentation viable so if you haven't attended a previous session or want to get a refresher, please register to attend now at daryl-james@outlook.com.

NEW COURSE AVAILABLE IN TERM 3

A series of three courses, back-to-back, of three weeks each will start in Term 3 to be held at Parkwood in Classroom 1 on Wednesdays from 1.30 – 3.00 pm and led by Vicki Wilson.

(1) Quick Lessons on Photography

This short three-week course is designed to help you take better happy photos and what makes photography interesting.

The first lesson is how to make your photos interesting. **The second lesson** looks at the composition of the photo and how it makes a difference. **The third lesson** gives you the ideas and tricks that professional photographers use to make their photos look stunning.

(2) Exploring Space

There have been amazing advances in understanding our solar system, galaxy and beyond as NASA and renowned scientists explore further afield with their upgraded telescopes and equipment. Our universe is incredible and I would love to walk you through the new information found including the on again/off again reasons why Pluto is a planet.

It's only a short 3-week course but is packed full of "wow factor" information and facts about where we live in our universe. In the third session we will have an open discussion about your ideas of what is out there further afield after I have given you what the scientists are saying.

The first lesson is about our solar system taking you through all the new information available.

The second lesson takes you on a journey through the milky way galaxy that will blow you away,

The third lesson takes you further still showing how big our universe is and the theories that they have come up with including yours.

Come and join me as I take you on an awe-inspiring journey of discovery.

(3) Near Death Experiences and the after effects

This three-week course will take you through my experiences of NDE's and when I recovered the after effects of what happened to me. I discovered with a lot of research that what I had experienced, the detail and what I saw was exactly the same as other people. I searched more and found that scientists have been doing a lot of research and found also that these experiences are exactly the same all over the world.

The first lesson would cover my experience and what I saw the side effects and what happened to me after the event. The search for the truth of what really happened including with how some scientists debunk the experience and why that could not be true. **The second lesson** Amazing scientific discoveries about NDE's. **The third lesson** will cover the fear of death and how having a NDE in all cases stopped this fear.

WHAT SOME CLASSES HAVE BEEN DOING IN 2024

Book Club News

The U3A Book Club is a meeting of kindred spirits, of those who have always read a lot, those who now have more time to read, and those who want to experience literature beyond their usual genres. Last year we were provided with a pleasing diversity of books. This year, so far, we have read and discussed three novels, all set in Australia, one in the early 20th century outback, (Coal Creek), one in inner suburban Melbourne (The Spare Room) and the third, (Burnt) in a contemporary country town.

We seem to like Aussie writings (been there, maybe not done that!). We also recommend writers to each other for example Shankari Chandran, originally Sri Lankan, whose works are receiving much attention, and Alli Parker's "At the Foot of the Cherry Tree", which focuses on Alli's grandmother who was the first Japanese War Bride to Australia, in fact, to Ringwood!!

Happy Reading everyone.

Taste Tour of the World of Wines

With Term 2 coinciding with a change in the weather, we gravitated away from the light easy drinking European white wines and rose, to red wines. We have sampled some robust Australian red wines as well as more softer Italian and French red wines (we have found that as we age the softer wines are gentler on the palate).

Of course, we have discovered some lovely wines, both white and red, that we have immediately placed on our personal must buy list, but I must admit that we have also placed a few wines that we tasted, on the drink if nothing else is available list.

The beauty of selecting wines that are made from lesser-known grape varieties, are from little known wineries and price is a factor in selection, the likelihood of tasting a wine that is a 'surprise' increases markedly.

Armchair Travel

The Armchair Travel classes started the year with a trip to a Gulag in far northern Siberia which created a lot of interest. This was followed by a presentation on Broken Hill and some very interesting Silo Art in Victoria and the Rivierina. We have also cruised The Balkans from Budapest to Bucharest and visited England in the summer.

One of our long time members, Geoff Deason, is a keen "birdo" who often takes on short visual walks to parks and reserves close to Melbourne, also giving us a brief history of the area. For people no longer travelling or driving great distances, this enables them to still be able to view the sights in our Armchair Travel group at no expense.

Our presenters come from within our own group and also some outside presenters for a visual presentation We meet at 9.30 am on the first and third Tuesday of the month at the Kevin Pratt Pavilion. Hoping to see you there soon.

Art Appreciation

Term Two has seen the focus move back again onto Australian Art, as a result of the fact that Archie Moore won the "Gold Lion" (the equivalent of a Gold Medal at the Olympic Games) with his stunning family history entry in the Venice Biennale. Following up on that, we did a brief study of the history of the Venice Biennale itself.

With all the publicity around indigenous art, we then turned our attention to the remarkable Rebecca Hossack, an Australian ex-pat living in London, who owns and operates three indigenous art galleries in London. She was the curator who introduced Clifford Possum to the Queen in 1990, where he presented the Queen with one of his paintings.

We are now looking in detail at the history of Australian painting, from early colonial times to the present. There are marvellous youtube and internet articles and videos, which provide us with much information and many subjects, ideas and opinions for discussion. We do a lot of discussion!

Our current group enjoy The Heidelberg School and we will be spending the remainder of the term looking at this delightful period. The class is informal, chatty, interesting and most enjoyable.

Music Appreciation

We have been continuing our lectures by American Professor, Robert Greenberg on Solo Piano Series featuring music by Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Copland and an intriguing one called "The A List".

We have also enjoyed viewing DVDs of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake Ballet, Cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble bringing together Strangers of Music from Europe and Asia and a wonderfully received one on the female Australian Conductor, Simone Young, with her triumphs and tribulations to be recognised in a male dominated occupation. Everyone so enjoyed this that they gave a spontaneous applause at the end of this DVD.

We have also had DVDs on Sarah Brightman in Concert and Westside Story, including the Making of Westside Story with Leonard Bernstein conducting and singers Kiri Te Kanawa and Jose Carreras.

Class members have done presentations on Romantic Classics, Schubert and Mozart. Of interest was also a session of Classical Destinations on Norway's Edvard Grieg. Class Music, where everyone brings a piece of Classical Music to share, is always enjoyed on the last day of each term.

Researching your Family History on Line

In 2024, the Class has covered various topics, on how to research Birth, Death and Marriage records in England and Wales, and how to order them if required (a surprisingly difficult process, unlike here in Victoria). Another recent session involved members bringing along a family item, inherited etc and explaining its provenance etc.

The class has also discussed the implications of having your DNA tested, and how it may affect others with related DNA.

Poetry for Pleasure

Of our class this year, Mary le Get says *"we have discovered so many new poets, new and old. All of interest and so varied! What pleasure!*

Irina Shevsova writes: *In the Poetry for Pleasure class, we take turns in reading aloud the poems chosen by Helen. This is followed by stimulating discussions about imagery, structure, meaning and historical context. This "teasing out" process allows the poems to come alive and the intimacy of poetry to be better understood and appreciated. This most enjoyable and enriching class is enabled by Helen's own deep love and understanding of poetry.*

Continuing our journey through the mid-twentieth century – so ravaged by war and all the social changes arising from it – we are enjoying the works of poets from around the world, from England, Scotland, South Africa ('Horses on The Camargue' by Roy Campbell), the USA, Australia, (Rosemary Dobson's 'Private Soldier') and 'As One Listens to the Rain') by Ocatavio Paz from Mexico. Two Australian poets, Colin Thiele (best known perhaps for his children's book 'Storm Boy') and David Rowbotham, have brought great pleasure and much lively conversation:

Of Colin Thiele's 'Bird in the Classroom' Julie Wakeham says *"A beautiful poem by a much-loved author, not well known for his poetry; it skilfully contrasts the stupor of a hot summer classroom with the cool voice of nature". Brian Taylor liked Colin Thiele's 'The Improvers', because "I think he displayed real attitude – outrage – at what we are doing to the country. And he played wonderfully with the word 'improve' and its derivatives, demon-*

strating that they often mean the exact opposite.”

In response to the poignant poem ‘The Height’ by the Australian poet David Rowbotham, which describes an old man living a hundred miles inland who constantly yearns for the sea, his “witch of tantrums”, John Robertson was inspired to pen the following:

THE LOW

It took so much convincing to move him from the sea

I’d hoped that in these mountains he might return to me

But every day he wanders; shuffling up that hill

Peering in the distance, to where his heart lies still

While he is up there counting ships that sail beyond the trees

I’m here knitting sweaters for the kids he barely sees

So if you seek adventure and companionship for life

Don’t marry to a sailor for you’ll be a lonely wife

I think all of us look forward to getting together in easy companionship with wonderful poetry which stimulates conversation and invites us to share the perceptions which arise from the many images and ideas they raise. We are continually learning from each other. It is certainly the highlight of my week!

Chinese Revolution and History of Germany

Revolutions History is limping along with members between 3-6 each week. There is plenty of room for anyone else to join, especially as we will begin the Chinese Revolution at the start of term 3. We are currently looking at how the Bolsheviks managed to hold onto power after the two revolutions in 1917. The **Chinese Revolution** course begins with an understanding of life under the old or existing regime and reviews the roles of ideas and individuals as contributing factors to the revolution. We will then explore the immediate causes and events of the revolution. Finally, we will consider the nature of the new (post-revolutionary) society and the legacy of the revolution both nationally and internationally.

German History is often standing room only with numbers between 18-22 each week. This is a new class and we have looked at how Germany evolved during the 19th Century to an economic and military powerhouse in the early 20th Century. We are currently looking at the demise of the democratic Weimar Republic and the rise of Adolf.

Film Appreciation



I must admit, that I am a ‘Philistine’ when it comes to the arts, so when I started to attend Jim Moroney’s Film Appreciation Class, I had a lot to learn. Like many others I actually thought that the actors were the talent that made films great.

But I now know that a good actor is merely the cherry on the top, and it is the director who is the real talent behind a good film.

The director and their team determine the messages that the film is to convey to the audience, determines the locations, type of screen shot that will be made, the camera angles that will achieve the objective and even selects the actors that will best suit his /her film.

In term 2 we have viewed and discussed a number of lesser-known films by renowned English film director Sir

Alfred Hitchcock, including 'The Man Who Knew Too Much' and 'The Trouble with Harry'. Hitchcock is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in the history of cinema. In a career spanning six decades, he directed over 50 feature films, many of which are still widely watched and studied today.

Why not invest a couple of hours on Fridays, by joining Jim Moroney and learn about the art of 'FILM MAKING' – it may increase your enjoyment of a 'good film'

CLEANING ISSUES AT THE PARKWOOD COMMUNITY HUB

We are very fortunate to have the Maroondah City Council provide us with great rooms at the Parkwood Community Hub. For these rooms, U3A Ringwood has entered into a License Agreement with Council, under which it pays an annual rental fee plus a share of the cost of both electricity and water supplied to Parkwood.

As part of the rental fee, Council provides cleaning of the shared areas, i.e. foyers and toilets. The cleaning of rooms and keeping them in good condition is the responsibility of the relevant user group.

The Committee cleans and dusts the rooms at the beginning of Term 1 and expects classes to ensure that the room that they use is left in a clean condition – there are rechargeable vacuums located in the storeroom attached to CR1 and CR4 that are available for class members to use as required.

Although our classrooms could be vacuumed more often, we have a serious ongoing issue with the bins that are located in each Classroom for member convenience. These bins are not being emptied despite food and other rubbish being regularly deposited in them. If there is food left in a bin for weeks, it will smell and may attract vermin – no one wants that. We have previously tried rosters for cleaning classrooms and emptying of bins, but they have not been successful. Accordingly, we ask all classes to ensure that they:

- empty their bin at the end of their class – the contents can be placed in the bin in the kitchen, which will be later emptied by the Council cleaners: and
- regularly use the vacuums provided, to ensure their room is left in a clean condition - just as clean as they hopefully found it.

Should the bins continue to be not regularly emptied, to safeguard member health and comfort and meet our obligations under our License Agreement, there will be little option, other than to remove the bins from classrooms. This will then necessitate all rubbish to be placed directly into the bin in the Kitchen.

We understand that this may cause inconvenience for some, but it is a much better option than having our classrooms smell and potentially visited by vermin.

IMPORTANT DATES

There are **no classes** on 10th June (King's Birthday holiday) unless previously agreed with a class leader who has their own access to our premises. This also applies to the Monday before Melbourne Cup holiday (4th Nov 24).

Term 2 ends on Friday 28th June 2024.

Term 3 starts on Monday 15th July and ends on Friday 20th September 2024.

Term 4 starts on Monday 7th October and ends on Friday 6th December 2024.